



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2015
Hospitality Management**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Higher National Qualifications in this subject.

Higher National Units

General comments

The majority of centres selected for verification demonstrated a good understanding of the SQA assessment requirements.

Qualification verification was carried out in nine centres, covering a total of 11 Units.

Feedback from the verification team highlighted a consistently high standard in centres with the experience and dedication of staff delivering the awards frequently commented upon.

Measurement against the quality assurance management criteria is detailed and centres are becoming more familiar with the new verification procedures and requirements. As a result, any actions were agreed and carried out to mutually acceptable time-frames and were clearly understood.

Each centre is complying with SQA requirements and is using the current assessment exemplars and Unit specifications.

Each centre that was verified is providing a supportive internal quality assurance network with regular meetings including standardisation meetings and rigorous internal verification. Whilst all centres were able to demonstrate that meetings were taking place, it was not always evident where standardisation had been discussed and this was highlighted as an area for improvement.

Some centres have adopted an online internal quality assurance system where SQA criteria are effectively mapped into internal policies and procedures. This allows for an inclusive and transparent approach to quality assurance for all staff members. In some centres, quality assurance procedures are accessible through the college website.

Centres approach the delivery of Units in different ways and it was highlighted by both staff and candidates that some approaches are considered insufficient and some as time-consuming. Unit specifications may provide guidance on lesson scheduling in the Support Notes section. It is recommended that any concerns of this nature should be documented within the course team review meetings.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Tutors/assessors and internal verifiers demonstrated an understanding of the SQA Unit specifications and assessment exemplars — and marking schemes/checklists demonstrated a high level of consistency. Mechanisms are in place that provide support for candidates from tutors, and support for tutors from internal verifiers. This was demonstrated through the level of feedback provided following internal verification and second marking.

There is evidence in some centres of pre-delivery standardisation taking place to ensure reliability of assessment. In many centres it is clear that Unit master folders contain the most up-to-date assessment and learning material.

Course team reviews indicate that staff and candidates are involved in how the course is operating and action points are resolved in a timely manner.

Centres are proactively ensuring that procedures are in place to identify plagiarism and, when necessary, they are actioned. Candidates are made fully aware of the plagiarism policy from many sources including their induction procedures, course handbook and assessment documentation. Some centres offer online anti-plagiarism systems such as Turnitin.

Evidence Requirements

In general, a good understanding of the Evidence Requirements was evident with centres using current assessment instruments and guidance material.

There is consistency of marking which demonstrates fairness, support and guidance where applicable, although it was highlighted that certain areas had recommendations for further consideration.

Administration of assessments

It was highlighted that centres have an effective plagiarism policy in place that candidates sign as read and understood. The form is generally part of the candidate handbook and induction procedure and is completed with each assessment submission. Each centre has its own procedure for dealing with non-compliance, which was effectively evidenced during visits.

The majority of centres successfully submitted evidence to demonstrate that assessment and verification systems are working. Robust systems included:

- ◆ using current SQA Unit specifications and assessment exemplars
- ◆ using SQA marking schemes and/or enhancing them for Graded Unit purposes
- ◆ standardisation processes and procedures at the start of each session with regular meetings throughout the session
- ◆ regular team meetings
- ◆ use of action plans to highlight areas of improvement
- ◆ effective internal verification recording and sampling systems

General feedback

Feedback from centre staff and candidates reinforced previous comments about support and guidance between team members and candidates.

Whilst there are some areas for improvement, the standard across all centres is very high and demonstrates conformity and understanding of SQA requirements.

College mergers have altered systems and procedures for staff and it is with great appreciation that visits were conducted with clarity and consistency and that evidence had been produced to cover all required criteria. Centre staff were fully supportive of the verification visits and assisted in areas where clarification was sought.

Areas of good practice

It was highlighted that some centres had adopted innovative internal online platforms where candidates upload assessment material. These include:

- ◆ Blackboard VLE
- ◆ Moodle
- ◆ Mahara
- ◆ ILearn
- ◆ BRAG

These systems allow candidates to select Unit information, download course material handouts, monitor time management, search for guidance from internal and external sources, track assessments, request support and upload assessments for marking. It was identified that these systems can also highlight where additional support may be required allowing the candidate to request this if required. Some of these systems also allow for data to be downloaded for report purposes and action planning.

Centres have robust learning support teams who proactively support candidates in a number of ways. Candidate feedback during visits highlighted that they feel comfortable seeking support and guidance from tutors and learning support staff and feel valued and motivated in doing so.

It was encouraging to see that one centre had developed an assessment recording spreadsheet that encompassed the feedback provided to each candidate. This was viewed as an effective system that could be forwarded to the second marker and internal verifier more efficiently across different campuses, and is especially effective where candidate evidence is stored securely online. Individual candidate feedback is provided by e-mail with specific information captured from the report that relates only to their assessment submission.

Specific areas for improvement

Areas for improvement differ between colleges but common themes are:

- ◆ Encourage candidates to use font style, font size and layout consistently when report writing. This should assist with progression to higher level qualifications
- ◆ Enable relevant assessments to be available through secure online platforms to allow candidates to access work at all times

- ◆ Clarify marking/feedback sheets where re-assessment or remediation has taken place. This could be either by using a different colour of marking pen or a distinguishing second mark in a formatted template to show first and second marker/IV and re-assessment decisions. The template should allow clear feedback once the assessment has been resubmitted and marked
- ◆ Ensure that standardisation is clearly taking place whether as part of the course team meetings or separately to demonstrate consistency of practice. Records of discussions should also be kept and made available during verification visits

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

DL4H 34 Hospitality Graded Unit 1
DL4K 35 Hospitality Graded Unit 2

General comments

Centres demonstrated that they are successfully complying with the Unit specifications and that the assessments are clearly being processed in three consecutive stages, which are: marked, second marked and internally verified to confirm completion.

Group sessions confirmed that everyone was clear about the case study and the Graded Unit assessment requirements. These sessions were followed up with supportive one-to-one sessions, which are recorded.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Tutors/assessors and internal verifiers demonstrated an understanding of the SQA Unit specifications and assessment exemplars for each Unit, and marking schemes/checklists demonstrated a high level of consistency. Effective mechanisms are in place that provide support for candidates from tutors, and support for tutors from internal verifiers.

Re-assessments/upgrades were effective and there was evidence that candidate work had been subject to downgrading due to lateness of assessment submission.

Evidence Requirements

There was consistency of marking which demonstrated fairness, support and guidance where applicable.

Some Graded Unit marking checklists have been enhanced to incorporate marks for the breakdown of all task requirements, Within one centre this had helped to ensure fairness and consistency across markers.

Administration of assessments

The use of pre-delivery checklists and standardisation events is apparent and centres have development lessons to ensure candidates understand the requirements of the Graded Unit.

The development lessons are followed up with individual meetings and log books/diaries demonstrate where candidates felt they lacked knowledge.

Achievement of the minimum evidence requirements at each stage is clearly evident and where candidates fail to meet this, they are permitted to resubmit evidence.

Second marking/verification was evident in all centres and met the requirements of SQA and internal policies.

Centres that were verified for Graded Units are currently operating 40–100% internal verification. This reflects the tutors' confidence in the delivery and assessment of the Unit, internal policies and whether previous verification highlighted any areas of concern. Generally, all work that was evidenced had been subject to second marking to confirm grades and this was apparent within the internal verification reports.

General feedback

Internal feedback confirmed that staff were supported through meetings and verification and candidates maintained motivation through effective tutorial support and guidance.

Whilst one comment was made regarding the delivery schedule and tight timescale, the length of time given to a Unit is internally set by the centre. However, sufficient time should be given to allow candidates to prepare for the Graded Unit assessment.

Areas of good practice

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Centres have robust learning support teams who are proactively supporting candidates in a number of ways. Candidate reflection during visits highlighted that they feel comfortable seeking support and guidance from tutors and learning support staff and feel valued and motivated in doing so.

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