



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014
Clothing and Textiles**

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

Higher National Units

General comments

Four college centres were visited and the following HNC/D Fashion and Textiles Units were externally verified (Units verified in more than one centre are in bold):

F18B 35 Surface Decoration for Textiles: Advanced

F193 34 Printed Textiles: An Introduction

F1F2 35 Concept Garment Design: Advanced

F1P9 34 Corset Production: An Introduction

F1PR 34 Garment Manufacture: An Introduction to Working Drawings

F1R0 34 Textile Fibres, Yarns and Fabrics

F18X 33 Garment construction techniques: An Introduction

F1F6 34 Concept Garment Design: an Introduction

F1F5 34 Designing and Producing a Fashion Garment: An Introduction

F1F4 35 Designing and Producing Fashion Garments: Advanced

F1PC 35 Design and Manufacture a Bridal or Evening wear Garment

F188 34 Garment Pattern Construction Blocks, Manipulations and Production

The rationale for selection was to gauge standardisation across groups within the same centre as well as across various centres, including Units that have not been previously assessed.

Most centres had a good or very good standard of candidate evidence and a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards.

An exciting range of work was evidenced. Most Units that were verified showed improvement in the standard and consistency of evidence produced. Internal verification procedures in most centres were robust and there was clear evidence of a supportive staff. However, one centre did not judge candidate evidence accurately and consistently against the national standards. Units verified in the session 2013–14 would therefore indicate that in one centre there had been a decline in the standard and consistency of evidence produced.

Discussions of candidate evidence, sharing assessment instruments, marking schemes and sharing of good practice at the annual Qualification Support Team meetings has helped most centres to standardise and has supported most centres in working towards a national standard.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Most centres were familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. Holistic integration of Units and assessments clearly linked the design and production processes creating more meaningful learning for candidates.

Most centres had their own bank of exemplars to assist with standardisation — photographs, garment samples, annotated drawings, marking schemes.

Working collaboratively with other centres to share assessment materials would support centres that need additional support.

Evidence Requirements

The majority of centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Units.

Most candidate evidence was at the appropriate level for the Units and good to very good progression from level 7 to level 8 was evident.

Staffing issues were the cause of weak candidate evidence in one centre.

Administration of assessments

All instruments of assessment were current and appropriate for the Units and course delivery, and were at the appropriate level for the qualification. They reflected the Group Awards and provided the candidates with the knowledge and skills required.

In most centres, robust internal verification procedures were evident. Constructive feedback and support was evidenced in all candidate feedback on assessment decisions. In one centre, internal verification procedures were not robust and assessment decisions were not accurately and consistently judged.

All centres had an internal verification schedule. In one centre standardisation minutes could be improved. In most centres, records of discussions with staff confirmed that verifiers and assessors had regular discussion regarding candidate evidence.

All centres had a creative approach to delivery. Where appropriate, various Units were integrated to make a more meaningful candidate experience and a holistic approach to assessment. One centre needs to document the integration of Outcomes in Units.

In all centres, instruments of assessment were approved by the internal curriculum group before use. Instruments of assessment were available in hard copy and electronic format on the VLE, giving candidates and staff online access.

General feedback

Candidates were not always available for feedback sessions. Candidates who were available for discussion were happy to hear comments from verifiers on the good to very good standard of work produced. Candidates were enthusiastic and praised the excellent tuition and support they had received. This was further evidenced in the constructive written feedback and support on assessment decisions.

Many candidates commented on the open access to online teaching notes, instruments of assessment and the 'showcasing' of their achievements at internal and external exhibitions.

Most centres commented on the positive benefits of attending the annual Qualification Support Team meeting — such as standardisation, sharing of good practice, sharing assessment materials and establishing a good working relationship between centres.

Collaborative working, exchanging skills with other centres to provide staff CPD could be beneficial to centres.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ The integration of several Units to create a holistic approach to assessment will ease the assessment burden and create a meaningful learning experience for candidates
- ◆ Exciting design briefs linking the design and production processes to create a more meaningful learning experience for candidates
- ◆ Constructive feedback and support in candidate feedback records on assessment decisions
- ◆ Using social media to communicate with and support groups of learners
- ◆ Exhibitions of candidate work at internal and external venues

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Standardisation procedures need to be improved in one centre
- ◆ The documenting of how Outcomes in Units are integrated

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

Two college centres were visited and Higher National Graded Units from the following courses were externally verified — HNC/D Textiles and HNC/D Fashion: Design and Production with Retail.

Graded Units verified:

F2EJ 34 Fashion: Design and Production with Retail: Graded Unit 1
F2EK 35 Fashion: Design and Production with Retail: Graded Unit 2
F1RA 34 Textiles: Graded Unit 1
F1RF 35 Textiles: Graded Unit 2

General comments

All centres are using the most up-to-date Unit specification. All assessment specifications are relevant and appropriate to the Unit and award.

There was a consistent standard within each centre with detailed feedback to candidates for the various mentoring stages. In one centre, grades needed to be reviewed to reflect commercial standards of evidence. In the other centre, the majority of A, B, C grade pass and fail candidate evidence was graded appropriately.

One centre delivering F1RA 34 and F1RF 35 demonstrated a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The centre delivering F2EJ 34 and F2EK 35 would benefit from working with another centre to improve standardisation.

In all of the Graded Units verified the instruments of assessment were well written and open to a wide range of contexts. Marking schemes were available for all centres, which showed evidence of internal standardisation. In all centres, there was evidence of thorough marking of candidate evidence and good constructive feedback to candidates.

Centres were asked to grade candidate evidence as A, B, C or fail. The External Verifier selected a sample to see if they agreed with the centre's decisions. In one centre, the External Verifier agreed with the judgement of the centre and the grades awarded. In the other centre, it was recommended that the grades should be reviewed to reflect the commercial standard required.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

A practical assignment was the most appropriate instrument of assessment for all of the Graded Units verified.

It was evident that all centres are familiar with the Unit specification, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. However, the centre delivering the Fashion: Design and Production with Retail Graded Units would benefit from attending the Qualification Support Team meeting to discuss and share exemplification materials. This would suggest that there is still room for improvement in the delivery of these Units.

There was evidence in all of the Graded Units that were verified that candidates had fair access to assessment, as well as inclusive design briefs exploring different cultures and identities.

Group discussions at the Qualification Support Team meetings have helped to standardise and benchmark student work. Centres who do participate would agree this is an essential and excellent event to share good practice.

Evidence Requirements

One of the centres verified had a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements for the Graded Units. The other centre would benefit from benchmarking candidate work with other centres at the Qualification Support Team meeting.

Both centres had well written briefs that were open to a wide range of contexts. One centre used a team approach to produce exciting and appropriate briefs for candidates and the assessment specifications. One centre used briefs from the SQA bank of exemplars.

Marking schemes were available for all Graded Units. Robust internal verification procedures were evident in centres; however, in a few cases the External Verifier recommended that a few of the grades and the marking scheme should be reviewed.

Candidate evidence in one centre could be improved to reflect a more commercial standard.

Assessment instruments were available in hard copy and also on the VLE with support notes.

Administration of assessments

All centres had a creative approach to delivery of the Graded Units. Key dates for the delivery were indicated to candidates — planning, development and evaluation stages. It was evident that independent learning had occurred and that the candidates enjoyed the learning experience.

A robust internal verification system was evident in all centres. Pre-, ongoing- and post-delivery checklists with candidate feedback where appropriate were available and a minute of meetings.

There was a strong team approach to internal verification where candidate evidence had been marked by the assessor and a sample cross-checked by the internal verifier. All centres had an internal verification schedule. Standardisation minutes and discussions with staff confirmed that the verifier and assessor had regular discussion regarding candidate evidence.

In most cases, final assessment decisions were accurate, reliable and recorded.

One centre used prior verified assessment materials and marking schemes. This aided the external verification process. Centres can access the assessment bank and share assessments and marking schemes.

General feedback

In one centre, no candidates were available for discussion due to the timing of external verification visit. Where candidates were available they commented on: enjoyment of Unit, what was learned, the planning and organisational skills developed, independent learning, and meeting deadlines.

Recorded written feedback from candidates in one centre reflected on what was learned within the Unit, what they would do differently if repeated, how they could improve on a particular technique, and how they could use what was learned in future projects.

A good and very good standard of candidate evidence and tutor support with good constructive comments to candidates at various stages was evidenced within one centre.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Clear marking guidelines
- ◆ A team approach to marking
- ◆ Teaching staff not involved in the delivery of the Unit 'blind marked' candidate work

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Benchmarking candidate work with other centres at the Qualification Support Team meeting would support centres and improve standardisation

SVQ awards

General comments

Three centres delivering the Manufacturing Textile Products at SVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 were visited. All demonstrated a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards at the appropriate level of the award for their candidates.

A good to very good level of candidate evidence was observed — similar to previous sessions — indicating a standardised approach to delivery and assessment.

Centre one, a college provider, managed the delivery of SVQ Manufacturing Textile Products levels 1, 2 and 3 within various industrial workplaces.

Another centre, a training provider, managed the delivery of SVQ Manufacturing Textile Products levels 1 and 2 within a number of 'cottage industry' work places and industrial mills.

The level of skills demonstrated in the different workplaces was a true reflection of the national standards and credited candidates with appropriate SVQ Units in their various vocational areas.

The Assessment Strategy stipulates that F0JK 04 Maintain Health and Safety at Work must be verified annually and is the key Unit across all levels of the award. Each centre demonstrated a standardised approach within the workplace. It was evident from talking to the candidates, assessors and verifiers that they all had a very good awareness of the importance of health and safety in the workplace.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors in all centres demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. This was evidenced by well documented Unit packs with appropriate instruments of assessment, exemplar answers, assessment schedules, detailed performance criteria checklists, minutes of standardisation meetings, and candidate folios of evidence. Direct observation, questions, discussions, witness testimony, work products, photographs of various processes and end-products were all used to record Unit evidence. Conversations with assessors and internal verifiers confirmed this judgement.

It was evident that all of the programmes are planned to take account of learner needs. Assessment in each centre occurs when candidates have gained sufficient skills and have a realistic expectation that they will achieve the assessment criteria. Regular feedback to candidates in each centre is evident. Teaching materials are regularly reviewed.

Evidence Requirements

Well documented candidate evidence appropriate to the level of the award and minutes of standardisation meetings confirmed that all centres had a very clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the award. Appropriate Units were selected for the different types of workplace and end-products.

All centres administer assessments at an appropriate level and within an appropriate assessment environment and use workplace assessment/simulation for health and safety situations that rarely or are unlikely to occur. In all centres there was a robust internal verification system evident.

Candidates view the SVQ as a method of certifying that they are highly skilled and competent in work.

Administration of assessments

All centres administer assessments at an appropriate level and within an appropriate assessment environment and use workplace assessment/simulation for health and safety situations that rarely or are unlikely to occur. In all centres there was a robust internal verification system evident.

In all centres candidates are assessed when competent in the skills. At the end of each observation the candidate will read what has been written and sign off the response discussing any points raised.

All centres deliver and assess in line with the Creative Skillset Assessment Strategy.

General feedback

In all centres, it was evident from discussions with candidates, assessors and internal verifiers that meaningful and enjoyable learning has taken place. There was an excellent supportive relationship between candidates, assessors and verifiers.

All centres recorded feedback to candidates offering constructive comments.

Candidates demonstrate competence in the workplace at the appropriate award level.

There were no evident barriers to assessment. There was a wide range of age, gender and nationalities. Where English was not the first language, appropriate candidate support in the candidates' native language was available.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Thorough induction programme for all assessors and verifiers

- ◆ Clearly documented roles and responsibilities of all involved in the assessment process, internal verification and quality assurance was evidenced
- ◆ Standardised approach to gathering candidate evidence in detailed and comprehensive log books with sample answers and a consistently high standard of work across all candidate evidence
- ◆ Excellent assessor and verifier support to candidates and excellent documentation of candidate evidence available from all centres
- ◆ Strict compliance with all SSC and SQA requirements

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ It was recommended that one centre should consider progressing one or more existing assessors to the role of internal verifier