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

Hairdressing

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 Graded Units

F5DM 34: HNC Hairdressing Graded Unit

General comments

External verification was carried out over two centres.

The delivery and assessment of the Graded Unit were of a good standard. The candidate understanding of the Graded Unit was good and the resulting assessment evidence was innovative.

Centres are using the SQA-developed assessment exemplar and marking scheme; these are being used effectively. This session, a Training Assessment Pack was available and centres felt that candidates benefited through having a better understanding of the evidence required for each part of the Graded Unit: planning, development and evaluation.

The content of the Graded Unit gives candidates the opportunity to showcase their skills learned within the year; the final portfolio of evidence available confirmed this. In the portfolio evidence presented, candidates showed good research underpinning the creation of their chosen company for the portfolio. The planning stage, development stage and resulting photographic evidence was of a good standard throughout the presenting centres. The evaluation stage in centres has improved — this is an area that can give candidates challenges as evaluative writing is not an area they are familiar with.

In some centres, candidates had been given lessons on evaluative writing; this had helped and was shown as good practice. Centres were presenting performance evidence is a number of formats, both paper-based portfolios and digital portfolio presentation.

Assessment evidence was of a good standard and met the SCQF level requirements.

Although not a requirement, the centres presented staff CPD folders. These showed all staff delivering and assessing these Units are current in their specialist skills and are well qualified.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Centre staff had a good understanding of the Unit specification and assessment requirements. The instruments of assessment used are set out in the Unit exemplar and marking guidelines. The assessment decisions that had been made showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and Evidence Requirements.

Centres are using SQA assessment exemplars and suggested marking guides. This ensured a consistent approach was carried out and a consistent standard of assessment decisions was shown to be in place across the centres.

Exemplification materials: in the evidence seen in the portfolios, evidence requirements were of a good standard and met the needs of the SCQF levels of the Graded Unit being delivered and assessed.

The Graded Unit must be marked at the planning and development stages. Recorded evidence of feedback to candidates showed that assessors provided good support for candidates.

Evidence Requirements

The centres that were verified showed a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the Graded Unit and grading of candidate evidence was carried out effectively. Evidence of this was shown through standardisation meeting records, formal and informal team meetings, and supportive feedback from internal verifiers.

Evidence was also shown through candidate portfolios; these were presented in both standard and digital format. All portfolios contained evidence of planning, development and evaluation. Assessor feedback was ongoing throughout and showed support was in place to guide candidates.

Both centres are using the SQA-developed assessment exemplar and marking guides to show Evidence Requirements for this Graded Unit. Centre staff delivering and assessing this Unit have attended standardisation network meetings at SQA, which looked at a standard approach for grades given in this Unit, and are very clear about what is needed for the A, B, C grades given in this Unit.

The new TAP developed for this Unit was discussed at the network meeting and all attending centres had an opportunity to input to the content.

Administration of assessments

All assessment evidence presented met with the SCQF level of the Graded Unit. The Graded Unit is introduced at different times in centres, but as this Unit is supported by skills learned throughout the session, evidence is generated later in the award delivery.

Assessments outcomes were delivered in a logical sequence. Assessment decisions were recorded and standardisation minutes showed that all assessors adopted a standard approach to assessment.

Internal verification was robust in the centres visited, and records showed that assessment decisions were consistent across all the assessors. Overall, feedback from internal verifiers to assessors was supportive. All centres carry out double-marking of the portfolio evidence to ensure fair and robust grading

decisions are made. This ensures that the grades given meet the requirements of the marking guidelines.

Both centres use the SQA-developed assessment exemplar and marking guide for the Graded Unit, ensuring a consistency of assessors' decisions over the sector.

Outcomes are assessed at both the planning and development stages of this Unit, then evaluation is assessed at final submission. Candidates cannot progress until each stage is assessed and the requirements of each Outcome are met. Assessors interview candidates at each stage. The interviews are recorded and feedback is given to candidates.

College regionalisation was taking place during this session and could have had an impact on the introduction of, and delivery of, the Graded Unit. Standardisation meetings took place across merged centres to ensure a standard approach was carried out. Internal verification is being rationalised across merged centres and will be in place by session 2014–15.

General feedback

The summary sections in the EV reports show that support and feedback to candidates was supportive. Recorded evidence of assessor reviews and feedback to candidates was available; this was informative and showed support and encouragement to all candidates, ensuring fair access was available for all. A number of international candidates were interviewed and all felt that the support that had been put in place ensured they understood all aspects of the award.

Candidates who were interviewed were motivated and enthusiastic and all enjoyed the challenge that the Graded Unit offered; they all felt that their assessors supported them throughout. Candidates enjoyed showcasing their skills through the presentation of their portfolio evidence; the portfolios showed innovation in the evidence presented. All candidates who were interviewed felt that the skills they had developed were giving them confidence in the practical elements of the course and a better understanding when creating their portfolio for the Graded Unit. All candidates felt that the portfolio evidence within their Graded Unit could be used to support progression to employment.

In all centres, access to assessments clearly offered equal access for all. The support systems were excellent in all centres visited and should ensure that all candidates have access to support and any individual help they need to complete their course successfully.

The evidence seen showed that the Graded Unit is being delivered to a good standard. Digital portfolios are being introduced in centres and where these were used centre staff ensured that the External Verifier had access to the technology needed to view them.

Areas of good practice

♦ Candidate participation in extra-curricular activities — eg regional and national competitions, charity events, opportunities to be part of a salon within the Commonwealth Games

♦ Good photographic evidence

♦ Digital portfolios

♦ Colour technicians from different companies carrying out workshops with candidates and giving training on new trends within the industry

♦ Good guidance and support systems within centres ensuring all candidates have a fair access to assessment

♦ Good IT support enabling candidates to produce electronic portfolios of evidence

♦ Well-documented portfolios with information throughout clear and informative at all stages — planning, development and evaluation

♦ Opportunities for international exchanges

♦ Delivery of lessons on evaluative writing

♦ Diary kept of all information for planning and development — which could be used when completing the evaluation stage of the Unit

Specific areas for improvement

♦ Encourage candidates to use more evaluative writing for the evaluation stage of the Graded Unit. This is apparent in some centres but should be reviewed to ensure this is carried out

♦ Ensure all stages of the portfolio evidence is detailed to show clearly planning and development

♦ Action planning could be more detailed evidencing how the Graded Unit will be planned by candidates from start to finish. Diary evidence would then support the progress of the plan and provide information for the evaluation stage

♦ Candidates should be encouraged to present more detail of the underpinning processes undertaken to produce the looks created. This would afford the candidates more opportunity to obtain the highest grade possible

SVQ awards

G9EC 21: Hairdressing and Barbering Level 1
G9EY 22: Hairdressing Level 2
G9EG 22: Barbering Level 2
G9EF 23: Hairdressing Level 3

General comments

External verification visits took place over 24 centres. This covered colleges, training centres and private providers where SVQs are being delivered and assessed. All centres visited had a good understanding of the SVQs being delivered.

All centres were delivering and assessing to the requirements of the assessment strategies and national standards. Each centre had copies of the assessment strategies.

The G9EG 22 Barbering award was being delivered in only one centre. This centre is well established and all evidence met the requirements of the award.

The centres that were visited were using either the paper-based mandatory written questions and marking guidelines or SOLAR online mandatory questions (marked online) to generate evidence for the mandatory elements of all Units in the awards as required by guidelines.

One centre is now using the non-mandatory electronic online documents to generate evidence for the non-mandatory elements of the awards. Centre staff fed back that they thought this was helpful, and candidates were enjoying this format for their assessment.

Where centres have developed their own non-mandatory assessment evidence material, this was found to meet the Evidence Requirements.

Where centres were not yet using the SOLAR online assessments (mandatory elements), the EVs gave advice on how this could be accessed. Centres that have not yet accessed the SOLAR online assessments have said they will be using this in future.

Development visits took place to help centres access and use the SOLAR questions.

The candidate work that was sampled showed a good understanding of the requirements. Most have personal development plans and assessment schedules.

Most centres are using Moodle or other online medium to deliver theory notes and this is proving to be beneficial to candidates who can access this remotely.

All staff had CPD folders. These showed that all staff who are delivering and assessing these Units are current in their specialist skills and take part in both in-house and external CPD development events. Most staff delivering and assessing the SVQs held either D32, 33 and 34 or A and D or new LD Units as required by the assessment strategies. Where these are not yet in place the assessors who are undertaking these Units are mentored and assessments are cross-signed by an experienced assessor. Centre staff records show, in the main, that CPD is taking place and meeting the requirements of the assessment strategy. Where this was not completed, advice was given by the EV and actions agreed to ensure this was completed.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

From evidence provided within EV reports, all assessors delivering and assessing the awards are familiar with the requirements of the awards. Evidence from all centres subject to external verification visits showed that staff who were delivering and assessing SVQs were familiar with the needs of each Unit within all the awards verified and that assessment decisions met the requirements. Instruments of assessment used and assessment decisions made, showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and Evidence Requirements. The materials used to underpin knowledge and understanding were of a good standard and supported candidate learning.

Evidence Requirements

All staff who were delivering and assessing the SVQ Units and the awards in Hairdressing were familiar with all Evidence Requirements to meet the national standards.

All centres have a copy of the assessment guidelines and assessment strategies required for each award being delivered. The assessors had access to all materials required for the Units and awards they were delivering and assessing.

The evidence seen consisted of written questions, projects, assignments, client consultation records, personal statements, photographs of completed work and completed portfolios of observed assessments.

Staff in almost every centre were well informed through team meetings, internal verification meetings and standardisation meetings. Feedback to assessors was informative and support systems were in place for new assessors. This was evidenced in the form of meetings, induction packs, team teaching and mentoring.

Administration of assessments

Evidence from all visits shows that centre staff have a good understanding of the awards they are delivering. All centre staff felt that the awards are clear and the Evidence Requirements meet the needs of the hairdressing industry. All centres

visited were very clear on the types of evidence needed to comply with assessment needs and assessment strategies.

Some EV reports have identified that the Level 3 Unit G22 F42 04 — Monitor procedures to safely control work operations — is still causing a slight challenge. Visiting EVs have advised on ways to generate evidence for this Unit.

Clarification of the evidence required to satisfy the assessment requirements was provided for two Units — GH16 Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques and GH17 Colour hair using a variety of techniques.

Centre-devised material used to supplement evidence was appropriate and fit for purpose. Assessment instruments used included practical performance, written closed-book mandatory questions, project consultation records, oral questions, assignments, personal statements, witness testimonies and photographic evidence to show competence for the Units and awards being delivered.

Evidence presented for external verification included pre-delivery verification, records of internal verification carried out including any actions required, internal verification systems and schedules, records of assessment feedback to assessors, standardisation meetings and yearly reviews of learning and teaching, CPD and staff qualification documentation (paper-based and electronic), and centre policies on equal access, equality and diversity.

Internal verification processes were robust in almost every centre. Where assessment evidence did not fully meet requirements, internal verification had identified this. It was then recorded and actions were put in place to ensure this was rectified within a given timescale then signed by both the assessor and internal verifier.

Internal verification systems differ over centres but, overall, these were clear to follow. These show robust evidence of procedures in place to ensure quality across all assessors and assessment decisions for the awards being delivered. Most internal verifiers hold required qualifications but where these have still to be completed those registered for a qualification had been registered and a date set for completion in line with the assessment strategy requirements. This was recorded in EV reports.

Due to college regionalisation, internal verification was being changed in a number of colleges to ensure all new campuses were following a standard approach.

All centres have assessment planning schedules in place and it would appear from feedback that all candidates have a clear understanding of assessments and timing of assessments within their award. Candidates who were interviewed and observed felt they were well supported throughout their course of study.

Most centres were integrating Units within the award where the evidence presented covered more than one Unit. This was indicated on recording documents. It demonstrates good practice in ensuring candidates do not have an

overburden of assessment and shows a good understanding of the requirements of the national standards of the award.

The centres that were verified were using the marking schemes provided for the mandatory questions **or** SOLAR online as knowledge evidence.

SOLAR online assessment is marked online and staff using this felt it was a great advantage and ensured consistency across all assessment decisions.

Where centres had not yet used the SOLAR online mandatory assessments, this was discussed at feedback and centre staff said they were putting this in place for the future.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates in all centres was very good, with supportive comments and advice. Feedback was evidenced through comments in portfolios, consultation records, written projects and candidate reviews, which take place on an ongoing basis throughout the course.

In some centres, candidate representatives were involved in standardisation meetings where they fed back on any problems with any aspect of their course, so that any problems were addressed. This feedback was then used for reviews of learning and teaching.

Candidates who were interviewed and observed were enthusiastic; all felt they were well supported by assessors. Interviews were carried out with a number of candidates over all types of delivery, full-time and part-time, and across colleges, training centres and private providers. Feedback was positive and all candidates seemed to be aware of the needs of the assessments and of timing — most had assessment schedules. Candidates' feedback showed where the online SOLAR mandatory assessments were being used. They felt these were better than the paper-based assessments and that they were less time-consuming, allowing more time for practical work.

In most centres, candidates took part in charity events, in-house competitions and some regional and national competitions, showcasing skills learned. In a number of centres, candidates took part in training events delivered by external companies, which enhanced the candidate experience. Most colleges have a commercial salon, which gives candidates a real experience of industry needs. All candidates who were interviewed (from colleges, training providers and private trainers), felt they were well supported.

Access to assessment was well planned and further support was available when required. No barriers to assessment were identified. All centres have policies in place to ensure that all candidates have equal access to assessment.

Areas of good practice

♦ Demonstrations from companies and visiting stylists carrying out workshops throughout the year, giving candidates current information about industry needs

♦ Experiences in industry exemplified by previous students

♦ Activities for candidates that consolidate learning — eg charity events, themed days, competition work

♦ Integrating assessment across Units ensures candidates achieve evidence requirements in an efficient manner

♦ Candidates from two colleges took part in a salon in the Commonwealth Games arena, giving them opportunities to work in a high profile area

♦ Candidates at different levels working together to support one another

♦ Strong links with local employers

♦ Use of individual assessment plans to support learning

♦ Regular trainee progress reviews undertaken by assessors and/or internal verifiers to support assessment and training

♦ Commercial salons in colleges run to provide realistic working environments and work experience for candidates

♦ Most centres work with local community partners and this provides work experience opportunities for candidates as well as enhancing their creative skills and softer skills

♦ Feedback to candidates is supportive, positive and relevant to the progress of the candidates' performance

♦ Photographic evidence in a number of centres shows clear evidence of practical assessment evidence requirements

♦ In-house and national competitions where candidates from Hairdressing L2, L3 and Barbering awards take part, enabling them to showcase their skills and creativity

♦ Pre-induction sessions, learner feedback activities, skills tests, peer assessment and other activities to support and show improved retention, achievement and attainment

♦ Colour-coded worksheets in portfolios, individual learning plans, review sheets and feedback to support candidate progress and attendance

♦ Use of personal statements at Level 3 to show evidence of practical work, indicating clearly that candidates have a sound knowledge base and can give expanded information on the individual services — showing clear evidence for assessment requirements

Specific areas for improvement

♦ Ensure aftercare is given and shown on client records to meet evidence requirements

♦ Ensure all staff have or are undertaking the required assessor and/or verifier awards as required by the assessment strategies

♦ F472 04/G22 Augment existing assessment evidence to clearly demonstrate supervisory/monitoring role — advice has been given by EVs where required

- Record evidence type by use of correct evidence key
- Ensure performance evidence is recorded timeously by assessors in candidates' portfolios
- Where top-up is required when asking oral questions for Mandatory evidence, ensure responses are recorded and signed by the assessor — this applies to both paper copy and SOLAR evidence
- In some centres Level 3 consultation sheets could be redeveloped to show where evidence could show cross-referencing of practical assessments
- Level 3 — Creative cutting using a combination of techniques (F7AG 04/ G16) — recording of re-style should be comprehensive to show where a combination of techniques have been used — to ensure evidence fully reflects the re-style carried out
- Level 3 — Colour hair using a variety of techniques (F7AH 04/G12) — clarity required for range, ie block colouring (fashion technique of block colour) and lightening full head of colour
- Level 2 — ensure all timings are entered in the client analysis sheet
- Level 2 — Advise and Consult Unit — ensure this is completed when candidate skills are appropriate, and over three technical Units
- Ensure products (shown in range) are evidenced in line with assessment requirements