



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2014  
Creative Industries**

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

Five centres delivering the following Higher National Units were selected for verification this session:

DM0V 34	Creative Industries: An Introduction
DM0W 34	Creative Project
DM19 34	Radio Music Programme Production
DM28 34	Sound Recording: An Introduction
F45L 35	Editing: Own Programme
DM10 35	Editing to a Directors Brief
DM22 34	Camera: An Introduction
DM2J 34	Television: Planning and Production
F45P 34	Television Research
F45R 35	Television: Scripting: Factual Programmes
DM1934	Radio Music Programme Production
DM1C34	Technical Operations, Recording & Editing
FD5W34	Scripting and Presenting for Radio News

There was a mix of the old and new verification approaches. All centres appear to have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards, but there continues to be a difficulty with implementation due to reorganisation of centres and implementation of two approaches to quality assurance (QA). All centres visited indicated they are taking necessary steps to introduce relevant staff to the 'new approach'.

It is therefore anticipated that all future external verification visits will be under the 'new approach' to QA and material from centres should follow requirements.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Most assessors continue to be familiar with all materials and procedures. However, although centres continue to improve their adoption and dissemination of material through various virtual learning environment (VLE) systems, there continues to be variability amongst centres, which would benefit from standardisation. Unfortunately, in a few cases, the adoption of VLE systems has not been followed through with improved internal and candidate communication.

The recently established Qualification Development Teams (QDTs) continue to review and update material. As a result, assessment and support material are being improved and modernised.

It may be of assistance to standardisation if the QDTs were to review and agree the adoption of compatible communication and dissemination approaches among centres.

Major improvements in standardisation should become apparent when all centres adopt the 'new approach' to QA in the near future.

## **Evidence Requirements**

External Verifiers (EVs) continue to report that in the majority of visits there is a clear understanding of Evidence Requirements for the Units.

In exemplary centres, a more integrated and contextualised curriculum delivery continues to result in alternative approaches to evidence gathering.

Despite ongoing major centre reorganisations, EVs have reported motivated staff in most centres, dedicated to improving the student experience and employability. Although staff are committed to developing 'real-world' curricula, they report that they continue to be under increasing time and budget constraints, which may result in a lessening of links to industry.

As a result, EVs have been encouraged to support alternative methods of gathering and recording evidence. QDTs are continuing to review Evidence Requirements.

## **Administration of assessments**

All centres continue to demonstrate improved methods of delivering assessment and feedback, with all now utilising a variety of electronic communications, eg VLEs. The quality and performance of these continues to be mixed and could benefit from standardising.

Again, it has been reported that internal verification procedures do not appear to be keeping pace with developed assessment methods but small improvements have been noted this year.

It is again reported that in addition to VLEs, there continues to be a marked rise in the adoption of web-based 'social networking' and blogging. This continues to improve levels of assessment and communication.

## **General feedback**

The challenges being experienced during centre mergers and reorganisation continue to have an effect on the development of this programme area, with centres continuing to report challenges in implementing desired curriculum and learning and teaching improvements.

Although learners are reporting an improved level of 'virtual' communication with assessors, some have again highlighted a diminution of personal assessor contact. This is again illustrated by the paucity of candidate action and development plans in some centres.

As reported last year, in some centres, direct links with industry are lessening and as a result 'real-world' teaching continues to decline. Disappointingly, the concentration on delivering candidates with employability skills appears also to have been diminished in those centres that are still under re-organisational pressure.

It is to be hoped that once centre reorganisation is embedded that there is an encouragement for all centres to share good practice in order to develop standardised high quality curricula that fully meet the requirements of industry.

## **Areas of good practice**

As reported for the past few years, the best performing centres continue to embrace highly integrated and contextualised learning and teaching strategies with concentration on 'learning by doing' and reflecting industry practice.

Again, those centres with direct industry liaison and staff with a high level of subject experience, and continuing professional development (CPD), are exhibiting high standards.

All centres are now actively embracing a variety of virtual learning environments and electronic communication and promotion methods that reflect industry practice. It should be noted, however, that there is little standardisation amongst centres during this period of reorganisation.

Exemplary centres are to be commended for:

- ◆ improving liaison with industry/staff CPD
- ◆ integration and contextualisation of curriculum to mirror industry practice
- ◆ further exploration of alternative and practical ways of gathering evidence within a contextualised curriculum
- ◆ meeting candidate support and development needs, in particular, exit and employability planning

It is to be anticipated that those centres experiencing a hiatus during reorganisation will implement the above good practice as soon as possible.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

As noted above, it would be helpful if standard approaches to electronic assessment and communication were adopted amongst participating centres.

Exemplary centres continue to develop course design with a focus on real-world experience, employability and links with industry. These centres provide excellent individual candidate support and guidance

However, despite the continued adoption of new virtual learning environments and electronic communication by some centres, it would appear that in some cases, personal contact between assessor and candidate is diminishing. These centres display a poor approach to candidate support and development needs. In particular, there continues to be a reported diminution of exit and employability planning.

Internal verification systems in many centres continue to be reported as not having kept pace with the adoption of VLEs and electronic communications. As a

result, most are now cumbersome and would benefit from concurrent development to assist in the modernisation of curricula.

# Higher National Graded Units

Two centres delivering the following Graded Units were selected for verification this session:

F2E2 34 Creative Industries: Television: Graded Unit 1  
DM2T 35 Creative Industries: Television: Graded Unit 2

FF45 35 Creative Industries: Radio: Graded Unit  
H49T 35 Creative Industries: Television: Graded Unit

## General comments

Centres demonstrated an improved understanding of the requirements of the national standards, but there continues to be diversity of interpretation of standards, and resulting quality, amongst centres. This may be attributed to ongoing reorganisation of centres.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Most assessors exhibited a good knowledge of Unit specifications and instruments of assessment. However, ongoing centre reorganisation has resulted in a varying degree of standardisation of approach.

Encouragingly, those centres that have undergone reorganisation are now developing creative approaches to delivery and assessment.

The QDT is still engaged in updating this programme area. As a result, assessment and support material continue to be improved and modernised.

## Evidence Requirements

As a result of centre reorganisation, there continues to be a mixed understanding and interpretation of Evidence Requirements amongst centres at present.

Although some centres are to be applauded for continuing to develop methods of evidence gathering that reflect industry practice, it is felt that the QDT should strive to assist standardisation amongst participating centres.

## Administration of assessments

Centres verified this year demonstrated a mixed range of assessment material and a variety of levels of VLE-delivered assessment, communication and feedback.

In some cases, there appears to be an increased reliance on the remediation procedure to achieve results.

Internal verification procedures, although robust, in most cases continue to be cumbersome and do not reflect developments in assessment and candidate communication.

### **General feedback**

See HN Units above.

### **Areas of good practice**

See HN Units above.

### **Specific areas for improvement**

See HN Units above.

In addition, in some cases there is a worrying reliance on the remediation procedure to gain results. Centres should ensure that sufficient guidance is given in the pre-planning stage to ensure candidates are fully aware of the requirements of the project. SQA provides guidance on 'reasonable assistance' in *Guidance for the Implementation of Graded Units in Higher National Certificates and Diplomas*, which can be downloaded from SQA's website. An extract has been provided below:

*In carrying out a given task, candidates are required to display the ability to work independently to meet the Evidence Requirements and standards set out in the Graded Unit specification. At the same time, candidates need appropriate support to enable them to complete the project-based Graded Unit.*

*This is demanding on the candidate as integration is based on content/topics taken from Units delivered across the Group Award. SQA has used the phrase 'reasonable assistance' in all project-based Graded Units to try to marry the need for support with the need to not give too much assistance. If a candidate requires more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', this will affect the grade awarded.*

Examples of reasonable assistance are provided in this guidance document.