



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2013
Drama and Theatre Arts**

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

Within the verification group Drama and Theatre Arts there appeared to be a clear and accurate understanding of the national standards for HNC/D Acting and Performance, HNC/D Musical Theatre and HNC Technical Theatre. The standards across the centres were appropriate and consistent with HN level.

The following Units were verified across centres:

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|---------|--|
| DG4N 34 | Voice 1: Developing Skills |
| DG4R 35 | Voice 2: Applying Skills in Performance |
| DG3L 35 | Acting 2: Applying Skills in Performance |
| H1KY 34 | Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1 |
| H1L0 35 | Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 2 |
| H1L2 35 | Singing Skills for Musical Theatre 2 |
| H1KV 35 | Acting 2: Applying Skills in Performance |

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In all cases centres used the SQA assessment exemplar materials if they were available for the Unit. For delivery of the Units, the majority of centres adopted their own house style of the materials.

Centres which had delivered the Units for some time demonstrated a high level of familiarity with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessments and exemplification materials and this aided the standardisation of marking and recording of assessment across the centres. There was a notably high standard of presentation of material in all centres selected for verification.

Evidence Requirements

All centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements. All evidence was easily accessible and easy to track and this applied to both written evidence and recorded video evidence. It is increasingly apparent that written evidence is being submitted and stored electronically in centres where a VLE is being employed for learning and teaching. Units which had been updated/revised were delivered without any evident issues. There are updates to some Units for delivery from the session 2013-14 onwards and these can be found on the SQA website.

Administration of assessments

All centre assessments were at an appropriate level. Standardisation was achieved through centres employing robust and well-documented internal verification (IV) procedures.

General feedback

Across the majority of centres, feedback to candidates was considerable and detailed throughout. There was a significant amount of evidence where the use of comments and ticks in written work and checklists supported the derived result. This is extremely important as it removes elements of ambiguity in marking and allows the verification process to progress smoothly. Candidates across centres were very enthusiastic about their Courses. VLEs, such as Moodle, are being used for delivery of some teaching and assessment material. Candidates gave very positive feedback about their studies.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ All centres offered very well laid-out Unit folders and candidate assessment material.
- ◆ There were good examples of detailed feedback to candidates.
- ◆ Recorded video evidence was generally very good throughout and easily accessible for verification.
- ◆ Use of VLE for learning and teaching enables the candidate to learn and apply new IT skills.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Centres have commented that they would benefit from SQA exemplar materials for all mandatory Units in HNC/D Musical Theatre. This is evident from discussion with assessors and verifiers. This would enhance standardisation across centres delivering the award.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| DG4T 34 | Acting and Performance: Graded Unit 1 |
| DG4V 35 | Acting and Performance: Graded Unit 2 |
| DP9P 34 | Musical Theatre: Graded Unit 1 |
| DP9R 35 | Musical Theatre: Graded Unit 2 |
| F3NN 34 | Technical Theatre: Graded Unit 1 |

General comments

In the majority of centres there appears to be a clear and accurate understanding of the national standards for Graded Unit 1 and 2 in *Acting and Performance* and Graded Unit 1 and 2 in *Musical Theatre*. SQA development visits are available, focusing on guidance on the delivery and assessment of Units and Graded Units.

The standards across the centres selected for verification appeared to be appropriate and consistent with HN level. Only one centre was verified for *Technical Theatre* — Graded Unit 1. The centre had a successful verification visit and national standards at HN were upheld.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In all cases, centres used the SQA assessment exemplar material for Graded Unit 1 in *Acting and Performance*, Graded Unit 1 and 2 in *Musical Theatre* and Graded Unit 1 in *Technical Theatre*. The centres adopted their own house style for delivery materials. There was some concern about the imbalance of workload between the Graded Units in *Acting and Performance* and *Musical Theatre*. These issues will be addressed during the current ongoing review of the Graded Units in both awards.

The high level of familiarity with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessments and exemplification materials continues to aid the standardisation of marking and recording of assessment across the centres. Some difficulty arose with centres who were offering the *Musical Theatre* Graded Units for the first time. In the main, these difficulties were caused by unfamiliarity with the exemplar materials. The centres were given guidance in the approach required in order to achieve consistency and standardisation of assessment. It is worth noting that, where an SQA development visit has taken place prior to delivery of the Graded Units, the centres have benefited from advice on best practice when delivering the Units.

Evidence Requirements

Overall, centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements. Candidate evidence was easily accessible and easy to track and

this applied to both written evidence and recorded video evidence. Occasionally, some issues arose over the difficulty in locating and identifying candidates on video, particularly where tape was the medium used for storage. Some centres offering *Musical Theatre* Graded Units for the first time misunderstood the Evidence Requirements at some points, and related marking required adjustment. A difficulty can arise for centres delivering Graded Units for the first time in establishing the correct level of applied marking for HN level; there is a tendency to mark subjectively.

There was an ongoing increasing use of a VLE for submission, marking and storage of written Evidence Requirements.

Administration of assessments

Standardisation was achieved through robust and well documented internal verification (IV) procedures. This was a dominant feature across a number of centres. Consistent and appropriate marking was achieved, sometimes through a system of double marking. Assessments were marked by two assessors, each with an individual score sheet, and an average mark taken from the two results. This was particularly beneficial in the marking of the practical assessment and logbooks in *Acting and Performance* and *Musical Theatre* Graded Units. There was evidence in some centres of IV taking place throughout the delivery of the Graded Units — once after Stage 1, once after Stage 2 and one after the final stage. This system enables issues to be picked up early on and corrected if necessary, rather than waiting until the end of delivery and discovering a problem in Stage 1.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates was generally significant and detailed throughout. Verifiers found that the effective use of comments in logbooks and checklists supported the derived mark. All centres offered fair access to assessment and learning support if required. Candidates who were interviewed displayed enthusiasm for their Course and lecturers.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ All centres offered very well laid-out Unit folders and candidate assessment material.
- ◆ Recorded video evidence was very good throughout and easily accessible for verification.
- ◆ Some centres used more than two assessors for the performances, thereby creating a realistic scenario for the mock audition.
- ◆ Double-marking was used to assist with appropriate level and standardisation of marking.
- ◆ Internal verification was carried out throughout the delivery of the Graded Units and this reduced potential problems that otherwise might not be picked up soon enough. This also assisted in maintaining standardisation.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Clear identification and tracking of candidates is required where video evidence is used, particularly if tape is used as the storage medium.
- ◆ Inexperienced assessors would benefit from guidance in the delivery and assessment of Graded Units.