



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2014  
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 *Drama and Theatre Arts* verification group there appeared to be, in by far the majority of centres, 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 appeared to be appropriate and consistent with HN level.

The following Units were verified across centres:

DG3L 35	Acting 2 Applying Skills in Performance
DG3T 34	Acting Methods and Practitioners
DG4N 34	Voice 1: Developing Skills
DG4R 35	Voice 2 Applying Skills in Performance
DG42 35	Drama Skills: Leading a Workshop
DG47 34	Production 1: Developing Skills
DG48 35	Production 2: Applying Skills in Performance
DP8T 34	Performance 1: Developing Skills for Musical Theatre
DP8V 35	Performance 2: Applying Skills for Musical Theatre
F1LN 35	Audition and Portfolio Skills
F1VB 35	Acting for Dancers: Advanced
H1KV 35	Acting 2: Applying Skills in Performance
H1KW 34	Voice 1: Developing Skills
H1KX 35	Voice 2: Applying Skills in Performance
H1KY 34	Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 1
H1L0 35	Vocal Techniques for Musical Theatre 2
H1L1 34	Singing Skills 1 for Musical Theatre
H1L3 35	Singing Skills for the Actor 2
H4SJ 34	Acting 1: Developing Skills
H4SK 34	Movement 1: Developing Skills
H4SL 35	Movement 2: Applying Skills in Performance
H4TP 34	Professional Development for Actors

## 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. The majority of centres adopted their own house style of the material for delivery. Centres and candidates appeared to respond well to the revised/updated Units in Acting and Performance and Musical Theatre.

Centres that 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 notable high standard of presentation of material in all centres.

## **Evidence Requirements**

Centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements. In most instances written and practical evidence was accessible and easy to track. Occasionally, some issues arose over the difficulty in locating and identifying candidates on video files. It is recommended that each centre has a clear approach to identifying candidates on video for external verification purposes.

Audio, within practical performances, was occasionally a problem. It is recommended that centres have an appropriate audio system where performers can be clearly heard. Often the inbuilt speaker on a laptop, for example, provides an insufficient level of sound to make clear and accurate judgements during the external verification process. There was significant use of a VLE in teaching and learning and written Evidence Requirements were being submitted and stored electronically. The use of a VLE was an aid to addressing issues relating to plagiarism and log-book submission deadlines. Units which had been revised/updated were delivered without any apparent issues.

## **Administration of assessments**

Centre assessments were at an appropriate level. Standardisation was achieved through centres employing robust and well documented internal verification procedures. Internal verification of assessments was generally active and robust.

## **General feedback**

Feedback to candidates was considerable and detailed across the majority of centres. 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. There was substantial evidence of positive feedback from candidates to their studies in terms of both course content and lecturers.

## **Areas of good practice**

- ◆ All centres offered very well laid out Unit folders and candidate assessment material.
- ◆ 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. This enables the candidate to learn and apply new IT skills. It also aids with issues such as plagiarism and submission deadlines of assessments.
- ◆ Some centres offered their candidates opportunities to perform in a professional environment with one centre offering candidates the opportunity to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

# 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. One Hold was placed on a centre and it should be noted that development visits are available where guidance can be offered in the delivery and assessment of the Graded Units and any other Unit. The standards across the centres appeared to be appropriate and consistent with HN level. Two centres were externally verified for Technical Theatre, Graded Unit 1. Both centres had a successful verification visit and national standards at HN were met.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In all cases, centres used the SQA assessment exemplar material for Graded Unit 1 and 2 in Acting and Performance, Graded Unit 1 and 2 in Musical Theatre and for Graded Unit 1 in Technical Theatre. The centres adopted their own house style of the material for delivery. Centres delivering the Technical Theatre: Graded Unit 1 felt that it was in need of revision and updating to keep in line with current working practices and terminology.

The high level of familiarity with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials continues to aid the standardisation of marking and recording of assessment across the centres.

## Evidence Requirements

Overall, centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements. Candidates' evidence was easily accessible and, in most instances, easy to track. Occasionally, some issues arose over the difficulty in locating and identifying candidates on video files. It is recommended that each centre has a clear approach to identifying candidates on video for external verification purposes. Audio was occasionally a problem. It is recommended that centres have an appropriate audio system where performers can be clearly heard. Often the inbuilt speaker on a laptop, for example, provides an insufficient level of sound to make clear and accurate judgements during the external verification process. There was substantial use of a VLE for submission, marking

and storage of written Evidence Requirements. The use of a VLE was an aid to addressing issues relating to plagiarism and log-book submission deadlines.

### **Administration of assessments**

Standardisation was achieved through robust and well documented internal verification procedures. This was a dominant feature across a number of centres. Consistent and appropriate marking was achieved sometimes through a double-marked system. 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 internal verification taking place throughout the delivery of the Graded Units — once after the Stage 1, once after Stage 2 and once after the final stage. This system enables problems to be picked up early on and corrected if necessary, rather than waiting until the end of the delivery to discover a problem in Stage 1.

### **General feedback**

Feedback to candidates continues to be generally significant and detailed throughout. There was a significant amount of evidence that the use of comments in logbooks and checklists supported the derived mark. All centres offered fair access to assessment and learning support if required. The 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.
- ◆ Some centres used more than two assessors for the performances thereby creating a realistic scenario for the mock audition.
- ◆ Double-marking was employed to assist with appropriate level and standardisation of marking.
- ◆ Internal verification was carried out throughout the delivery of Graded Unit and so reduced potential problems that otherwise might not be picked up soon enough. This also helped to maintain standardisation.

### **Specific areas for improvement**

- ◆ Clear identification and tracking of candidates is required where video evidence is used.
- ◆ Adequate sound systems should be in place that will allow a candidate's voice to be clearly heard during the external verification process.