



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014
Electrical Plant**

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

In session 2013–14, there were four external verification visits by three External Verifiers. Three of the external verification visits were conducted using the New Approaches to Quality Assurance external verification approach, while the other visit was undertaken using SQA's standard approach to quality assurance. All four externally verified centres were further education colleges. During these visits the following HN Units were externally verified (the figures in brackets indicate the number of centres in which each Unit was externally verified):

DN3W 34: Electricity Power Systems (3)
H01V 34: Electrical Safety (4)
H01T 34: Electrical Machine Principles (4)
DN4M 35: Electrical Standby Systems (1)
DN49 35: Transformers (2)

It is pleasing to report that all visits were successful. With regard to the three visits conducted using the New Approaches to Quality Assurance, this meant that significant strengths were identified in all four categories subject to external verification. In terms of the mainstream approach to external verification, this meant that no Holds were placed on any of the HN Units. This success confirms that all four centres were meeting national standards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

External Verifiers reported that centres were using up to date Unit specifications. Centres used both SQA assessment exemplar materials and assessment devised by centre staff. Marking schemes were accurate and complete. All assessment instruments satisfied the assessment specifications set out in Unit specifications, especially with regard to the number of knowledge and/or skills items that should be sampled. All assessments instruments externally verified were fair, valid, equitable and reliable. In general, alternative assessments were available for re-sit examination purposes.

In one centre, the External Verifier reported that assessment instruments for all Units had been prior verified, which ensured that assessments were valid, reliable, equitable and fair, with opportunities for re-sits if necessary.

Evidence Requirements

The External Verifiers found that in all four centres there was a clear understanding by assessors and Internal Verifiers of the Evidence Requirements in individual HN Units. This understanding was reflected in the accurate design of instruments of assessment and the quality of most candidate responses.

Administration of assessments

External Verifiers were content that all assessments instruments they saw were at the appropriate SCQF level and met the sampling of knowledge and/or skills requirements set out in each of the HN Unit specifications.

External Verifiers commented that assessors and Internal Verifiers were complying with their own centres' internal verification policies and procedures with regard to HN Units in Verification Group 274 — Electrical Plant. External Verifiers reported that, in the externally verified centres, appropriate sampling of candidate responses was taking place; there was clear evidence of second marking (normally in a different colour of ink), and internal verification documentation was generally completed well.

In one centre, to ensure that each candidate's Electricity Power Systems report was their own work, the assessor had used questioning techniques and had carried out online checks. Turnitin plagiarism detection software was being phased in by the department.

In another centre, the assessor asked candidates to submit initial drafts of their Electricity Power Systems report to him for comment. The assessor was able to make recommendations on what steps the candidates should take to improve their reports. The outcome of this was that the quality of the final reports was good or even very good.

General feedback

It is good to report that Electrical Plant assessors continue to provide clear and detailed written feedback to their candidates. In one centre the External Verifier observed that the assessor's feedback included annotating where candidates had not included units after numerical answers and where titles on axes of graphs were missing.

External Verifiers reported that they found no barriers to assessment. This reassured them that candidates have access to assessment instruments as and when they are ready to sit them.

Reviewing the External Verifier reports confirms that candidates generally feel well supported in their studies both by the lecturing staff and from support provided centrally by the centres.

Areas of good practice

The following good practice points were noted during external verification visits:

In one centre, assessment feedback sheets were provided to facilitate a system for the assessor to provide feedback to the candidate along with advice on how to prepare for re-assessment. These sheets also allow the candidate to provide comments back to the assessor, thus facilitating good communications between candidates and assessors/lecturers.

In another centre, the team use an excellent front sheet for their internal verification documentation, which spelled out who did what and who was responsible. This is a simple but very effective sheet.

A member of the delivering staff in one centre represents the centre on SQA's Qualification Support Team for Electrical Engineering.

One centre provided the External Verifier with a comprehensive list of Units and candidate groups prior to his visit, which allowed him to write a robust visit plan which helped to ensure a smooth flow of activity during the external verification visit.

In one centre, the External Verifier was particularly impressed by the standard (centre QA) documentation that the team used to deliver and monitor their courses. This documentation ensured internal verification was an integral part of the overall assessment process. Each assessor was given separate standard sheets to fill in for each class.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should ensure that any re-assessment instruments are based on a different sample of knowledge and/or skill items from those used in original assessments.