



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2016  
Maritime Studies**

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

There were five verification visits this year for HN Maritime Studies. Generally, the verifiers were satisfied that centres have a clear understanding of the national standards.

External verifiers identified a range of good practice among centres and suggested a number of recommendations to improve current practice.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Centres and assessors are familiar with the unit specifications which are available on SQA's website. They can be easily accessed by inserting the correct unit code into any internet search engine.

External verifiers checked that the assessment instruments met the required SCQF level of the unit. Centres have been urged to review their assessment instruments to ensure they reflect the correct level of evidence, whether in exams or coursework.

Centres were informed about SQA's prior verification service to ensure assessment instruments are valid, reliable and accurate for the level of the unit.

There is no national assessment bank for this qualification. However, many centres are happy that assessment instruments that they submit for prior verification are shared with other centres — indicated by ticking the box on application for prior verification.

## Evidence requirements

Centres provided external verifiers with the evidence requested in their visit plans.

SQA external verifiers reiterated that, on the day of the verification visit, evidence for verification must be made available for the period starting three weeks before the date when the verification visit was arranged and ending on the day of the verification visit.

The visit plan specifies what the external verifier needs from the evidence and the sampling process. Normally the external verifier selects a sample on the day from the evidence supplied by the centre.

## **Administration of assessments**

There are no issues to report on administration of assessments. External verifiers were content with the exam procedures and assignment/coursework submission.

## **General feedback**

General feedback on the day of the verification visit was well received by all centres. Centres saw the rationale behind the recommendations suggested by the external verifiers.

## **Areas of good practice**

- ◆ Initial diagnostic tests to ascertain student development needs
- ◆ Quality of learning resources available to students for deeper learning and application of the knowledge
- ◆ Formative assessments to help the students and teachers know where each student is at any stage of the programme
- ◆ Additional learning supports available to students
- ◆ Innovative ways and means of supporting students while they are not in the campus or they are at sea
- ◆ Pastoral support and one-to-one conversations available to students to support them in achieving their goal
- ◆ Good employer engagement to ensure students are work-ready on achieving the qualification

## **Specific areas for improvement**

- ◆ All students to know the appeals procedure with regard to their qualification
- ◆ Centre staff are to be conversant with 'SQA Guidance on Assessment' and 'Guidance to Centre for Qualification Verification'
- ◆ Assessment instrument to conform to the level of qualification as specified in the unit specification
- ◆ Centre staff to know their own internal verification procedures and to comply strictly with the laid down procedures
- ◆ Properly completed documentation with regard to assessment header sheet of internal verification documents