



**Higher National Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2016  
Music Business**

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

This report is based on five external verification visits conducted in 2016. There were three full HN qualification visits, one Music Business Graded Unit 1 (F507 34) and one NC qualification visit. From this verification sample most centres have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. Three of the visits had initial outcomes of 'significant strengths' and two of 'some strengths, some weaknesses'.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres visited were familiar with the unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials. In one centre, very thorough reviews of the assessment environment were taking place, including instruments of assessment and support materials. There were no actions relating to unit specifications, instruments of assessment or exemplification materials. In one centre support was needed as they did not have marking guidelines or checklists when applying the assessment. The student evidence produced in this centre did meet the requirements and had been judged accurately — the action to produce appropriate checklists was raised to support the assessor when marking to standard.

All centres that were visited displayed well-organised master packs containing unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials.

## Evidence requirements

From the verification sample, it would suggest that centres have a clear understanding of the evidence requirements for the units. One centre was directed to the October 2015 Update Letter which gives guidance as to what is expected as evidence for each outcome of Creative Industries Infrastructure (DJ21 34). In general, the evidence was well organised and candidate work was of high quality.

## Administration of assessments

In all centres in the verification sample, administration of assessments was robust with appropriate assessment conditions applied. Candidate interviews in one centre confirmed that the appropriate assessment conditions had been applied.

One centre had avoided duplication of assessment by integrating delivery and assessment for Creative Industries Infrastructure (DJ21 34) and Working in the Creative Industries (DJ3A 34). One centre was recommended to introduce further standardisation to integrate Creative Industries Infrastructure assessment for HN Music and HN Sound Production candidates.

## **General feedback**

Feedback to candidates was generally very good. On all visits candidates stated that the feedback they received was supportive and helpful. One centre gave candidates a weekly review class to give them feedback on their progress, to keep them updated with course news and to give them the opportunity to provide feedback themselves. All candidates from this centre, when interviewed, stated that the level of feedback was excellent and that regular feedback helped motivate them.

Another centre had an in-depth and comprehensive guidance system with detailed notes on regular discussions with candidates on their progress. Overall, guidance and candidate support was strong in the centres verified.

One centre had a detailed and thorough internal verification sampling plan. All centres verified had clear records of application of regular internal verification.

## **Areas of good practice**

There were several areas of good practice identified from the qualification verification visits. The integration of delivery and assessment of Creative Industries Infrastructure (DJ21 34) and Working in the Creative Industries (DJ3A 34) avoided duplication of assessment and delivery.

The weekly review class delivered in one centre was considered good practice as it kept all candidates up to date on their progress and gave candidates a regular chance to give feedback themselves.

In general, support provided to candidates was very good and a high standard of work was viewed on the verification visits.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

There were some specific areas for improvement:

- ◆ Centres should refer to the guidance in the October 2015 Update Letter on evidence requirements for Creative Industries Infrastructure (DJ21 34).
- ◆ Centres should ensure they have detailed marking guidelines/checklists to aid assessors and verifiers in matching evidence to SQA requirements and standardising marking.

# Higher National graded units

Titles/levels of HN graded units verified:

A single instance of Music Business: Graded Unit 1 (F507 34) was verified in 2016.

## General comments

From the sample of a single graded unit it is not reasonable to draw conclusions about the extent to which centres across the sector have a clear understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The visit was 'unsuccessful' but all the visits in the previous session had been successful.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The assessor from the centre sampled had some improvements to make in the understanding of the unit specification and the application of the exemplar instrument of assessment. The centre had included extra requirements in the assessing of the planning stage which seemed to relate to the assessment of Graded Unit 2. As a result, candidates had to provide more than was required for the planning stage and this diluted the quality of the responses in the sections that were required.

In the assessing of the development stage there could have been improvements made to the guidance of candidates. The candidates had not produced a portfolio of artefacts but had instead written about the importance within the music industry of the various areas to be included within the portfolio. As a result, there was an action for candidates to resubmit the portfolio with artefacts for all the relevant areas.

## Evidence requirements

The single centre verified for Music Business: Graded Unit 1 did not have a clear understanding of the evidence requirements for the planning or development sections of the graded unit. After being actioned to address this, the centre provided candidate evidence that was matched to SQA requirements. The centre has requested a development visit to ensure that delivery is robust in the coming session.

## Administration of assessments

In the single centre verified, assessment appeared to be administered appropriately although an action was set to add the duration or amount of time to complete the assessment to the assessment instrument. Checking of authenticity could have been improved by using plagiarism detection software. Internet searching will not compare candidate work to candidates from previous year groups or other centres.

## **General feedback**

Candidates in the single centre verified received excellent support for their course in general with detailed evidence of discussion of candidate progress and feedback from candidates on the course. As the candidates were required to generate a significant amount of evidence towards the end of their course it is suggested that the internal verification system could be evaluated in such cases to establish why there was a misinterpretation of the subject specification and why this reached the candidates as an assessment.

## **Areas of good practice**

In general, candidates were well supported in the centre verified with regular reviews of their progress. From the candidate work there was evidence of significant learning.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

Specific areas of improvement identified were:

- ◆ Internal verification should be a meaningful process to check that the assessment instrument corresponds to the unit specification and that evidence is matched to SQA evidence requirements. In the event of the internal verification system failing to highlight inconsistencies it is worth reviewing the system.
- ◆ The portfolio should contain artefacts that use the knowledge and skills from key areas identified in the unit specification, not a description of these areas.
- ◆ If extra guidance is needed on the delivery and assessment of a unit then the facility for a development visit by the SQA could be used.
- ◆ Authenticity checking can be improved by use of plagiarism detection software.