



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014
Physical Education: Sport and Leisure**

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

Many centres have been involved in the delivery of Higher National Units and Awards for a number of years, and in many cases centres have used their growing experience to good effect.

The award with the largest number of learners was the HNC/D Coaching and Developing Sport. This has undergone a major revision with the HND being used by most centres for the first time in the revised format. The great majority of centres had a good understanding of the national standard and kept a close working relationship with SQA and colleagues for support where required. Most centres had attended SQA support events during the academic year.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The award had been revised to ensure that it remained up to date and reflected the needs of the industry. The Units and ASP material reflected these needs and centres were generally familiar with the materials and changes.

Evidence Requirements

Most centres had grasped the changes made in the HN awards and were familiar with the changes and the reasons for these changes being made. There remained, however, one or two centres that could benefit by once again looking closely at the changes and the wording of Evidence Requirements in greater detail.

Administration of assessments

Again, the majority of centres were clear on the administration of assessments. Colleges are generally very familiar with internal verification needs and deal with this significant task well. There remains a small number of cases where the internal verification seemed to have been carried out with less robustness than desired, however. Centres should ensure that the process of internal verification is robust yet fully supportive with feedback being given to assessor(s) by the Internal Verifier.

There were no significant issues on the administration of assessments.

General feedback

The great majority of centres had embraced the revised Coaching award with confidence. There were a few centres delivering the Applied Sports Science award. This award has also been refreshed.

Centre staff had mostly attended update and standardisation events for the award and this time had been extremely valuable and allowed any issues to be explored in a spirit of co-operation and supported CPD for those present.

Assessors had in many cases given detailed feedback to candidates. This is essential as it is the main way that the Internal and the External Verifier can judge if assessments are being used fairly and are valid. However, the principal purpose of assessment is to show the learner what they did well and how they can further develop their skills and knowledge.

Learners who were interviewed reported very favourably. All expressed their appreciation of the staff in their centres and all expressed the fact that they felt confidence in their preparation for employment.

Access to assessment was also timed to suit the learners and had been carried out at appropriate times in the course.

A small number of centres had unclear policies with regard to re-assessment or had not fully complied with their own policy.

Areas of good practice

The quality of feedback as discussed above was of a high order in many centres and showed clearly both how and why an assessment decision had been reached. This supported the candidate well and allowed progress to be made.

Specific areas for improvement

There were one or two instances of centre assessors waiting until several coaching sessions had been evaluated then giving feedback. This delay can lead to the learner making the same error several times before it is picked up. There is a real need for the session reviews to be seen by the assessor regularly to ensure that any errors are not perpetuated.

With regard to re-assessment and marking guides, centres need to ensure that policies are clear and are carried out, and that marking guides do in fact offer detailed clarification on what is required.

Higher National Graded Units

Applied Sports Science HND
Coaching and Developing Sport HNC
Coaching and Developing Sports HND

General comments

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The award with the largest number of learners was the HNC/D Coaching and Developing Sport. This has undergone a major revision with the HND being used by most centres for the first time in the revised format. The great majority of centres had a good understanding of the national standard and kept a close working relationship with SQA and colleagues for support where required. Most centres had attended SQA support events during the academic year.

The Coaching Graded Unit changes were significant and were a major focus this academic year.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The award revision had been carried out to ensure that it remained up to date and reflected the needs of the industry. The Graded Units and ASP material reflected these needs and centres were generally familiar with the materials and changes.

It should be noted, however, that suggested 'word counts' are only advisory. Some learners will need more and some will use less than any suggested figure.

For Graded Units a mark or two may not be gained where the submission is lacking in substance and detail. This may be reflected in a low word count, but not necessarily. Likewise an over-long submission may suggest a lack of focus or unnecessary detail, which might again mean losing out on available marks. Learners should not be repeatedly penalised for being over or under word limits. As stated, these are advisory and not mandatory.

Evidence Requirements

Most centres had grasped the changes made in the HN awards and were familiar with the changes and the reasons for these changes being made. There remained, however, one or two centres that could benefit by once again looking closely at the changes and the wording of Evidence Requirements in greater detail.

Administration of assessments

Again, the majority of centres were clear on the administration of assessments. Colleges are generally very familiar with internal verification needs and deal with this significant task well. There remains a small number of cases where the internal verification seemed to have been carried out with less robustness than desired, however. Centres should ensure that the process of internal verification is robust yet fully supportive with feedback being given to assessor(s) by the Internal Verifier.

There were no significant issues on the administration of assessments.

General feedback

The great majority of centres had embraced the revised Coaching award with confidence. There were a few centres delivering the Applied Sports Science award and this award has also been refreshed.

Centre staff had mostly attended update and standardisation events for the award and this time had been extremely valuable and allowed any issues to be explored in a spirit of co-operation and supported CPD for those present.

Assessors had in many cases given detailed feedback to candidates. This is essential as it is the main way that the Internal and the External Verifier can judge if assessments are being used fairly and are valid. However, the principal purpose of assessment is to show the learner what they did well and how they can further develop their skills and knowledge.

Learners who were interviewed reported very favourably. All expressed their appreciation of the staff in their centres and all expressed the fact that they felt confidence in their preparation for employment.

Access to assessment was also timed to suit the learners and had been carried out at appropriate times in the course.

Areas of good practice

The quality of feedback as discussed above was of a high order in many centres and showed clearly both how and why an assessment decision had been reached. This supported the candidate well and allowed progress to be made. The topics for the research HND Coaching GU were in many cases imaginative and interesting and it was clear that learners had been well supported.

Specific areas for improvement

There was some evidence of the planning stage not totally addressing the actual project but focusing on the coaching sessions. The planning is for the project as a whole — not just the session aims but the project aims. Centres need to ensure that this is clearly understood by the learner before they even begin as it takes time and effort to correct and amend.

With regard to re-assessment and marking guides, centres need to ensure that policies are clear and are carried out and that marking guides do in fact offer detailed clarification on what is required.