



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2016
Stonemasonry**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

Higher National units

General comments

Only one centre was verified this session for the PDA in Stonemasonry. This was the centre's first time delivering the award and it was accomplished to a high standard. There were also various examples of good practice regarding aspects of this award.

The external verifier commented on the high standard of practical and knowledge-based assessments delivered.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The centre has a very experienced workforce with a good in-depth knowledge of the qualification. Units were assessed using the current Training and Assessment Programme (TAP) which staff are familiar with. The external verifier's discussion with centre staff confirmed their knowledge of the qualification.

Evidence requirements

The centre met with SQA's evidence requirements. The external verifier highlighted good practice for most of the Higher National units, the generic units, and in the support given to candidates. Assessment and internal verification requirements are working efficiently within the centre.

Administration of assessments

The centre used SQA's Training and Assessment Programme to deliver assessments. The external verifier confirmed that all assessments were valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.

Candidate portfolios were stored safely and securely to meet SQA recommendations.

Internal verification was 100% as this was the centre's first year of running the award.

General feedback

Candidates are inducted to assess their prior experience and attainment. From this information candidates are matched against the requirement of the award.

Candidates have the means to review and revise the performance criteria of the award with lecturers on a day-to-day basis. Candidate feedback was consistent and fair. All written feedback is stored within the TAP feedback pages.

Areas of good practice

The following points are taken from the external verifier's report and highlight good practice for session 2015–16.

- ◆ Induction process implemented to assess students' individual needs.
- ◆ Assessors and internal verifier have weekly contact and discussions.
- ◆ All assessment procedures were valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.

Specific areas for improvement

No areas require improvement.

SVQ awards

General comments

All centres visited in session 2015–16 had a very broad understanding of the qualifications they were delivering.

Almost every external verifier commented on how the centres are carrying out an excellent job regarding the delivery of the award and the standard of work completed by the candidates.

One verifier commented on the excellent facilities within one centre, which also had a robust health and safety policy.

All centres use SQA's current Training and Assessment Programme (TAP).

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Verifiers stated that centres have very experienced workforces with good in-depth knowledge of the qualification they are delivering. External verifiers also commented on the comprehensive CPD undertaken by members of staff to keep them up to date with current assessment and verification strategies.

Almost every centre had at least one member of staff who contributed to the writing or vetting of the current qualification. Their knowledge is disseminated through team/standardisation meetings so centres are very familiar with the current TAP.

Evidence requirements

All centres met with SQA's evidence requirements. External verifiers highlighted that the centres have a good understanding of all technical, generic units, H109 12 Construction Craft Competence Assessment (Phase test) and unit H10A 12 Construction Craft Employment Skills.

Some verifiers highlighted good practice in the support for candidates and praised the centres for high quality delivery techniques.

All centres that were verified received positive feedback on their assessment decisions. Some external verifiers commented on good practice in relation to assessment and internal verification requirements.

Visit reports confirmed that all assessment and internal verification processes adhere to SQA's policies.

Administration of assessments

Centres use SQA's TAP to deliver assessments.

Candidate portfolios were stored safely and securely to SQA's recommendations.

Some centres sample 100% of practical and written assessments due to the small number of candidates registered for the award. One centre also completes a pre-/mid-/post-delivery internal verification form to ensure assessment is valid, reliable, equitable and fair.

Verifiers commented on the positive constructive feedback assessors were relaying to the candidates.

General feedback

Candidate feedback was positive, consistent and fair. All written feedback for assessment and tasks is stored within the TAP feedback pages.

There were questions posed on the assessment procedure, the process and the general learning environment, quality of training and assessment packs, whether they felt the phase test was beneficial, and how they felt about the general learning environment. All candidate feedback was positive regarding all the questions.

Areas of good practice

The following points are taken from the external verifiers' reports and highlight good practice for session 2015–16:

- ◆ The internal verifier and assessor attended CPD on a regular basis — approximately one CPD event each month. Staff CPD was excellent and in line with the sector assessment strategy.
- ◆ There was an excellent ratio of one assessor to three candidates.
- ◆ Candidates were given access to all relevant information and practices to develop their skills and understanding.
- ◆ All assessments are signed off by the candidate, assessor and (through sampling) the internal verifier. This is also well supported with clear photographs of the 'start, middle and end' of practical elements of the coursework.
- ◆ The high level of CPD carried out at the centre shows staff are very committed to their level of knowledge, competence and experience.

Specific areas for improvement

No areas were highlighted for the requirement of improvement.