Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2016
Hairdressing

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

DN63 34 Hairdressing: Style Hair with the Use of Postiche and Padding
DN5V 34 Hairdressing: Colouring, Colour Correction and Innovative Design
DN5W 34 Hairdressing: Creative Designs in Haircutting
DN5Y 33 Hairdressing: Long Hair Design
DN5T 34 Hairdressing: Alter the Shape of Hair by Temporary and Permanent
         Techniques
DN5K 34 Hairdressing: History of Hairdressing
DN60 35 Hairdressing: Specialised Treatments: Hair and Scalp Conditions

External verification was carried out over five centres.

The delivery and assessment of the units were of a good standard within all
centres subject to external verification. From discussion with staff on visits it was
clear that assessors have a sound understanding of all units. The resulting
assessment evidence that was seen was innovative.

Centres were using SQA-developed ASPs (assessment support packs) for the
units that were verified. These were being used effectively.

One centre was not aware that an ASP was available for unit DN60 35
Hairdressing: Specialised treatments: Hair and Scalp Conditions. The external
verifier gave advice on this. The assessment developed by the centre for this unit
met the assessment requirements.

Centres presented performance evidence for practical units as paper-based
portfolios or digital portfolios. Written evidence was of a good standard and
marking showed that assessors were consistent in their decisions over all
centres.

Overall, assessment evidence was of a good standard and met the SCQF level
requirements.

External verification reports confirmed that centres continue to develop a clear
and accurate understanding of the requirements of the standards in the delivery
and assessment of the HN units. Internal standards are being maintained and
centres continue to build on the good practice. A number of centres are now
using electronic systems to hold all records of meetings, standardisation, yearly
reviews and internal verification.

All centres were able to demonstrate that they are familiar with the requirements
of the units being delivered. Documentation included master folders which
comprised unit specifications, ASP material, instruments of assessment, marking
guidelines, assessor checklists, and lesson plans.

Although not a requirement, most centres presented staff CPD folders. These showed that all staff delivering and assessing these units are current in their specialist skills and well qualified in delivery and assessment processes.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres were able to demonstrate that they are familiar with the requirements for the awards being delivered.

External verification visits show that all staff delivering and assessing all units have a good understanding of the unit specifications and assessment requirements. Instruments of assessment used are set out in the ASPs for each unit and were being used correctly. Assessment decisions showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and evidence requirements.

Documentation seen on each visit included unit specifications, assessments instruments, exemplification materials, and evidence of internal verification and assessment decisions. These were made available to external verifiers and indicated that the staff responsible for delivery and assessment are familiar with all aspects of the award.

Centres are using SQA assessment exemplars and suggested marking guides. This ensured a consistent approach is being carried out and a consistent standard of assessment decisions was shown to be in place across the centres.

Materials seen included:

♦ written papers
♦ projects
♦ completed assessor observation checklists
♦ photographic evidence supporting practical assessments

Evidence requirements

External verification reports show a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of the units subject to verification. Marking of learners' evidence, was being carried out effectively and met unit level requirements. Evidence of this was shown through standardisation meeting records, formal and informal, team meetings, internal verification records, and supportive feedback from internal verifiers.

Assessor feedback was ongoing and showed support was in place to guide candidates.

Centres are using the SQA-developed assessment exemplars and these are being used correctly.

In a number of centres integration of units had been completed in a logical manner ensuring learners were not over burdened with assessments where these could be merged. Where this had not been carried out advice was given to support centre staff.

A number of centre staff delivering and assessing these units and award have attended standardisation network meetings at SQA, which gives opportunities for discussion and to share issues and good practice. This was discussed in a number of centres and feedback from assessors was favourable.

Administration of assessments

ASP materials are being used in all centres to support assessments. It was seen that this material assisted with the consistent application of standards as set out in the unit specifications. Centres that were verified were assessing units to the required standards and SCQF level for each unit.

Assessors integrate units where appropriate. This enhances the learner experience by avoiding repetition and over-assessment. All centres have a well structured assessment schedule which gives learners information and enables staff to deliver the units within the award effectively. Centres have different delivery modes but all were being carried out in a logical manner to meet each centre's needs.

Internal verification procedures were effective and ensure standards are being adhered to. A number of centres have changed internal verification systems and recording is now store electronically. These systems were seen as good practice.

Positive feedback was provided at the end of visits but in some areas advice was given to support centres.

General feedback

Learners who were interviewed were motivated and enthusiastic and although at times they felt challenged they were enjoying the course. They all felt that their assessors supported them throughout. All felt that the skills they had developed in the units within the course gave them confidence in the practical elements and a better understanding for the portfolio for the graded unit.

In all centres access to assessments clearly followed 'equal access for all'. Within all centres visited the support systems that were in place were excellent and ensure that all learners have access to support and individual help when needed to complete their course successfully.

One area that had caused issues in some centres was ensuring creativity was shown for units in colouring and cutting. This was, in the main, due to model choice. Where this was identified discussion took place to provide methods of overcoming this.

When electronic evidence was presented centre staff ensured external verifiers had access to the technology needed to view it.

Areas of good practice

♦ PowerPoint presentations were used to present unit evidence. This was not only professional in quality but also made good use of digital images which can be used during interviews with employers to present individual learners' skills.

♦ In a number of centres excellent online internal verification systems are used to ensure a comprehensive approach to monitoring all units delivered so all aspects of the quality process are monitored for assessment and internal verification.

♦ Candidates taking part in charity events to showcase the skills they have learned.

♦ The use of microscope equipment to identify hair and scalp conditions. Photographs of the identified hair and scalp conditions show how the professional services are being carried out within the Specialist Treatment unit.

♦ Step-by-step design plans in units DN5W 34 and DN5V 34 showed a good understanding of assessment requirements in the design aspects of these units.

♦ Integration of the units 'Creative Designs in Haircutting' and 'Colouring, Colour Correction and Innovative Design' ensure that evidence for these units is gathered in a logical manner.

♦ Research skills used in projects for History of Hairdressing show learners have a good knowledge and understanding of this unit.

♦ The librarian in one centre delivers a workshop on referencing which gives learners a good understanding for requirements in a number of units.

♦ All materials are on Mahara, except written papers, and this helps towards sustainability.

Specific areas for improvement

♦ For units in Cutting and Colouring, review client consultation records to ensure clear evidence is shown on technical skills.

♦ Review Cutting and Colouring folios to ensure they clearly reflect skills carried out.

♦ Model choice to reflect styling in Creative Cutting and Colouring.

♦ Integration of units where possible and logical.

Higher National graded units

Titles/levels of HN graded units verified:

F5DM 34 Graded Unit 1

General comments
External verification was carried out over four centres.

The delivery and assessment of this graded unit were of a good standard within centres that were subject to external verification. The learners' understanding of this graded unit was good, and the resulting assessment evidence seen was innovative.

Centres are using the SQA-developed ASP (assessment exemplar, and marking guidelines). These are being used effectively. The TAP (Training and Assessment Pack) developed by SQA is being used in most centres. This is the second year that learners have had access to it. Staff felt it had been a benefit to learners, giving a better understanding of evidence required for the grades given in each part of the graded unit: planning, development and evaluation.

The content of the graded unit gives learners the opportunity to showcase their skills learned from the mandatory units, and the final portfolio of evidence available confirmed this. Learners' portfolio evidence showed good research to support their choice of company for the portfolio. The planning stage, development stage and resulting photographic evidence was of a good standard throughout all centres. The evaluation stage of the unit has continued to improve — this aspect has given candidates challenges as evaluative writing is not an area many are familiar with. In some centres candidates had been given workshops on evaluative writing. This had helped and was shown as good practice. Centres were presenting performance evidence in different formats, both paper-based portfolios and digital portfolios.

Assessment evidence was of a good standard and met the SCQF level requirements.

Although not a requirement, most centres presented staff CPD folders. These showed all staff delivering and assessing these units are current in their specialist skills and well qualified.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials
External verification visits show that staff have a good understanding of the graded unit specification and assessment requirements. The instruments of assessment that were used are set out in the ASP unit exemplar and marking guidelines.

Assessment decisions made showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and evidence requirements, and were consistent across the centres.

Exemplification materials: evidence seen in the portfolios of evidence were of a good standard and met the needs of the SCQF levels of the graded unit being delivered and assessed.

As part of the requirements of the graded unit it is marked at planning and development stages. Recorded evidence of feedback to candidates on review records shows good support in place for candidates from assessors.

Evidence requirements

External verification reports show a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of the graded unit and that grading of candidate evidence was being carried out effectively.

Evidence of this was shown through standardisation meeting records, formal and informal, team meetings, and supportive feedback from internal verifiers. Evidence was shown through candidate portfolios; these were presented in both standard and digital format. All portfolios contained evidence of planning, development and evaluation. Assessor feedback was ongoing throughout and showed support was in place to guide candidates.

Centres are using the SQA-developed assessment exemplar and marking guides to show evidence requirements for the graded unit. Centre staff delivering and assessing this unit had attended standardisation network meetings at SQA (which looked at a standard approach for grades given in this unit), and were very clear about what needed to be achieved for the A, B, C grades given in this unit.

The TAP developed for this unit was discussed at the network meeting and how well this had benefited learners.

Administration of assessments

All assessment evidence presented met with the SCQF level of the graded unit being delivered. The graded unit is introduced at different times in centres, but as this unit is supported by skills learned throughout the session evidence is generated near the end of the award delivery.

Assessments outcomes were delivered in a logical sequence. Assessment decisions were recorded and standardisation minutes show that all assessors were following a standard approach to assessment.

Internal verification was robust in the centres visited, and records of this showed that assessment decisions over all assessors were consistent. Overall, feedback from internal verifiers to assessors was supportive. All centres carry out double marking of the portfolio evidence to ensure a fair and robust grading decision is in

place, this ensures grades given meet the requirements of the marking guidelines.

All centres use the SQA-developed assessment exemplar and marking guide for the graded unit ensuring a consistency of assessors' decisions over the sector. Outcomes are assessed at both planning and development stages of this unit, and feedback given, then evaluation is assessed at final submission. Candidates cannot progress unless each stage of planning and development is assessed and meets the requirements of each outcome. Interviews are carried at each stage by assessors and recorded, feedback is given to candidates. Evidence of this seemed to be carried out effectively.

Where centres have merged, there was evidence of standardisation meetings taking place to ensure a standard approach is being carried out over all centres.

General feedback

External verifiers' reports show assessment feedback to learners was supportive. Recorded evidence of assessors' reviews and feedback to learners was available in all centres. This was informative and showed support and encouragement to all candidates, ensuring fair access was available for all.

Learners who were interviewed were motivated and enthusiastic and all enjoyed the challenge the graded unit offered. They all felt that their assessors supported them throughout. Learners were enjoying showcasing their skills through the presentation of their portfolio evidence. The portfolios showed innovation in the evidence presented. All learners interviewed felt that the skills they had developed were giving them confidence in the practical elements of the course, and a better understanding when creating their portfolio for the graded unit. All learners felt that the portfolio evidence within their graded unit could be used to support progression to employment.

In all centres, access to assessments was clearly following 'equal access for all'. Within all centres visited, support systems in place were excellent and ensure that all learners have access to support and individual help when needed to complete their course successfully.

The evidence seen showed that the graded unit is being carried out to a good standard. The use of digital portfolios in a number of centres showed both good IT skills and professional images. When electronic evidence was presented centre staff ensured external verifiers had access to the technology needed to view it.

Areas of good practice

♦ Areas where additional marks are given for the grading of graded unit are clearly identified on the assessor checklist.
♦ Well-presented portfolios of evidence in electronic format.

- Learners carry out internal and external events giving them opportunities to showcase the skills they have learned.
- Internal verification systems in electronic format are easy to track and clearly show the feedback given.
- Learners receive an e-mail with customised feedback informing them of the grade achieved.
- In a number of centres there was a wide choice of companies for the graded unit.
- Workshops from product manufacturers help expand learners' knowledge.
- Consistent and accurate application of marking given.
- High standard of practical work displayed.

Specific areas for improvement
- Model choice to suit company chosen.
- Evaluative report writing expanded to show evaluation not reflection.
- Ensure learners are not led to choice of companies for graded unit to ensure individuality and creativity.
- Presentation of hard copy portfolios — ensure formatting shows professionalism.

SVQ awards

General comments

G9EC 21: SVQ Hairdressing and Barbering Level 1
G9EY 22: SVQ Hairdressing Level 2
G9EG 22: SVQ Barbering Level 2
G9EF 23: SVQ Hairdressing Level 3
GK73 21: SVQ Hairdressing and Barbering at SCQF level 4
GK74 22: SVQ Hairdressing at SCQF level 5
GK76 23: SVQ Hairdressing at SCQF level 6

This year centres were delivering the lapsing SVQs (so that learners can complete qualifications) and the new SVQs at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 in both Hairdressing and Barbering.

External verification visits took place over 21 centres, colleges, training centres and private providers, where SVQs are being delivered and assessed.
A number of centres have learners completing the lapsing awards and also learners on the new awards.

All centres visited had a good understanding of the SVQs being delivered. All centres were delivering and assessing to the requirements of the assessment strategy and national standards. Each centre had a copy of the new assessment strategies.

Centres visited were using SOLAR online mandatory questions (marked online) to generate evidence for the mandatory elements of all units in the awards as required by guidelines for the lapsing awards.

For the new awards SOLAR online assessments were being used for all knowledge evidence. These are marked online so a consistent approach is in place. Feedback from centre staff was positive — they thought the online approach was helpful and learners were enjoying this format for assessment.

Development visits took place to assist centres with accessing and using the new SOLAR assessments and also the new portfolio which is pre-marked to show knowledge requirements.

Learners who were interviewed showed a good understanding of the requirements. Most have personal development plans and assessment schedules. Centres are presenting performance evidence is a number of formats, these are paper-based and digital portfolios.

Most centres are using Moodle or other online medium for delivery of theory notes. This is proving to be beneficial to candidates who can access this remotely.

All staff had CPD folders. These showed that all staff delivering and assessing these units are current in their specialist skills and take part in both in house and external events for CPD. Most staff delivering and assessing the SVQs held either D32, 33 and 34 or A and D or new LD units as required by the assessment strategies. Where these are not yet in place the assessors who are undertaking these units are mentored, and assessments are cross-signed by an experienced assessor.

Centre staff records show, in the main, that CPD is taking place, meeting the requirements of the assessment strategy. Advice was given where this needed to be expanded to ensure CPD folders showed clearly hours completed and skills updated. There were changes to the assessment strategy for the new awards and centres were advised of how this impacted on assessor qualification needs. Where this was going to create challenges advice was given by the EV and actions to ensure this was resolved.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

From evidence provided within EV reports, all assessors delivering and assessing both the lapsing and new awards are familiar with the requirements of each award. Evidence from all centres subject to external verification shows staff delivering and assessing SVQs are familiar with the needs of each unit within all the awards verified, and assessment decisions meet the evidence requirements. Instruments of assessment used and assessment decisions made showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and evidence requirements. Materials used to underpin knowledge and understanding were of a good standard and supported candidate learning.

Where centres were delivering the new awards feedback from assessors was positive as all felt the new portfolios and online assessments were a benefit to learners, and saved time as marking is online. Centres using the new material had portfolios in electronic format and downloaded hard copies. All centres that were visited were using these effectively.

Questions were asked about storage of electronic material. EV feedback was that this was dependent on centre systems.

Evidence requirements

All staff delivering and assessing the SVQ units and awards (both lapsing and new) in Hairdressing and Barbering are familiar with all evidence requirements to meet the national standards.

All centres have a copy of the assessment guidelines and assessment strategies for both the lapsing and new awards and were aware of the changes within these for each unit in the award being delivered. Assessors had access to all materials required for the units and awards they were delivering and assessing.

Evidence seen for the lapsing award consisted of SOLAR mandatory questions and non-mandatory evidence, which was shown through written questions, projects, assignments, client consultation records, personal statements, photographs of completed work and completed portfolios of observed assessments.

Evidence for the new award was available through SOLAR online questions covering both mandatory and non-mandatory knowledge, client consultation records and portfolios of evidence covering practical performance and marked by assessor when performance was completed. These are being used effectively.

Staff in centres were well informed through team, internal verification and standardisation meetings. Feedback to assessors from internal verifiers was informative and support systems were in place for new assessors. This was evidenced in the form of meetings, induction packs, team teaching and mentoring.

Administration of assessments

Evidence from all visits shows that centre staff have a good understanding of the awards they are delivering. All centre staff felt that the awards are clear and evidence requirements seen met the needs of the hairdressing industry. All centres visited were very clear on the types of evidence needed to comply with assessment needs and assessment strategies.

Centre-devised material used to supplement evidence was appropriate and fit for purpose. Assessment instruments used included practical performance, written closed-book mandatory questions, projects consultation records, oral questions, assignments, personal statements, witness testimonies and photographic evidence to show competence for the units and awards being delivered within the lapsing award(s).

Practical assessments are carried out in line with the assessment strategy, within all centres. Where colleges are delivering the awards, the salons used gave a realistic work environment. These were seen to be of a high standard and reflected industry needs.

Evidence presented for external verification included pre-delivery verification, records of internal verification carried out (including any actions to be carried out), internal verification systems and schedules, records of assessment feedback to assessors, standardisation meetings and yearly reviews of learning and teaching, CPD and staff qualification documentation (paper-based and electronic), and centre policies on equal access, equality and diversity.

Internal verification processes in most centres was robust. Where assessments evidence did not fully meet requirements internal verification had identified this, recorded it, and put actions in place to ensure it was rectified within a given time scale then signed by both assessor and internal verifier.

Internal verification systems differ between centres and a number are now held in electronic format. Overall, these were clear to follow and showed robust evidence of procedures in place to ensure the quality of all assessors' assessment decisions for the awards being delivered. Most internal verifiers hold the required qualifications. Where these qualifications had still to be completed, those registered for the qualifications had times set for completion in line with the assessment strategy requirements. This was recorded in EV reports.

Within merged colleges, internal verification is now being standardised over the merged centres to ensure all campuses follow a standard approach.

All centres have assessment planning schedules in place and it would appear from feedback that all learners have a clear understanding of assessments and timing of assessments within their award. Learners who were interviewed and observed felt they were well supported throughout their course of study.

Learners on the new awards felt that the SOLAR questions and new portfolios to cover all knowledge and practical performance were beneficial and clearer to understand.

Centres delivering the new awards are using SOLAR online assessment material which is marked online. Feedback from staff was positive — they felt it was a great advantage and ensured consistency over all assessment decisions.

General feedback

All centres — colleges, training centres and private trainers — are delivering the award successfully, and all have a good range of clients ensuring learners can carry out services required for the units and award of the SVQ. Evidence from external verification reports shows that all centres are following the strategies of the awards being delivered.

Within one training centre, where learners are employed and attend on a day-release basis, the centre employs both trainers and assessors in the delivery of the awards. Two staff are always involved in the learning process. The centre has a good range of clients and services are varied and meet all areas of the units within the award. The training salon gives a good realistic experience of the hairdressing industry needs.

Learners who were interviewed were motivated and enthusiastic and said they were enjoying the course. All felt that their assessors supported them throughout. All learners interviewed on the new award using the new material were positive in their feedback and felt it gave them clear information on requirements for assessment.

In all centres, access to assessments was clearly following 'equal access for all'. Within all centres visited the support systems that were in place were excellent and ensured that all learners have access to support and individual help when needed to complete their course successfully.

When electronic evidence was presented centre staff ensured external verifiers had access to the technology needed to view it.

Areas of good practice

♦ In one centre a fashion show is conducted each March, allowing candidates to work alongside student make-up artists and photographers. This enables the candidates to explore their creativity whilst working to a design brief and interacting with others as part of a large team.

♦ Learners take part in professional training sessions for new products and watch demonstrations of current trends in hairdressing.

♦ Learners take part in internal and external events to showcase the skills they have learned.

♦ One centre intends to offer a PDA in Photography to aid learners when they photograph their practical work and to produce a more 'professional' image.

♦ A learner's self-assessment matrix allows the candidate to monitor their own assessment and seek help if targets are not being met.

♦ In a number of colleges full-time candidates undertake work experience on a weekly basis.

♦ One centre has two classroom assistants, both of whom hold their SVQ Level 3 Hairdressing award. Their role is to support learning and teaching in practical sessions.

♦ Level 1 learners integrated with Level 2 and Level 3 learners facilitating the development and assessment of skills in a realistic manner.

♦ Level 1 learners have the opportunity to participate in a work placement, enabling them to experience 'salon life'.

♦ Level 2 day-release learners have an extended day, reflecting industry practice and giving additional opportunities for practical assessment.

♦ Candidate review sheets are sent to employers on regular basis for each candidate to show progress. Areas where the centre feels the candidate needs support from the employer can be highlighted and the salon owner can send comments back to the trainer.

♦ A good overview sheet that shows clearly to candidates how many and what practical services are still to be completed.

Specific areas for improvement

♦ In once centre standardisation was discussed and advice was given on how to expand internal verification across all sites.

♦ Record both SQA and NOS unit numbers on internal verification documentation to ensure clarity.

♦ Encourage Level 2 and 3 learners to fully complete areas on client consultation records where insertion of narrative is required, in particular client requirements and aftercare advice sections.

- H9CP 04 (SKACH9) Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques: Encourage learners to develop and use a cutting vocabulary which can be used to exemplify the techniques identified and effects created.

- H9CR 04 (SKACH10) Creatively colour and lighten hair: Ensure colour placement is clearly identified in narrative inserted.

- Standardisation meeting to discuss the practical assessment for units H9CR 04 (SKACH10) Creatively colour and lighten hair and H9DA 04 (SKACH11) Hair colour correction services.

- SVQ Level 1 — Record clearly where evidence has been cross-referenced and holistically assessed.

- SVQ Level 2 — Encourage learners to give relevant, specific aftercare advice to every client.

- H9CE 04 (SKACHB9) Advise and consult — record unit cross-reference clearly and accurately to enable evidence to be easily tracked.

- Use index evidence numbers which reflect new unit numbers as opposed to lapsing unit numbers for clarity.

- Assessors and internal verifiers to undertake training to meet the occupational competence requirements in the Assessment Strategy for the new SVQ 2 in Barbering at SCQF 5 (GK75 22).

- Assessors and internal verifiers to undertake CPD activities which will support specific Barbering units being delivered.

- Encourage learners to supplement aftercare advice recorded on the client consultation record.

- Ensure CPD records show clearly the hours completed and skills learned, and how these will be used.