



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2015
Sound Production**

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 10 external verification visits. There were six full qualifications visits and four Graded Unit 2 visits.

Across the sector most centres visited had significant strengths with two centres receiving action points. Therefore this would suggest that from this external verification sample that centres, in the main, have a clear and accurate understanding of the national standard for HN Sound Production.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

From this external verification sample it appears that assessors are familiar with Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification material since most had significant strengths. Almost all centres maintained up-to-date master packs contained Unit specifications, instruments of assessment, model answers and checklists, candidate records and internal verification forms and materials.

From the sample, almost all assessments were valid, reliable, equitable and fair and were constructed in accordance with Unit specifications and SQA requirements. Almost all evidence verified was deemed to be accurately and consistently marked in accordance with detailed and thorough marking schemes.

Evidence Requirements

The sampled evidence would suggest that in the main there is a clear understanding of the evidence requirements for Unit(s).

Generally, for the Units verified, there was evidence of pre-delivery checks and internal verification throughout the term, including sampling of student work. This complies with SQA guidelines and standards.

Administration of assessments

From the sample it was clear that assessment is generally at the appropriate level. In some centres delivering staff have used SQA exemplars where available and ensured that these, as well as their own instruments of assessment, match the knowledge and skills required for all Outcomes for each Unit.

There were, in this sample, fairly robust internal verification systems in place.

Curriculum planning, self-evaluation and review was also generally evident showing how learning, teaching and the assessment process would be implemented with dates set for targets to be met throughout the year.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates was, in the main, very good, constructive and fair. Feedback from candidates in these centres was also very positive, where interviewed candidates stated that they were enjoying their course and study. Candidates generally felt that they were well supported in all aspects of their course and, in the main, had access to excellent resources and excellent teaching.

Access to assessment was thought to be fair for all. In each of the sampled centres candidates were in the one facility for their studies, therefore the process was easily managed.

It is clear that candidates across the sector are working conscientiously and very hard, and, in some cases, producing exceptional work. They are supported throughout their studies by teaching teams that are committed and very experienced.

Areas of good practice

In general, course teams are highly motivated and well informed about the assessment and internal verification procedures. They are committed to producing high quality learning environments and learning and teaching materials, and to producing and managing rigorous and robust assessments. Teams are clearly giving serious consideration to the planning of integrated approaches to assessment at both Unit content level as well as integration across programmes, a factor that should be significant to the experience of every candidate.

Centres are generally very well equipped and up to date and this affords candidates an excellent learning experience. Tutors/assessors are generally active themselves in the audio/sound production industry, this is especially true in the case of part-time staff. This factor, coupled with visiting lectures from industry professionals, brings the industry into the classroom and ensures access to the latest information as well as access to these professionals. Candidates are also assessed in a workplace environment outwith their centre in, eg theatres.

Many centres appear to be using Turnitin software to ensure that evidence from candidates is their own work.

A number of good practice areas were identified.

Specific areas for improvement

Delivering lecturers, assessors, internal verifiers and college management are striving to ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement in their centres. It is hoped that any recommendations highlighted in the EVs' reports will support this.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

DR2R 35 Sound Production: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Graded Unit 1 was verified but allocated under Music (63), therefore see the HN Music internal assessment report for comments.

General comments

This report is based on three Graded Unit 2 visits.

Across the sector all centres visited had significant strengths with no action points recorded. Therefore this would suggest, from this external verification sample, that centres have a reasonably clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standard for HN Sound Production Graded Unit 2.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors are familiar with the Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials as well as the SQA online support material for this Graded Unit.

From the sample, all assessments were valid, reliable, equitable and fair and were constructed in accordance with Unit specifications and SQA requirements. All evidence verified was deemed to be accurately and consistently marked in accordance with marking schemes.

Evidence Requirements

Due to the timing of EV visits for Graded Units the key requirement for verification is that the planning and developing stages are complete with at least an indicative mark allocated. This generally means that the evaluation stage is not complete and is rarely verified.

In this Graded Unit the candidates prepare a presentation to be delivered in a job interview situation and to be ready for interview questions.

The evidence verified indicates that there is reasonably clear understanding of the evidence requirements for the Unit. However, the focus of the presentation could generally be more about a 'pitch' as opposed to demonstrating knowledge from the mandatory Units. This is the point of this Unit because by pitching, eg say, a funding opportunity, knowledge and skills would have to be shown without saying 'I did this in this Unit' or 'I used a... piece of equipment'. Also, candidates should use sufficient audio to exemplify skills. The reason for using particular

recordings would be highlighted by the candidate therefore showing their skills. How they did it and what they used becomes secondary.

The evidence presented in centres was generally comprehensive and also included accompanying portfolios and candidate PowerPoint slides. Video evidence on both hard drives and videotape with playback equipment was also available.

Logbook entries were not always as intended, ie as a mechanism to help candidates develop through reflection as well as helping them to build a routine where they track progress and achievement.

Administration of assessments

Assessments in centres are administered well, are at the appropriate level, and decisions are fair and consistent. There appears to be robust systematic verification procedures in place. There is also good recording of mentoring interviews.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates was, in the main, very good, clear and consistent. Feedback from candidates in the sampled centres was also very positive. Candidates generally felt that tutor support was very useful, timely and constructive. Candidates felt very supported and were usually very complimentary of the teaching teams and environments in which they were learning.

Access to assessment was thought to be fair for all. In the sampled centres candidates were in one facility for their studies, and the process was easily managed.

It is clear that candidates across the sector are working conscientiously and very hard. The Graded Unit is an opportunity to pull together skills and to pitch and sell oneself. Some candidates excelled and produced high quality work and delivered exceptional presentations. Candidates are supported throughout their studies by teaching teams that are committed and very experienced.

Areas of good practice

In general, course teams are highly motivated and well informed about assessment and internal verification procedures. They are committed to ensuring their candidates gain a high quality experience. Teams are clearly giving serious consideration to the planning and delivery of this Graded Unit.

Centres are generally very well equipped and up to date and this affords candidates an excellent learning experience.

A number of good practice areas were identified.

Specific areas for improvement

Delivering lecturers, assessors, internal verifiers and college management are striving to ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement in their centres. It is hoped that any recommendations highlighted in the EVs' reports will support this.