

Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Moderator Report

2006

Subject: Mathematics & Statistics (CG 142)

Sector Panel: Engineering, Science and Mathematics

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on moderation which has taken place within Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

NATIONAL UNITS

(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS MODERATED

E94110	Mathematics: Business Numeracy
E94210	Mathematics: Engineering Numeracy
E9G910	Mathematics: Construction Numeracy 1
E9GA10	Mathematics: Construction Numeracy 2
E9AJ10	Mathematics: Statistics 1

E9XD10	Core Mathematics 2
D11T10	Core Mathematics 3
D11V11	Core Mathematics 4
D11W11	Mathematics: Analysis/Algebra 1

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

- The majority of candidates felt well supported by their centre.
- Assessment evidence was in line with descriptors.
- In several centres, poor quality materials were still being used.
- Most candidates showed high performance standards.
- However, a large drop out rate was evident in many centres with several explanations such as candidates being started at an inappropriately high level.
- In several centres, moderators found a lack of clarity of where marks are being awarded. Centres should show clearly the marks being awarded and this should be shown at correct points on scripts. A clearer indication of marks awarded at each stage of the candidate answer is beneficial to candidates and for both internal and external moderation.
- Some candidate project work was of a high standard. More often, however, projects sampled were very structured with little evidence of the planning stages or the analysis and communication of findings. The purpose of the investigation must be seen as more than simply a series of calculations.
- Some drawing work was of a poor standard.
- Internal moderation still needs to be improved by some centres particularly the recording of monitoring and the timing of monitoring activity.
- In centres where there was evidence of a rigorous internal moderation system, external moderation was straightforward. This highlights the advantages to all centres of implementing rigorous internal moderation procedures. In most centres, there was evidence that procedures for internal moderation are in place but often a lack of actual evidence of internal moderation activity having taken place.
- Two centres thought that internal verification was still optional and had no procedures in place.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good Practice

- One centre had produced an excellent student handbook for D11V11, and also a detailed marking scheme allowing both good remediation and excellent post assessment feedback.
- Another centre had produced an excellent mathematical handbook valuable in the delivery of D11W11. This handbook would also be valuable for the delivery of several other units and is to be commended as good practice.
- Some centres had developed assessments in ‘write on’ format for several units. This improved the setting out of candidates’ work and is to be encouraged as good practice.

Areas for Development

- Centres should encourage candidates to show all working.
- On two occasions, for D11V11, it was observed that centres were using multiple versions of each assessment to discourage malpractice but with only one general mark scheme to cover all. This resulted in some inaccurate marking in the scripts sampled. A detailed marking scheme must be provided for all assessments and be made available to external moderators.
- Again in D11V11, care should be taken with sketching Trig. Graphs, indicating clearly scales on both axes.
- In E94110, LO4, it is important to note that the drawing of line graphs and not bar charts is required.
- Consideration should be given by all centres to using individual candidate recording sheets to facilitate discussion with candidates as to whether or not they have met threshold requirements.
- Often a varied approach to assessment and moderation was observed when a centre was operating on more than one site. Care should be taken to standardize expectations, materials, performance levels and moderation across sites.
- Internal moderation often did not pick up some obvious errors on candidate scripts.
- Some centres need to improve the rigour with which they apply their internal moderation procedures. It is recommended that:
 - records of meetings to discuss this should be kept
 - evidence of internal moderation should be recorded on candidate scripts.

A clear moderation policy, and regular team meetings of staff who deliver maths units, would result in greater standardization of marking and moderation activities.