National Qualifications 2014
Internal Assessment Report

Skills for Work: Creative Industries

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

National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

Skills for Work: Creative Industries (SCQF level 5) C276 75

Creative Industries: An Introduction	FH60 11
Creative Industries: Skills Development	FH61 11
Creative Industries: The Creative Process	FH62 11
Creative Industries: Creative Project	FH63 11

General comments

During visiting verification it was apparent that the work produced by candidates across all centres was found to be consistent with the expected standards and, in most cases, exceptionally high. This indicates clearly that the delivering centres have an informed and accurate understanding of national standards and how they should be applied. It was also noted that standards set by assessors and centres were found to be consistently high.

It was observed that the work produced across all centres was consistently meeting or exceeding national standards whilst meeting the needs of learners.

A variety of approaches to delivery were observed; a range of skills were developed; and a diverse range of interesting creative projects were produced. Collaboration between teaching departments was found in several centres and in a few centres the Course was being partially delivered by staff from departments such as English, Technology and Computing. In some centres, departments such as English, Technology and Computing exclusively delivered the award, highlighting the flexibility and possibilities offered.

It was evident that centres had a clear idea of the aims and intentions of the award and this was reflected in the work produced by the majority of candidates.

All centres visited this year had successful external verification visits.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres were able to demonstrate their use of the Arrangements document to assist with the context for delivery. Master folders were made available to all External Verifiers, which contained all relevant documentation including Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment, exemplification materials, evidence of internal verification and assessment decisions.

Most centres sampled this session were making good use of National Assessment Bank (NAB) material and candidate evidence was found to be consistent across candidates and centres. It is clear from the External Verifiers'

reports that centres, and candidates, are finding these resources valuable and accessible. During visiting verification in previous years, the message to centres has been to have the confidence to adapt the NAB material to suit individuals and specific projects. This was clearly evident this year with NAB material being successfully adapted and new instruments of assessment being employed. However, in such instances, the role of the Internal Verifier is crucial in ensuring that where materials have been adapted or new approaches to generating or capturing evidence have been developed, that standards remain consistent. All centres have been invited to make use of the prior verification service offered by SQA when developing their own instruments of assessment.

Across all centres, levels of achievement expected by assessors continue to be high, with a view to encouraging candidates to fulfil their own potential. It was observed that staff continue to be sensitive to the age, experiences and abilities of individual candidates.

Evidence Requirements

It was clear from External Verifiers' reports that most candidates retained folios, which were thorough and generally well presented. Furthermore, candidate portfolios in most centres were comprehensive. Reports also identified several examples where progression and development of ideas was clearly evident in Unit work.

Assessments were found to be consistent, valid, reliable and fair. Assessments set by centres fully met the required standards of the Course in almost all instances. Comments on candidate submissions in the vast majority of centres were found to be supportive and clearly outlined strengths as well as areas for improvement. In relation to candidate feedback, there were several examples observed where feedback was instrumental in the development and progression of candidates. It is, therefore, essential for candidates, assessors, verifiers (internal and external) to have access to this feedback in order to monitor progress and to act as a tool for reflection and improvement. The recording of this feedback continues to help ensure that national standards are being applied and that the Evidence Requirements set out in the Unit specification are being met.

Administration of the Course and recording of assessment decisions and overall attainment was generally very clear across most centres. The decisions made by assessors were valid, and in almost all cases there was evidence that internal verification had taken place. In most instances, assessments were marked by all assessors individually and then signed off by other delivering staff, course leader or principal teacher. While it is recognised that many centres do not have standardised internal verification policies in place, there appears to be an increasing use of formal and informal internal verification systems being utilised by individual departments and staff. Many centres have been recording discussions between assessors, counter-signing marked work, cross-marking and detailing other verification activity, which clearly benefits delivering staff as well as Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers.

Administration of assessments

In most centres the use of NABs assisted with the consistent application of standards set out in Unit specifications. Evidence was available which supported the decisions to require some candidates to re-sit Unit assessments when appropriate standards had not been met. These re-assessment decisions were found to be reliable and consistent across centres and delivering teams. It was noted that where re-assessment had taken place, the feedback given to the candidate, as well as the original submission, was made available for internal and external verification.

A variety of forms of evidence were used to demonstrate that standards of performance had been achieved. In one centre, the learners worked together on the production of an end of year show. As the show was already established as an event in the school year, an opportunity existed for performance evidence to occur naturally and the centre was able to use the NAB paperwork to record learner achievement. This centre had clearly supported their candidates through appropriate and constructive feedback, as the standards achieved by the candidates were consistent with those outlined in the NABs.

Other forms of evidence gathering included the production of materials such as presentations, videos, workbooks, assessor observation checklists and candidate evaluations. Individual candidate checklists accompanied this material where appropriate, in addition to class record sheets which detailed attainment and achievement.

In one centre where the Course is delivered across multiple sites, robust pre-delivery and standardisation meetings were held prior to the commencement of the Course to ensure consistency of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. As a result of these pre-delivery and standardisation meetings, a brief was produced for each site for the Creative Process and Creative Project Unit, which required each site to contribute to a section of a video. The video was then put together and used as a showcase for the Course across multiple sites. It was observed that the NAB was flexible enough to adapt in order to address each of the required component parts of the video.

Centres continue to integrate the Creative Process Unit and the Creative Project Unit alongside elements of Skills Development (development of skills) and Introduction to the Creative Industries (candidate reviews). Evidence of careful planning prior to delivery and development of checklists ensure that all aspects of the Units are being addressed.

Areas of good practice

In the majority of cases it was observed that delivering staff are highly skilled industry practitioners who readily share their extensive, up-to-date skills and experience with learners. It was evident from the majority of the reports that staff are committed to giving candidates a valuable, enjoyable and varied experience. Candidates across all centres have access to high quality resources and

industry-standard equipment. In most centres, candidates were well aware of the skills for work they were developing.

In one centre the Course has been planned, and delivered, to a very high standard and centred around planning and delivering a school show. This centre presented work of a very high standard. Learners kept an electronic blog to track progress (listing 'done' and 'to do', roles and responsibilities and highlighting skills used/developed). In addition, each student set up external training opportunities/talks. For example, they arranged visits by a stage manager, composer, make-up artist, set designer, marketing professional, all of which served to broaden their awareness of the skills/roles within the sector. The centre facilitated student ability to carry out their own research. Students started and ran a drama club to develop skills required for other students to perform in the school show. The learners organising the school show took a leadership role by supporting and developing other learners' skills to enable them to participate in the show. A presentation given to the class on skills development was made into a display and shared with all pupils in the Drama department.

A fashion show was used as the basis for the Course in one centre. Learners worked together to create fashion items for display during the show. They worked alongside professionals from the sector, planning, creating and putting on a successful event. This partnership with industry professionals also benefited the wider school community and not just the Creative Industries learners.

It was highlighted during an external verification visit to one centre that they had developed strong links with a local college and a network of industry professionals to support the delivery of the award. A series of guest speakers provided lectures and workshops and learners from this centre attended some lectures at the local college. This collaboration has resulted in increased exposure and awareness of the possibilities and opportunities offered by the creative industries within that geographical area. The centre worked hard to ensure that a wide range of types of evidence was accepted, meaning candidates could fully express their creative talents. This encouraged strong elements of free choice, allowing candidates to make their own decisions and develop skills in areas of personal interest and enjoyment.

In one centre the award was delivered between three members of staff from Music, English and PE. Learners worked towards a theatre production involving dance and song. The English teacher combined the assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 of the Introduction to Creative Industries Unit, requiring the submission of a short essay, thus further developing literacy skills. There was evidence that the team met regularly to internally verify and discuss other learning, teaching and assessment approaches. There was clear evidence of engagement with external partners and this, combined with the teaching team's experience of the creative industries, helped to create an environment in which the learners undoubtedly benefited.

The Course was delivered over a two-year period with the first year used to prepare candidates for the folio creation in year two. The cross-curricular

approach allowed candidates to appreciate the broadness of the creative industries and how the skills required could be developed in a range of areas.

Specific areas for improvement

Instruments of assessment, marking schemes, checklists, etc should be stored centrally and be made available for external and internal verification purposes. It is also recommended that details of discussions relating to delivery, assessment and verification are documented and made available for external verification.

It is strongly recommended that centre-devised instruments of assessment are sent to SQA for prior verification.

Mechanisms should be put in place that enable learners to track their progress and organise folios effectively. This will also help learners to understand and work towards the standards required.

Centres should evidence assessment decisions of student work effectively. For example, each individual student folio should clearly signpost work in relation to Unit Outcomes. Candidate checklists, assessor observation checklists and Unit checklists could be used to assist with this.

Centres should continue to seek opportunities to further develop integrated assessment and consider e-submission through blogs or e-portfolios to overcome candidate reticence to more traditional worksheets. This is especially valuable as candidates hoping to work in the creative industries are very likely going to have to use online tools to promote their skills and connect with employers.

Learners should be encouraged to focus on the review and development of employability skills in Outcome 3 of the Introduction Unit, and not just their personal development goals/targets (eg musical or acting skills).

Continued engagement with employers is encouraged in order that learners can gain experience of, and insight into, skills, knowledge and attitudes expected in the workplace.