



**National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Construction
Crafts**

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

National Courses

Skills for Work: Construction Crafts (National 4 and 5)

General comments

This year, seven centres were selected for verification. Of these seven centres, five resulted in Accepted verification decisions while the remaining two were initially Not Accepted.

Once again, all centres with Accepted verification decisions were using National Assessment Bank (NABs) materials for assessment purposes and these were proving very effective in measuring the candidates' progress regarding their employability skills. All centres were fully resourced to meet the requirements of the Units and, in general, delivery was well planned. Where candidates were interviewed it was clear they were fully aware of the employability aspect of this qualification and that they were enjoying the practical activities contained within the craft Units.

Health and safety in the workplace continues to be of high importance within the delivery of these Courses and this was clearly demonstrated throughout all of the Accepted visits.

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

All Accepted centres were making good and effective use of nationally devised assessment materials.

In the case of one Not Accepted centre it was clear that National Assessment Bank materials were not being used across all of the Units of the Course. This, allied with a lack of co-ordination and communication between those delivering the Course, contributed to the Not Accepted verification decision.

Evidence Requirements

In general, centres had retained good paperwork in the form of checklists, self-evaluations and knowledge evidence. The links between the craft Units and the Employability Skills Unit were also evidenced.

In the case of the Not Accepted centres, the fundamental links between the craft Units and the Employability Skills Unit were not in evidence. In one of these centres there was very little evidence that this Unit had been assessed. Employability skills in the construction industry are fundamental to this Course and it is imperative that centres measure and record their candidates' performances in these areas. Good internal verification systems will also help centres to ensure successful delivery of this qualification.

Bearing in mind that it is not mandatory to retain practical activity models for external verification of this qualification it is worth stating that there was good evidence of this type available in each of the successful centres visited. Where no practical models were available, centres had continued to make very good use of secondary photographic evidence to supplement their checklists.

Administration of assessments

Assessment paperwork was, generally, appropriate with centres using nationally devised materials and in all cases assessment decisions had been subject to internal verification procedures.

Where Not Accepted verification decisions were made, it was clear that internal quality assurance had not been effective and in some instances this activity had been completely overlooked. The nature of this qualification places great emphasis on effective internal quality assurance processes being in use and where this is not the case there will always be problematic areas when external verification takes place.

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were identified during this session's external verification activity:

- ◆ 'Normal good practice was being shown at this centre with some very good written feedback given to the candidates. There was some very good photographic evidence from most of the trades. The video evidence was very helpful especially as no candidates were available for interview on the day of my visit.'
- ◆ 'This is a well-informed group of staff who show good leadership in all the Units on offer.'
- ◆ 'The centre has a well-resourced area to enable the delivery of this Course. The centre is making very good use of support material produced by Colleges Scotland.'
- ◆ 'Candidate portfolios were well presented and organised.'
- ◆ 'Internal verification procedures are very effective within this centre. Activity is clearly planned and is more than sufficient to ensure that a high quality product is delivered to candidates.'
- ◆ 'The Staff Quality Enhancement handbook is a very helpful document for staff which emphasises the importance of internal quality assurance when delivering qualifications of this nature.'
- ◆ 'Lead lecturers are of great value particularly with the centre having multiple campuses. The lead lecturer plays a vital role in the internal verification process.'
- ◆ 'The centre encouraged a progression for their learners, by which successful completion of the Skills for Work Course guaranteed the candidates a place on a pre-vocational course.'

- ◆ 'The newly devised internal verification process currently in use in this centre has taken the most effective parts of three previously operated versions since the college's recent merger activity. This system is proving to be very robust and effective.'

Specific areas for improvement

Once again, in general the delivery of this qualification was quite encouraging, however there were a few comments/recommendations highlighted within the reports. They were as follows:

- ◆ 'Time must be set aside for the assessor and external verifier to discuss the assessment decisions.'
- ◆ 'Signatures and dates are required to complete the paperwork.'
- ◆ 'Greater integration of employability skills from an earlier stage in the delivery of craft Units would be recommended.'
- ◆ 'For the Employability Skills Unit, at both levels, it is good practice to have access to a scale plan or drawing that the candidates can lift sizes from, this could be mounted in one of the workshops, with a scale rule close by.'
- ◆ 'If doing rods for the joinery flat frame, staff should encourage the candidates to complete a cutting list.'