



**National Qualifications 2016
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

There was a substantial increase in the number of selected centres this session. A total of 18 centres were externally verified as opposed to only seven in the last session. This gave a far more balanced view on the overall delivery of the award. Of the 18 centres visited all but one were successful. The main reasons for the 'hold' being imposed on the unsuccessful centre was that the centre and their external partners were not communicating effectively and no real standardisation or internal verification was taking place between them. The centre and their delivery partners, having addressed their issues, received a return visit and this resulted in the hold being lifted.

Once again all centres successfully visited were using National Assessment Bank (NABs) materials for assessment purposes and these proved 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 these awards 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 awards and this was clearly demonstrated throughout all of the successful visits.

Course and unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All 18 centres visited were using NAB materials and assessment support packs to deliver the award to candidates and in doing so fully met the above requirements of the award.

Evidence requirements

Once again, in general, successful centres had retained good paperwork in the form of checklists, self-evaluations and knowledge evidence. Most of the centres visited were making very good use of secondary photographic evidence contained within their candidate portfolios. The links between the Construction Crafts units and the Employability Skills units continue to be well evidenced.

In the case of the unsuccessful centre, there had been little or no evidence of the employability aspect of the award being recorded and/or shared between the centre and the satellite delivery partner. Employability skills are what this award is supposed to measure so it is imperative that centres measure and record their candidates' performance in these areas. External verification activity must always ensure that this assessment and recording is fully evidenced. Good internal

verification systems will also help centres to ensure successful delivery of this award.

Bearing in mind that it is not mandatory to retain practical activity models for external verification of these awards, it is worth stating that there was good evidence of this type available in each of the successful centres visited.

A 'hold' was imposed on one centre for the following reasons:

- ◆ Insufficient evidence at the time of verification for the units delivered at the satellite centre.
- ◆ No evidence of any internal verification having been carried out on the units or of a verification plan for the delivery.
- ◆ No evidence of standardisation meetings having taken place.
- ◆ No assessors or internal verifiers who were delivering the units were available to interview.

The actions required to resolve the issues were:

- ◆ Centre must produce completed evidence for each unit listed.
- ◆ Evidence to be produced that internal verification has taken place as well as a plan for future internal verification.
- ◆ Assessors and internal verifiers must be available for interview on the return visit.
- ◆ Evidence to be produced of on-going standardisation meetings between staff at the delivering centre and delivery staff at the satellite centre.

Administration of assessments

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

Where the negative outcome was recorded it was clear that internal quality assurance had not been effective and in most instances this activity had been completely overlooked. The nature of this award 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

There were many examples of good practice recorded within this year's reports. The following is a representative selection of instances where delivering centres are excelling:

The centre correctly places great emphasis on the 'Employability Skills' aspect of Skills for Work: Construction Crafts and this has filtered through to their candidates who fully appreciate the purpose of their course.

Excellent internal verification systems and procedures ensure that all assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable across all of the award delivery.

Student work progress reports that tied in with the school report showed good practice between college and school.

Well laid out programme of delivery across a wide level of classes and candidates — easily followed and identifiable.

Students' view sheets — a great opportunity for the candidates to share their views and experiences with staff, help improve and develop the course, and highlight the good and not so good aspects.

Course team report incorporating all trades delivering the Skills for Work units. Good time to meet and discuss programme and classes.

The centre continues to operate a very effective internal quality assurance policy which ensures a high level of delivery to their candidates.

The centre places great emphasis on internal quality assurance and this is reinforced by the 100% sample, proposed in the internal verifier plan.

This centre continues to deliver a high quality product to its customers with excellent recording procedures in place. The candidate portfolios were laid out in a very logical and comprehensive manner with emphasis being placed on the employability skills aspect of the award.

Excellent internal quality assurance procedures ensure that delivery remains consistent and fair across all candidates and all delivery staff.

The workshop was a designated Construction area, where all trade disciplines were delivered. This gives good potential for this area to be a Construction centre of excellence.

The college–school partnership is an excellent idea, as candidates and school staff can benefit from the site-based experience and knowledge of the trade specialist staff from the FE sector. This of course is a two-way process and the FE staff will gain much from being based in the technical department of the school.

Excellent workbooks in use for students. One section 'Exploring the construction industry' is a good example of employability.

Reviews after every task enable students to accomplish employability award even if all disciplines aren't completed or achieved.

Robust and effective internal verification procedures are in place at all times during the delivery of this award as was shown by the plentiful sampling and recording of this activity.

The centre had retained practical task evidence for external verification purposes even though this was not a mandatory requirement of the award. This evidence was of a good standard and is available for future candidates to see prior to beginning their courses.

Although it is not required, the practice of introducing and encouraging candidates to complete materials lists at National 4 does allow them to gain an understanding prior to National 5.

The sequence of operations that is introduced to candidates tests their understanding of the process.

The candidates interviewed on the day of the visit stated that they had enjoyed the time at the centre and felt that they were well prepared for the possibility of gaining entry into higher level Construction courses. The candidates conducted themselves in a mature manner throughout the interview process and were a credit to themselves.

The centre was very well organised for all aspects of the external verification visit.

The standard of constructive feedback (from assessors to candidates) was excellent on majority of employability review sheets and also on the majority of practical task checklists.

Cross-campus meetings were held that were specific to the SfW programme.

The internal verification procedures are clearly linked with excellent on-going large sampling of units being carried out. This system was found to very highly effective and robust.

Internal verification evidence is recorded electronically along with a main checklist to record each individual candidate's achievement towards all units, gathering the correct review sheets to go towards the Employability unit.

Specific areas for improvement

The following areas were noted for improvement in particular centres:

The centre to ensure feedback is given to all candidates where required on all areas of Employability Review sheets.

The centre to ensure that all sections of the practical checklists are fully completed.

When identified/required during the internal verification process, action points from internal verifier to assessor to show evidence of being closed out.

Record informal meetings taking place in note form or bullet points — these could be shared with the staff.

All paperwork needs to be completed by both staff and students as agreed.

Signatures and dates to be completed on all assessments.

Internal verification to be continuous throughout delivery of programme.

Best practice to be followed with regard to wearing of PPE in workshop areas.

Consideration given to partnerships with local construction companies, site visits or visiting speakers to enhance programme delivery.

It is strongly recommend that the centre reviews its procedures on the wearing of appropriate PPE for the practical activities to include the wearing of hard hats and hi-vis vests. This would bring the centre into line with best practice in the sector and also comply with the minimum requirements for a realistic construction workplace environment. This will also ensure that candidates are aware of, and trained in, the minimum requirements for any construction industry work placement.

This was a disappointing visit and more work has to be done to highlight evidence required. On my previous visits to this centre, the evidence was to a good standard and easy to locate in the portfolios. On this occasion I spent a considerable amount of time finding evidence and feel that there was enough for an acceptable satisfactory outcome.

Portfolios to be tidied up, as agreed with the SQA co-ordinator.

More internal verification to be completed.

I would like to see some evidence of course team meetings taking place, ie all staff who deliver the award should be having some sort of standardisation meeting, which should be recorded.

It would be worthwhile contacting the CITB and asking them to come along and do a career talk and perhaps have some posters of trade specialists on the wall with them undertaking their tasks. This would create an even more interesting and welcoming work environment.

The use of secondary photographic evidence would be improved if the images captured showed the candidates actively engaged in the production process, rather than with a finished product or the product and no candidate visible.

Some National 4 reviews had not been signed off by the assessor.

Quality folders looked a bit dated and need to be cleared of all old minuted meetings. SQA external verifiers only need to see current minutes, CPD records, internal verifier forms etc.

When completing an internal verifier form, it must be relevant to the particular class.

Sampling needs to reflect a wider group of candidates eg four from group A1, four from group B1, four from group A2, four from Group B2 etc.

Previous report from 5 years ago suggested CPD for staff teaching across disciplines. It looks as though no progress has been made in this area.

Subject-specialist staff should be used for the internal verifier process.

Some of the exercise boards used in Unit DM7K 10: Decorative Painting, were marginally smaller than prescribed in the unit specification, and while this did not present a serious issue, in the opinion of the EV it would enhance the experience of the candidate if these boards were increased in size.

The practical delivery of this course within this centre would be greatly enhanced for the candidates by increasing classroom time. The external verifier recommends that a minimum of 3 hours per session would be required to gain the optimum results for this award.

Candidate evidence for the Employability Skills units should be placed with the evidence for these units and not in the Craft units.

The centre's internal verifiers should ensure that they sign and date all the candidate assessment evidence that they sample. Also, an internal verification plan would ensure that there is a sampling procedure which will cover all the units and candidates over the course of the delivery of the award.

The assessor should, as part of his continuing professional development, endeavour to complete the SQA Assessor qualification, eg L and D9 unit.