



**National Qualifications 2015
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Engineering Skills**

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

National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified:

Skills for Work: Engineering Skills (National 4 and National 5)

General comments

Six centres were visited as part of this year's verification activity. Of the centres selected, four were colleges delivering the National 4 Course, one was a college delivering the National 5 Course, and one was a school delivering the National 5 Course. Most candidates were from S3/S4 with those undertaking the National 5 Course typically from S5/S6. One college was offering the National 4 Course for the first time.

All centres have a comprehensive understanding of national standards — the centre offering the Course for the first time had previously delivered other SQA qualifications.

Three of the colleges visited had recently merged with other colleges and were in the on-going process of reviewing their recently produced joint procedures.

In Section 3 of the Visit Plan sent to centres before the visit date it requests that the external verifier will wish to access evidence relating to:

- ◆ Equal/fair access to assessment
- ◆ Assessor standardisation arrangements
- ◆ Internal verification strategy/procedures and sampling

Only one centre commenced the visit by introducing the procedures from a member of their quality assurance staff — in all other cases this important stage of the visit was left to departmental staff assessing or internally verifying the award. It should be emphasised that the external verifier bases the report on the adherence by centre staff to the centre procedures in their standardisation and recording of assessments, sampling, internal verification decisions, and retention of candidate assessment material.

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

Centres are now familiar with the information included in the Course Arrangements and most record the requirements from the Unit specifications in their internal verification procedures.

The majority of centres were making use of the SQA-produced National Assessment Bank materials and also the support materials initially produced by Scotlands' Colleges. However, the centre delivering for the first time was, prior to the verification visit, unaware of this resource.

Evidence Requirements

All centres have a clear understanding of the evidence requirements for the Course although there are still a few instances of not fully understanding the importance of the Employability Skills integrated into each individual Unit.

Administration of assessments

Centres were able to produce relevant internal verification procedures and in most cases there was evidence of adherence to the procedure in the candidate evidence sampled. The centre in its first year of presentation carried out 100% sampling as per their procedures. Centres mainly still tend to treat Employability Skills to a lesser extent than the production of an artefact and in a few cases feedback to candidates was scant or non-existent.

Areas of good practice

One centre was offering the National 5 Course to a group from a local authority scheme targeting those who were having particular difficulties at school. It achieved a high degree of success with regard to candidate motivation.

Centres were encouraging candidates to be honest in their self-evaluation.

One centre offering the National 5 Course was challenging candidates to record improvements for future reference and had outside organisations involved in project work.

Two centres were trialling the integration of some of their assessment activity and this approach is recommended for other centres to attempt.

One centre was using the Course as a method of progression towards an HNC qualification.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres that have not already formalised their partnership agreements should do so in order that candidates experience advice from employers.

Centre staff should prioritise the full completion of Employability Skills integrated within each Unit of the Course and record supportive feedback to aid candidate development.

While most centres were using the NABs in their published format, a few were making minor alterations — these alterations must be recorded in internal verification procedures with an explanation as to why they are being carried out.

Centres could consider developing alternative written assessments for all Units, if they think that these may be more suitable than the NAB materials in their situation.