



**National Qualifications 2016
Internal Assessment Report
Skills for Work: Uniformed and
Emergency Services**

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

National courses

SfW Uniformed and Emergency Services (C251 10)

Uniformed and Emergency Services: An Introduction (F38R 10)

Uniformed and Emergency Services: An Introduction (Scotland) (H6SE 74)

Uniformed and Emergency Services: Health, Safety, Fitness and Wellbeing (F38S 10)

Uniformed and Emergency Services: Engaging with the Community (F38T 10)

Uniformed and Emergency Services: Working in Teams (F38V 10)

It should be noted that Unit H6SE 74 forms a part of the Scottish Studies group award (GG64 44). It is identical to unit F38R 10, with the proviso that it should be delivered and assessed in a Scottish context. Centres are advised to ensure that they deliver the unit appropriately.

General comments

Considerably more centres have been visited during this session than last (a total of 7). Additionally, a number of new centres have come forward for approval — predominantly schools looking to expand the curricular opportunities for groups in S5 and S6. Regrettably, in two instances the verification visit resulted in a hold being placed — in both cases centres had used SQA developed ASP material inappropriately, with a lack of cognisance being given to the evidence requirements of individual units.

Additionally, two development visits took place. It is encouraging that centres perceive this service as a valuable way to enhance their delivery. As has been reported previously, a number of centres are delivering the course in conjunction with the Army Cadet Force (ACF): these centres are now using the ACF activities more to underpin than drive the course. This is good practice as it allows a more rounded approach in keeping with the underlying ethos of the Skills for Work programme.

Discussions with tutors/assessors/internal verifiers generally confirmed a clear perspective of the course rationale and requirements. One centre submitted material for prior verification. The external verifier team has discussed the scope of this service with all centres.

Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

External verification, approval, and development visits indicate that staff responsible for delivery and assessment are generally familiar with all aspects of the course. Centres approved this session are primarily using (or intending to use) SQA developed ASP material. The ASP for Unit F38S 10: Uniformed and Emergency Services: Health, Safety, Fitness and Wellbeing contains reference to the Food Pyramid but Food Standards Agency guidelines have replaced this with

the Eatwell Plate. Where centres have been visited or approved this development has been discussed in detail. Centres are reminded that it would be appropriate to update their assessment materials accordingly. SQA will update the ASP accordingly at the earliest opportunity.

As previously reported (IAR 2013-14 and 2014-15), it is essential that centres interfacing their delivery with the Army Cadet Force Scotland ensure that additions or amendments to existing materials are consistent with evidence requirements and SCQF level.

Evidence requirements

A number of centre verification reports suggested some issues with the standard of candidate evidence in terms of quantity, presentation, and clarity. Candidate folios contained adequate evidence, including tutor checklists and self-reviews, though in some instances (both holds) centres had overlooked the evidence requirement that some activities should take place in a 'specific service environment'. It is important that all delivering staff familiarise themselves with the full scope of the unit specifications prior to delivery. Whilst this is a condition of pre-delivery internal verification checks, it was apparent that some centres procedures were less than robust. This was highlighted in the internal assessment report for 2014–15, but does not appear to have been taken on board by a small number of centres.

The reports for centres requesting development visits showed that considerable thought had been put into the delivery pattern and suggested activities. As stated in the previous report, some centres commented on the difficulties sometimes encountered in the conduct of the individual reviews, especially when larger cohorts are concerned: a number of strategies were discussed with centres to help alleviate this issue.

Administration of assessments

See also comments above regarding the evidence requirements for units, and the FSA Eatwell Plate. Most centre visits indicate a holistic delivery pattern (or intended delivery pattern) for the programme, so assessment material is generated throughout the course in a variety of different formats. As stated in previous IARs, centres using additional material (ACF, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Heartstart/Emergency First Aid etc) are reminded to ensure that assessment is appropriately mapped, and at the correct SCQF level where it has been used as evidence. It is essential that assessment evidence is logged correctly in order that staff and candidates are aware of progression, and to enable effective internal and external verification.

In the majority of centres assessment material is generated in multiple formats: this is good practice to ensure that all candidates are able to maximise learning and skill transfer. Some centres use staff with contacts or experience in either uniformed or emergency services — this is good practice, allowing a high level of context-specific knowledge and personal experience to enhance delivery of the course. It is clear that the majority of centres have developed a broad range of

local (and in once case national) contacts in order to enhance delivery. It was also evident that a number of excellent initiatives existed for delivery of the Engaging with the Community unit.

Internal verification processes, centre assessment and recording processes, and the development of centre/context-specific assessment were discussed at length in all centres visited.

Areas of good practice

In the lifetime of the award, the vast majority of centres have been visited, and continue to contact the senior external verifier for advice and guidance on delivery. Together with the approval and development visits undertaken it remains encouraging to note widespread good practice:

- ◆ Centres employ a variety of delivery patterns, and the course is available to a wide spectrum of different cohorts — this is particularly true in schools looking to develop a variety of experiences, and increase depth of personal reflective skills which underpin SfW programmes.
- ◆ Time and resource allocation in centres is giving more candidates opportunities for success, especially considering the wide variety of complex issues faced by candidates.
- ◆ Tutors/assessors in centres show personal experience of UES.
- ◆ Much work has been done to develop local links, and many centres have considerable depth in terms of external speakers whom they can draw on.
- ◆ An increasing variety of learning and teaching styles designed to include all candidates is evident.

Specific areas for improvement

It is pleasing to note that many centres have taken on comments made in previous internal assessment reports.

- ◆ Centres should be aware that if delivering the course in a holistic manner it is important that candidates have an awareness of their own progression and target achievement.
- ◆ Centre reports of all types (see above) indicate effective practice in some aspects of delivery of the award, but it is important that once a centre has gained approval for delivery that a clear perspective is maintained on all aspects of delivery, assessment, and verification. This relates not only to ensuring that evidence requirements are adhered to, but also basic centre recording process such as signatures, dates, candidate achievement, and *effective* internal verification.
- ◆ As previously stated, centres delivering the award should give careful consideration to the requirements of the internal verification process, and ensure that paperwork is standardised and completed timeously.
- ◆ Centres using external providers or other courses to enhance/support/underpin the award must ensure that assessment is appropriately mapped to

the units (and evidence requirements) within the award, and that cognisance is given to the appropriate SCQF level. It is not appropriate to simply indicate where criteria might be met: there needs to be a clear statement. Should any centre be unsure of how to carry out this process they should contact SQA to request a development visit.