



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Message Reports

Verification group name:	Practical Technologies
Levels	N3 to N5
Date published:	July 2014

This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2013-14.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 1

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Practical Technologies
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	January 2014

National Courses/Units/Awards verification

Units of Practical Technologies (Practical Woodworking C762 74/ 75, Practical Metalworking C761 74/ 75 and Practical Craft Skills C759 73)

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

The first round of visiting verification for the Practical Technologies Courses has now concluded. Whilst most centres made use of the SQA Unit assessment support packs (UASPs), a proportion used assessments of their own devising.

Where centres make use of their own assessments, we recommend that they submit these for prior verification before making use of them. This free service will check the assessment (and provide guidance where needed) and ensure that the approach is correct before our Verifier visits the centre.

Most of the candidate evidence sampled was for completed Units but there were a few instances where the Unit was partially assessed — there is no issue with this as verification is a process where we seek to agree a centre's assessment decisions, whether they are for all of the Assessment Standards of a Unit or only one of them.

Assessment judgements

In the main, centre assessment judgements were appropriate and in line with the national standard.

Where assessment judgements were correct, this was often supported by evidence of internal verification. The Verifiers saw many excellent examples of internal verification processes/approaches and this is to be commended.

Where centre assessment judgements were not correct, the Verifiers drew attention to the 'judging evidence' tables of the UASPs; these contain detailed information on specifically what is required for each assessment standard to be met.

03

Section 3: General comments

Centres are reminded that candidates should not be set a Coursework Assignment until they are ready to undertake it, ie after they have successfully passed all of the Units of the Course.

The retention of physical evidence, which is problematic because of limited storage space, was raised in some centres. There is specific guidance on this within the Commonly Asked Questions section of the subject web pages.

One centre queried the sizes of the Course Assignments. Whilst centres are free to assess Units as they wish (as long as the Assessment Standards are met), they must use the SQA-produced tasks for the assessment of the N4 Added Value Unit and the N5 Course Assignment — these cannot be altered in any way.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 2

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Practical Technologies
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	March 2014

National Courses/Units verified:

Practical Woodworking: Flat-frame Construction (H25V 74 and H25V 75)
Practical Woodworking: Carcase Construction (H25W 74 and H25W 75)
Practical Woodworking: Machining & Finishing (H25X 74 and H25X 75)
Practical Metalworking: Bench Skills (H25P 74 and H25P 75)
Practical Metalworking: Machine Processes (H25R 74 and H25R 75)
Practical Metalworking: Fabrication & Thermal Joining (H25S 74 and H25S 75)
Working With Tools (H25G 73)
Working With Materials (H25H 73)
Making An Item (H25J 73)

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Centres have been successfully using the Unit assessment support packs and some have developed updated/new assessment instruments to meet the requirements of Outcome 3. This has been particularly successful with the centres that submitted their assessment materials for prior verification.

The Assessment Standards of all Outcomes must be met for every candidate to constitute a Unit pass — if any have not been met, a Unit pass cannot be awarded.

Where centres use an SQA Unit assessment support pack to assess a Unit, they must ensure that it is used in its entirety. For example, if the Unit assessment support pack includes a 'candidate log' or 'record of work', then this would need to be completed too. Likewise, for assessment purposes, candidates should be given working drawings where appropriate and any templates (eg for use in turnery) must be retained for assessment/verification purposes.

Assessment judgements

Centres, in general, continue to make accurate assessment judgements when using the Unit assessment support packs. Additionally, centres that have submitted their own assessments for prior verification are making good assessment judgements.

Centres are reminded to be aware of tolerances when making assessment decisions

There is plenty of evidence of robust internal verification policies being applied in centres and this is to be commended.

03

Section 3: General comments

Centres are encouraged to submit their own assessment instruments for prior verification as this will enable them to use an assessment that suits their own circumstances with peace of mind that their approach is valid.



NQ Verification 2013–14

Key Messages Round 3

01

Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Practical Metalworking and Practical Woodworking
Verification event/visiting information	Visiting
Date published:	June 2014

National Courses/Units verified:

H25Y 74/75 Vanity Mirror
H25Y 74/75 Coat rack
H25Y 74/75 Toy truck
H25T 74/75 Garden lantern
H25T 74/75 Metal clock
H25T 74/75 Toy cannon

02

Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

Round 3 incorporated the Added Value and Course project verification. SQA will be providing the assessment models for both Wood and Metal at National 4 and National 5 for the foreseeable future. The models and working drawings on SQA's secure site must not be altered.

This year, centres were allowed to use materials that had been purchased in previous years; however, the variance with regard to thickness sizes will not be accepted in the 2014–15 diet.

The projects that are on the secure site will remain live for next year's diet. In the Wood projects, some personalisation is available in the choice of turnery, provided this meets the required parameters. Templates for these designs must be available for verification. Some centres have offered candidates two or three

pre-designed templates, which allows a degree of personalisation. This has proved to be a successful approach with the candidates gaining more time for practical work. Other centres have given candidates the opportunity to produce their own template. This can lead to some good personal designs, nonetheless, some centres found this to be time consuming, thus, impacting on the time available in the practical aspects.

The projects require a finish on the models. Within both Wood and Metal, centres have been applying a wide variety and standard of finishes. The approach by centres has been generally good, with some work being completed to a high standard. The assessment for finishes involves applying the finish and includes the preparation for the application to take place.

When assessing this area, consideration should be given to the following.

Preparation:

- ◆ pencil marks
- ◆ glue marks
- ◆ saw and machine marks removed
- ◆ no obvious blemishes

Application:

- ◆ runs/accumulation of residue
- ◆ brush marks/hairs
- ◆ raised grain
- ◆ uneven finish

Centres should be aware that a finish that obscures the project will lead to a Not Accepted decision (during either internal or external verification). The Wood projects, Units or coursework, can have varnish, oil, wax, stain (light stain for colour effect) etc. On the whole, this has been very successful this year, with centres generally assessing to the required standards.

Centres are reminded that the Verification Sample Form for Unit and/or Course must be completed with relevant and detailed information on the practical activity assessment record. If the relevant paperwork is incomplete or if insufficient information is recorded, it is possible that no verification can take place and the centre will be asked to complete it immediately — or a Not Accepted outcome will be recorded.

The candidate diary is a very important assessment tool. This highlights all the areas that are required for assessment included within the Added Value Unit and the Course project. The diaries have been of varying standards. One centre devised an excellent example, where the candidates were given drawings of each area of the project. This had space for the candidates to reflect on what they had completed and the methods used. The diary also had a section for candidates to report on damaged tools and any accidents which may have occurred. This document was extremely detailed and assisted with the

verification process. Other centres devised diaries to be completed daily with short comments. This demonstrates good practice as it details progress and can highlight any areas of difficulty or concern.

In general, this year, centres have provided appropriate evidence for verification. The candidate evidence (project) along with the student diaries and the candidate logs have been essential in this process.

Assessment judgements

Within the new National 4 and 5 Courses in both Wood and Metal, the majority of centres are making fair and accurate assessments. Centres have been using the documents and assessing the Added Value Unit as Pass/Fail and the Course project with a score out of a total of 80. Centres are reminded that 'A upper', 'A lower', etc marks are not applicable in this Course. The mark awarded is out of 80 from four sections equally, amounting to 20 marks each.

The verification process has highlighted some excellent marking with centres using the marking structure correctly. Some centres, however, continue to have difficulty in assessing the National 5 project using the Assessment Standards as set. In each section, the first two rows detail the main areas for assessment and the grades should be awarded using these standards. The final two rows support the grade given; analysing the teacher/lecturer notes and the candidate's diary.

If a candidate's work has been graded under 'Less than half the component parts meet the requirements of the working drawing or template' and 'Less than half the component parts have been marked out, cut and shaped to within $\pm 1.0\text{mm}$ ', the centre **cannot** grade the candidate as an 18/20 within this section even if it is stated that 'Candidate worked independently during all of the marking, cutting and shaping activities: assistance was generally not required'. This is not the correct basis for assessment.

Within the Added Value Unit, the model must be completed. If one part of this project does not meet the tolerance, evidence from the Unit that covers the particular section can be used to support the candidate in being awarded a pass. All evidence must be available for verification. If photographic evidence is provided to support the grade, the pictures must be very detailed showing all sizes, squareness and, if templates have been used, how it fits the design.

The diary/log has supported the grades awarded to candidates. The information written has generally been very good with some candidates highlighting work completed, tools used, damaged materials or tools, and accidents when working. Some centres have linked this to the world of work where some apprentices are required to have a log book — so emphasising the relevant and real-life situations in which the skills developed in completing the diary/log can be used.

Section 3: General comments

Internal verification is a key part of quality-assuring your internal assessments. The verification team use this to support and validate assessors' judgements. If no internal verification has taken place, the process could lead to a Not Accepted outcome. An effective internal verification process will have a pre-delivery, delivery and a review process. It will identify areas that need to be developed to support the centre's assessment judgements and ensure these are valid and reliable. It is noted that most centres have a good verification policy; however, some centres are not operating or not recording the process within this calendar of verification.

This course is a practical course; if a machine has been used in manufacturing a joint or component then it cannot be used within the assessment. Grades should reflect the number of machines used.

If any templates are used, these should be present for verification as they will support the assessment for working to tolerances. Some centres have manufactured several templates to support the candidates in decorative areas. The templates are then provided for verification and are used to support the grades that have been awarded to candidates.

It was reported by team leaders that most centres provided good accommodation with all relevant work present for verification. Thank you for supporting SQA's verification team and helping this quality assurance process to operate smoothly.