



**Higher National Qualifications**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017**

**Chemistry**

# Introduction

Three external verification visits were carried out by the team this session. Centres had a clear understanding of the standards required and the visits were successful.

The units externally verified were as follows:

F21J 34	Chemistry and Physics for Life Sciences
H92W 33	Fundamental Chemistry: An Introduction
H92X 34	Fundamental Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills
DX2H 35	Organic Stereochemistry
H936 34	Physical Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills

The past two years have seen significant new developments in the HN Chemistry provision at centres, with the implementation of the new suite of HNC/D science group awards. The design of these new group awards, with their increased flexibility, has seen a clear increase in the number of centres offering multiple HN Chemistry units.

## Category 2: Resources

**Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.**

All centres visited had established internal quality control procedures. These were robust, effective and routinely applied. Centre staff had a good understanding of the resources required for each of the units verified, and there was documented evidence of effective reviews on an ongoing basis.

## Category 3: Candidate support

**Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.**

All centres visited had processes in place to ensure that candidates' development needs and any prior achievements were taken into consideration. All centres regularly reviewed teaching materials to ensure that they were appropriate to the needs of candidates.

**Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.**

All units externally verified were delivered in-house, through regular formal class contact. In addition to the regular formal class contact, candidates were provided with further support including drop in sessions and extended learning support tutors.

Centres should ensure that written feedback is included on candidate assessments to clarify where the candidate went wrong.

## **Category 4: Internal assessment and verification**

### **Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.**

All centres visited have developed robust, effective and routinely applied internal quality control procedures. Internal verification and sampling records were easy to follow, with centres increasingly moving to electronic records.

Centres must ensure that practices across delivering centres/campuses is standardised via robust internal assessment and verification procedures.

### **Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.**

Internal verification of assessment instruments was universally applied by all centres verified. SQA ASPs, where available, were used by all centres verified, and specific re-assessment instruments were submitted to SQA for prior verification. In those instances where SQA ASPs were unavailable, centres had devised valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair assessment instruments.

All centres visited had processes in place for candidates to seek alternative assessment arrangements, and to identify any candidates who might benefit from such arrangements with a range of modifications to assessment methods.

Centres should ensure that pro forma report templates are issued individually and not embedded within laboratory practical books. This approach allows pro forma reports to be completed electronically and facilitates remediation where required.

### **Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.**

All centres verified have adopted a variety of procedures to ensure the authenticity of candidate submissions. All assessments were conducted in line with the requirements of the unit specification.

### **Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.**

Most centres visited had clear, effective and routinely applied policies that ensured standardisation across delivering centres/campuses.

Centres must ensure full alignment and consistency across all delivering centres/campuses. Centres should also carry out additional internal verification sampling around the cut-off score boundary to ensure that there is consistent judgement by assessors.

All centres visited were making effective use of the exemplification materials published on SQA's [Understanding Standards](#) website.

**Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.**

All centres visited complied with SQA policies and procedures regarding the retention of candidate evidence.

**Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.**

All centres visited had policies and procedures to ensure that feedback from qualification verifiers is disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

**Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers**

The following good practice was reported during session 2016–17:

- ◆ A detailed online record of standardisation meetings, decision logs and discussion topics.
- ◆ A well-developed system for identifying candidate additional support needs.

**Specific areas for development**

The following area for development was reported during session 2016–17:

- ◆ Centres must ensure consistency in internal assessment and assessment approaches across delivering centres/campuses.