



National Qualifications Units

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2018

Core Skills: ICT

Introduction

Titles/ levels of NQ Units verified:

F3GC 09	Core Skills: ICT (SCQF level 2)
F3GC 09	Core Skills: ICT (SCQF level 3)
F3GC 10	Core Skills: ICT (SCQF level 4)
F3GC 11	Core Skills: ICT (SCQF level 5)
F3GC 12	Core Skills: ICT (SCQF level 6)

Once again, a wide range of centres were visited this year. As with previous years, NQ Core Skills were predominantly delivered in large colleges with a range of assessors working across several campuses. In almost all cases, centres were able to provide sufficient evidence for all quality criteria with only a very small number of concerns identified. As we have seen in previous years, when concerns are raised, these usually relate to the presentation of candidate evidence and ensuring that all evidence requirements are met across each outcome.

In relation to good practice, we now see more developed instruments of assessment being used, a wider range of resources being made available to candidates and greater consistency of assessment decisions. In almost all centres, internal verification and assessment practice was good. In a small number of centres there were some concerns in relation to internal verification practice and on one occasion little evidence of verification aside from a signature. However, this is not the norm.

Standardisation continues to be a challenge for larger centres although again, there was some improvement this year. CPD record management has improved in most centres, however as previously noted, these were not always explicit to the ICT Core Skill.

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.

This year we again saw good evidence of initial reviews being carried out. In terms of good practice, this year, for some centres the review, particularly in relation to assessment materials and learning resources, was more focused around the Core Skill. This year saw more centres devising and using their own materials, which were generally good. Some centres were able to evidence the requirement for ongoing reviews explicitly through document control mechanisms. Others evidenced this through minutes of standardisation meetings.

Category 3: Candidate support

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

In almost all cases, it was clear that the centre had taken into account prior achievement of candidates and that development needs had been identified through a range of measures. Many centres had their own method of matching development needs and prior achievements and others used Core Skill profiles during induction.

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

Almost all centres provided evidence that assessors were regularly scheduling and meeting with their candidates. Staff in centres continue to use a range of different ways to communicate and maintain contact with candidates. The rural colleges continue to be quite innovative in their use of e-mail, Skype or social media.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Centres continue to apply their assessment and verification procedures appropriately. In a very small number of centres, external verifiers identified minor irregularities or inconsistencies that had not been picked up through internal verification. However, the quality of internal assessment and internal verification does seem to be improving.

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

Most centres continue to use the assessment support packs, but more centres are beginning to contextualise and develop their own materials. In a small number of centres, the referencing of candidate evidence was not entirely clear and this can be an ongoing issue due to the lack of numbering within the evidence requirements. However, even where referencing and numbering was not clear, the candidate evidence was sufficient. In some cases, particularly at SCQF levels 5 and 6, the search strategy the candidate had used was not well documented and this remains an area for development.

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

Almost all centres met the requirements for conditions of assessment. Plagiarism policies were in place and frequently formed part of the induction programme. There was generally clear evidence of assessment observation, signed and dated by the assessor, and evidence produced by the candidate was signed. Where centres were storing assessments electronically, these were authenticated. In a very small number of centres, there were issues that prevented this criterion being met and these are being addressed.

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

There was sufficient evidence in almost all centres that candidates' work was being accurately judged by assessors. In a small number of centres consistency was harder to measure due to the lack of detail provided at assessment, but in general terms there were no real issues with consistency. There has been a marked improvement in previous years and better consistency and standardisation.

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

All centres met SQA requirements in terms of evidence retention with most centres retaining evidence beyond these timescales. All centres were aware of SQA's retention procedures.

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

All centres complied with the requirement to disseminate feedback to staff and to ensure that this feedback was used to inform assessment practice. This was either done through minutes of meetings being circulated, or amendments to procedural guides and/or internal documents.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ CPD records were maintained effectively with staff appropriately qualified and competent to deliver the qualification.
- ◆ Good evidence of initial assessment, prior learning needs and development needs fully documented in a candidate learning/training plan.
- ◆ Evidence of regular, scheduled, recorded contact between assessors and candidates.
- ◆ Good efforts made in relation to contextualisation.
- ◆ Good use of e-portfolios in some centres.

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ CPD should be more explicit towards the ICT Core Skill.
- ◆ Clear referencing of candidate evidence.
- ◆ Detailed search strategy (SCQF levels 5 and 6).
- ◆ More contextualised or embedded evidence through naturally occurring tasks with less reliance on the assessment support packs.
- ◆ Centres should use the opportunity to evidence Core Skills through naturally occurring evidence where possible.
- ◆ More evidence of standardisation activities being recorded specifically in relation to the ICT Core Skill. This could include a review of candidate evidence, discussions about evidence requirements, or interpretation of standards.