



**Higher National and Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2013**

**Physical Education:
Sport and Leisure**

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

Higher National Units

General comments

During session 2012–2013, centres offering the HNC/D award in Coaching and Developing Sport have been working with the revised award with their HNC candidates (and some with HND candidates). This has presented centres with challenges as staff members have had to work with revised and new Units, and revised and new assessment support pack (ASP) materials.

It was encouraging to note that External Verifiers had adopted a supportive role while ensuring the quality of assessments remained high. Centre staff had likewise responded well to the changes and had appreciated the additional support made available to them.

For the Fitness, Health and Exercise award, staff members were well aware that this award was also under revision and it was clear that standards had remained generally high. They had also remained high for other HN Sports awards that were subject to external verification procedures.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

As indicated above, centres delivering revised awards were using new materials (Unit specifications and exemplification materials) for the first time and responded well to this challenge. Centres generally kept good lines of communication open with SQA in order to address any issues with the new materials. Some centres made regular use of the service offered by SQA to prior-verify assessments and this approach is commended as it ensures that assessment material meets a national standard.

Evidence Requirements

Centres had made effective use of exemplification materials in general. As has been noted in previous years, centres need to ensure that marking of candidate work meets the demands of the SCQF levels of the Units. Also, regardless of any mark awarded, all Evidence Requirements and all essential evidence need to be addressed in full.

Administration of assessments

A number of centres were working with the revised verification procedures and it was clear that policies existed to ensure all required procedures were in place. This was generally true of all centres visited this year. In a very small number of cases, the Internal Verifier had not picked up potential problems and it is important to note that this task needs to be carried out robustly and in a supportive context to ensure that any problems are addressed and recorded. Where re-assessment is carried out, centres should retain the original assessed material for the External Verifier to view.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates has improved over the years as assessors have become more familiar with Units, assessments and SQA requirements.

The depth and breadth of feedback was excellent in a good number of cases as the feedback (what was good and what might be improved) is important for candidate learning. At the same time it helps the External Verifier to understand why an assessment decision was reached.

Assessments had taken place at times when the opportunity for success was high, and skills and knowledge had been acquired.

Areas of good practice

Centres had continued to utilise their experience to best effect to support candidates. The added value to the learning process was considerable and the generally good feedback enhanced the learning process. Some feedback was very detailed and of a high level.

Specific areas for improvement

In a few centres, there was disparity between the quality and depth of feedback given by one assessor for one Unit compared with that for another Unit by a different assessor. Centres need to continue to be aware of best practice and encourage staff to aspire to the highest level. Internal verification has a role to play here and the sharing of good practice is highly recommended.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

HNC Graded Unit at SCQF level 7 for Coaching and Developing Sport
HN Graded Units at SCQF level 8 for HND Sports Coaching with Development of Sport

Similarly for HNC/D Fitness Health and Exercise at both levels as well as Sports Therapy

General comments

The centres making use of the Fitness, Health and Exercise awards have over the years become experienced in the requirements of the Graded Units and they have put this experience to effective use. This has given candidates a good level of support and helped ensure that standards are being met.

Centres delivering the revised Graded Units for Coaching and Developing Sport had adapted well to the changes. Some of these changes were subtle but significant and SQA had held an event to which all delivering centres had been invited in order to explore the changes. This had been well received and the additional advice given regarding marking had resulted in good standardisation. This SQA support will continue with the HND award as most centres will be using this for the first time in the coming year.

Other Graded Units were all meeting the required standard in the main.

Where awards were under review, centres had been kept up to date and their support was much appreciated by all involved.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Centres visited had all made use of SQA materials and almost all had adopted the additional approach to marking which had been circulated and discussed at the standardisation event. There had been a need with the Coaching award, to ensure that candidates were not awarded high marks for minimum evidence and that had been addressed well.

The Fitness, Health and Exercise award had been well understood and exemplars and marking conducted fairly with good feedback given.

Evidence Requirements

The concerns of previous years had been addressed to a large degree by revisions to awards and the ensuing changes to exemplification material.

Centres had made good use of support materials and had given clearer justification for the mark and grade awarded.

There remains a need to be vigilant and avoid awarding a high mark for what is a minimum level of competence. In other words a high mark requires clear justification for it to be awarded.

Administration of assessments

Many centres again had good internal verification policies. This supported fair and effective standardisation with the centre.

General feedback

The quality of feedback was fair and effective in that it supported the mark being given. This was true in the majority of centres. All centres need to ensure that feedback is as detailed as possible and reasonable, to ensure that candidates can learn and that a verifier is able to see the justification for the award being made.

Areas of good practice

The high quality and detailed feedback given by some centres was welcomed. As was the case in previous years, the fact that centres had made use of opportunities to integrate assessments, where this was practicable, was noted as being good practice.

Specific areas for improvement

Variation across assessors at times remains a concern and this is an area in which Internal Verifiers have a part to play to encourage the sharing of best practice within a centre.

SVQ awards

General comments

The comments are for the verifications groups listed:

PE Sport and Leisure SVQ

As was the case with the previous year, the majority of centres delivering SVQ awards had been doing so for a number of years and had used their growing experience and confidence to add to the candidate experience.

Centre staff were experienced in the industry and were becoming familiar with SQA procedures and requirements.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

There were a relatively small number of active centres but good candidate numbers involved. Most centres had been delivering and assessing SQA awards for some time and were familiar with requirements and procedures.

Centres were also aware that standards are subject to change as industries move onward to meet current standards.

New centres were being supported by SQA staff to help ensure standards remain high.

Evidence Requirements

Centres generally had confidence in their ability to deliver and assess using a variety of types of assessment. This however also depended on the job role in which the candidate was working, and the environment in which the assessment took place. It was also affected by the aspect of knowledge or skill being assessed.

Administration of assessments

Centres showed that they generally used their best efforts to ensure that candidates received quality support and that assessments were appropriate to the competence being assessed. Centres had, as in previous years, generally good procedures in place to ensure that internal verification was being carried out and recorded, and that the frequency and timing was appropriate to any risk factor perceived.

General feedback

The quality of feedback is significant as it allows candidate development, but it is also significant in that it allows the verifier to see why a particular assessment decision has been made.

The majority of centres had made fair and valid assessment decisions with good justification being given.

Areas of good practice

Some centres had used NQ awards or HN awards to further enhance candidate competence and had also made effective use of NQ awards and Units to underpin knowledge and skills and also the SVQ awards.

The quality of feedback in some centres was good to note as it supports both candidate learning and the task of verification.

Specific areas for improvement

Verifiers can move on from centres. When another verifier is deployed, that new member of staff must also meet the requirements of the assessment or qualifications strategy and have the required assessor or Internal Verifier award(s) together with the operational competence as set down in the strategy.