



**Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2015
Electrical Plant**

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

Higher National Units

General comments

In session 2014–15, nine centres received external verification visits in HN Electrical Plant. All nine centres were further education colleges. The nine visits were conducted by three external verifiers. The external verification events were conducted using SQA's new approach to quality assurance.

The following HN Units were externally verified:

DN3W 34 Electrical Power Systems (5)
H01T 34 Electrical Machine Principles (7)
H01V 34 Electrical Safety (7)
DN40 34 Industrial Plant Maintenance (1)
DN49 35 Transformers (2)
DN4M 35 Electrical Standby Systems (1)

The number in brackets after each Unit title indicates in how many centres the Unit was externally verified.

All nine centres were successful at verification with overall outcome ratings indicating that they had significant strengths in HN Electrical Plant.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The HN Units externally verified in the nine centres consisted of a combination of SQA assessment exemplar materials and centre-designed internal assessment instruments. All assessment instruments reviewed by external verifiers were found to be in line with SQA requirements and, as such, were valid, reliable, equitable and fair. External verifiers reported that centres had developed effective marking schemes for all assessment instruments developed internally. In one centre, all new assessment instruments were sent to SQA for prior verification to ensure that these assessments were valid, reliable, equitable and fair.

Evidence Requirements

On reviewing assessment instruments and candidate evidence in all nine centres it was found that assessors and internal verifiers had a clear understanding of the evidence requirements in the HN Units that were externally verified.

Administration of assessments

All nine centres had highly developed and well documented assessment and internal verification policies and procedures which assessors and internal verifiers were applying in the case of the HN Units that were externally verified. In some centres assessment and internal verification policies and procedures were being modified as a result of the merger of colleges. However, these policies and

procedures were at a sufficiently well-developed stage that they could be used by assessors and internal verifiers to undertake assessment and internal verification.

The external verifiers reported that they saw clear evidence of internal verification taking place typically in the form of second marking of candidate scripts, internal verifiers' initials and dates on the front covers of candidate sampled scripts, and completion of a range of centre internal verification documentation. Sampling rates varied in centres (eg 25% or the square root of the candidate numbers + 1), but external verifiers were satisfied that acceptable levels of sampling were taking place for internal verification purposes.

General feedback

In all nine centres the external verifiers reported that they had good access to accommodation, candidate registers, assessment materials, internal verification forms, candidate work, candidates and staff to perform external verification.

Where external verifiers spoke to candidates in centres they found that candidates were generally complimentary about the support they received from their lecturers and from the centre as a whole.

External verifiers were complimentary about the Unit master folders they reviewed during their external verification visits. These were well presented and contained all essential assessment and internal verification documentation. In some centres much of the documentation in master folders can also be accessed via the centres' intranet systems.

External verifiers indicated that written feedback given to candidates was generally very good. Feedback was specific, accurate and comprehensive. It is good to see that assessors continue to correct candidates for not including the appropriate unit after a numerical answer.

Areas of good practice

It is pleasing to report that much good practice was observed by the external verifiers during their visits to centres. Some examples of this good practice is shown below.

In one centre, assessments for Units H01T 34 Electrical Machine Principles and DN3W 34 Electricity Power Systems are integrated with that of D77G 34 Communication: Practical Skills.

In the same centre as above, candidates had participated in two site visits to local industrial companies. This had enhanced their learning experience and allowed the candidates to relate theory better to current industrial practice.

In the same centre as in paragraphs 1 and 2, the lecturer schedules 15 minutes before lunch, and 15 minutes at the end of the day specifically to provide candidates with additional support and remediation.

In one centre the external verifier commented as follows: 'I was very impressed by the level of written feedback assessors provide to candidates on their responses to summative assessment. Candidates are complimented on good performance, but mistakes in working are clearly identified and used to explain to candidates where they have gone wrong.'

In another centre the external verifier observed that the curriculum team were using an excellent front sheet for their internal verification documentation which spelled out clearly who did what and who was responsible for what. The external verifier regarded this as a simple but very effective sheet.

In one centre new assessment instruments are prior verified by SQA to ensure they are valid, reliable, equitable and fair.

In one centre visited the external verifier commented as follows: 'I was impressed by the way in which one of the assessors asked candidates to send him an initial draft of their report for the Electrical Power Systems Unit. The assessor was able to make recommendations on what steps the candidates should take to improve their reports. The outcome of this was that the quality of final reports was good or even very good.'

In another centre assessment feedback sheets are provided to facilitate a system for the assessor to provide feedback to the candidates along with advice on how to prepare for re-assessment. These sheets also allow candidates to provide comments back to the assessor, thus facilitating good communications between candidates and assessors/lecturers.

Specific areas for improvement

External verifiers did not identify any specific areas for improvement during their visits.