



# NQ verification 2023–24 round 2

## Qualification verification summary report

### Section 1: verification group information

Verification group name:	Practical Metalworking
Verification activity:	Visit
Date published:	June 2024

### National Course components verified

Course code	Course level	Course title
C861 75	National 5	Practical Metalworking — IACCA

### Section 2: comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

All verified centres used the mandatory, annually-issued practical activity. Good practice was identified in centres where teachers had ensured candidates understood the requirements of the assessment before starting it.

Centres must use the components stated in the practical activity. A few centres which were verified did not use pop rivets, and this led to either an 'accepted with recommendations' or 'not accepted' decision (dependent on any other identified issues) for their approach to assessment.

Some centres used different material thicknesses to those specified in the practical activity. This is acceptable if there is a supplier issue, but centres must ensure that any change to thickness does not change the validity of the assessment by making it harder or easier. If the thickness of material changes, centres must update the working drawings to ensure candidates have the correct information.

Some centres used a centre-devised spreadsheet to record assessor observations and marks. This is acceptable, but please pay particular attention to formulas and ensuring that there are no unintended changes to the marking instructions. Some centres made transposition errors when transferring marks from their spreadsheet to the candidate assessment record and then to the verification sample form. This resulted in them having to make amendments to marks submitted to SQA via the Internal Marks Assessment Form (IMAF). We recommend that centres review the administration of marking as part of their internal verification process to ensure that no candidates are unfairly disadvantaged or advantaged.

Most centres were consistent in their approach to assessing functional sizes. They correctly used five of the suggested dimensions from the table in the practical activity, selecting at least one from each area. Assessors had indicated either on the assessment record, or on a pro forma devised by the centre, which functional sizes had been selected for assessment and had shown the awarded mark. These functional dimensions were consistent for all candidates within the group. However, a few centres did not inform candidates about the functional dimensions chosen, or indeed the importance of them in relation to the marking instructions, before starting the practical activity task. In all these centres, this led to either an 'accepted with recommendations' or a 'not accepted' (dependent on any other identified issues) for their approach to assessment.

No centres applied a finish that obscured candidates' practical evidence before visiting verification took place. Visiting verifiers were therefore able to fully verify assessment judgements this year. Centres are reminded that a clear lacquer can be applied.

## **Assessment judgements**

Good practice was identified in centres that had viewed the Understanding Standards videos and reviewed the specimen log book before starting the practical activity. Assessors, internal verifiers and candidates can use the materials to ensure they are aware of the standard required at National 5.

Centres are reminded to include detailed commentary when awarding marks, as this supports both internal and external verification activity.

Some centres marked the log book leniently. The completion of the log book is an individual activity — as with every aspect of the practical activity assessment, there is no group working (nor should it be a teacher-led activity). The information in the logbook must be in candidates' own words. As stated above, centres should use Understanding Standards materials and the specimen log book, along with the provided marking instructions when awarding marks in this area. We recommend that the log book is focused more on the care and maintenance of machinery or tools, rather than the processes being carried out, as that will help improve judgements in applying the marking instructions.

A few centres incorrectly awarded marks to candidate evidence where machinery or tools were used that are outwith the National 5 Practical Metalworking course specification. Machinery such as grinders and tools such as coping saws, which are not in the practical activity section of the course specification, must not be used in the log book and must not be awarded marks.

Some centres incorrectly applied the independence of work marks to their candidates. Assessors cannot award full marks in any section where evidence from that section is incomplete. For example, if the tray is missing the candidate cannot achieve full marks in the bench work, fabrication or finishing sections of the marking instructions. Furthermore, candidates cannot achieve full marks in the Independence of work area within these sections.

Visiting verifiers reported that many candidates could not gain marks due to a poor standard of preparing the component parts for a finish. We recommend that centres advise candidates, before assessment takes place, of the standard of finish required at National 5 level, for example, deburring and polishing component parts to remove scratches and process marks. If no attempt has been made by the candidate to prepare the components for a finish, then no marks can be awarded in this area.

### **Section 3: general comments**

Preparation for each cohort in terms of materials and documentation was particularly good across almost all centres selected for verification. The majority of centres had evidence of internal verification at most stages. Centres are commended for their hard work in this area.

The facilities, accommodation and resources for candidates across the country have all been positively commented upon by the verification team. This is very reassuring, as it shows that the infrastructure is in place to give candidates the best opportunity to demonstrate their skills and, likewise, the best opportunity for those that deliver the subject to make valid and consistent assessment judgements.

Centres should remember that if they are selected for verification, they must ensure that any non-permanent mechanical joints such as internal and external threads should be easily disassembled to aid the verification process.

Assessment arrangements can be used to support candidates when they are generating evidence for the practical activity. This can be especially important for the log book. SQA co-ordinators should submit full details of the candidate's difficulty in accessing the assessment, the proposed assessment arrangement, and the specific assessment being undertaken, to the assessment arrangements team by emailing: [aarequests@sqa.org.uk](mailto:aarequests@sqa.org.uk)