



**Skills for Work**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2024–25**

**Skills for Work: Hairdressing**

**404**

# Skills for Work Courses

## Skills for Work Hairdressing: National 4

Group award code: C238 74

J16S 74 Hairdressing: Salon Awareness (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points  
J16T 74 Hairdressing: Working in the Salon (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points  
J16R 74 Hairdressing: Employability Skills (National 4) 6 SCQF credit points  
J16V 74 Hairdressing: Creativity (National 4) 6 SCQF credit point

## Skills for Work Hairdressing: National 5

Group award code: C252 75

J138 75 Hairdressing: Working in a Salon Environment (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points  
J139 75 Hairdressing: Salon Skills (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points  
J13B 75 Hairdressing: Creative Trends (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points  
J13A 75 Hairdressing: An Introduction to Colour (National 5) 6 SCQF credit points

**and/or**

J13M 75 Hairdressing: Introduction to Colouring Processes (National 5) 6 SCQF credit point

## General Comments

Skills for Work: Hairdressing (National 4 and 5) courses are well established and have been delivered in a wide range of settings, including within realistic salon environments in schools. They provide an introductory hairdressing qualification, with practical experience of general salon duties, reception skills, communication and customer care. The courses are designed to help learners to acquire subject-specific knowledge and experience, an understanding of the workplace, positive attitudes to learning, and skills which are transferable to other employment areas, enhancing learners' employability profiles. A key feature is the emphasis on learning through practical experience and by reflecting on experience with a focus on process, not product. The units are written in a hierarchical format, to facilitate multi-level delivery, enabling candidates to achieve at their full potential.

There have been very few changes or amendments to the qualifications. The most recent was in February 2012, when an EU directive was issued on health and safety requirements for the use of chemicals used to colour the hair of pre-16-year-olds. To ensure compliance with this directive, SQA developed an additional unit — Hairdressing: Introduction to Colouring Processes (J13M 75) — as an alternative to Hairdressing: Introduction to Colour (J13A 75). The responsibility is with the centre to fully comply with the EU directive and to be aware of the pre-16-year-old restrictions set out by the sector skills body, HABIA (European Directive Pre-16 Restrictions).

Skills for Work courses were re-coded as part of the Curriculum for Excellence development programme in August 2013; however, there were no changes to course and unit content.

To ensure full GDPR compliance, centres should not add 'client' name, address and telephone number on instruments of assessment Client Consultation Records, but instead use 'client' reference code.

All SQA-approved centres selected for external verification activity in academic session 2024–25 have an 'accepted' outcome following external verification review. All units at National 4 and 5 were sampled by external verifiers during visits conducted this session.

The results of the external verification activity would indicate most centres have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards and apply them appropriately.

## **Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials**

Centres externally verified this session are using SQA National Assessment Bank (NAB) material. Discussions with assessors and internal verifiers during external verification based on evidence sampled during visits confirmed that most centre staff are familiar with, and have a clear and accurate understanding of, the unit specifications, evidence requirements and instruments of assessment.

Learning and teaching are supported by a range of resources including access to the internet for research, and workbooks developed by CDN (previously known as Colleges Scotland), or appropriate centre-devised learning materials.

### **Evidence requirements**

Evidence requirements for each unit are clearly detailed in the unit specifications and SQA NAB material provided for all units within each award. Marking guides provided within the NAB indicate the expected standard of learner response, facilitating standardised, reliable assessment decisions.

In almost all centres visited the evidence viewed indicated that SQA NAB material had been used appropriately, and that fair, consistent, reliable assessment decisions had been made in most centres. Therefore, the verification sample suggests that there is a clear understanding of unit evidence requirements.

## **Administration of assessments**

SQA NAB material is available for all units within each award. The evidence requirements for each unit are detailed within each unit specification. Marking guides provided within the NABs indicate the expected standard of learner response, facilitating standardised, reliable assessment decisions. NABs should be internally verified annually as part of pre-delivery activity to ensure any changes made are identified, and legislation is implemented such as GDPR compliance.

Almost all centres visited continued to demonstrate links with employers. The employers offered work experience to learners and carried out presentations to groups. These discussed job roles and responsibilities, and outlined realistic working practices and skills required to work within the hairdressing industry. This relates to task requirements for unit J16S 74 Hairdressing: Salon Awareness (National 4) and supports the holistic implementation and expectations of group award delivery.

Centres delivering unit J13B 75 Creative Trends lacked a range of styles, textures and colours. The assessing team should ensure candidates identify and record current fashion trends from a variety of sources to produce a style board which effectively combines style, texture, and colours to meet the minimum requirements.

## **Learning and teaching**

Learning and teaching activities are varied and appropriate to learners' needs. Activities were highly practical and reflected the skills and knowledge required to evidence each unit. Learners in all centres visited were given the opportunity to display practical skills in realistic salon environments reflecting industry practice.

## **Overall assessment**

Overall, from the candidate evidence externally verified at all centres this session, assessment judgements made were in line with national standards and were accepted with few development points identified. Assessments verified met the evidence requirements of each unit and showed consistent marking by assessors throughout. Good relevant feedback was given throughout portfolios verified. In almost all instances, evidence viewed was extensive and demonstrated a high standard of work by candidates across all centres visited.

## **Verification**

Centres visited provided the internal verification policies and procedure documents. Completed verification documentation was available, including internal verification sample plans, internal verifier feedback to assessors, minutes of meetings, and assessment feedback to candidates. Assessor judgements were accurate, valid and consistent across centres.

## Areas of good practice reported on during session 2024–25:

A range of good practice was identified across the centres visited, which included:

- good use of IT skills demonstrated by candidates when producing PowerPoint presentation of style boards for Creative Trends unit J13B 75
- good detailed individual candidate feedback by assessors to support improvement
- exemplary approach to assessment
- robust internal verification, with constructive feedback to assessors

Range of additional activities identified included:

- pop-up salon sessions with the barbering group
- class working in client salon sessions
- participation in competitions
- going to day care centres to offer hair services
- 'lucky dip' initiative — candidates blind pick hair theme to work on
- access to Wella HERO education platform
- candidate participation in creating hairstyle looks for school theatre productions

## Specific areas for improvement reported during session 2024–25:

- Internal verifier feedback to be specific and reflect evidence reviewed to support ongoing quality improvement.
-  Unit J13B 04 Creativity, outcome 1 — style board evidence presented did not always fully meet evidence requirements. To ensure the evidence criteria are fully met, evidence of sources used must be presented to ensure style board reflects current creative fashion trends combining style, texture and colour.
- Assessors' feedback to be recorded on all candidate reviews.
- Ensure candidate responses for unit J13M 75 outcomes 1 b and c fully reflect evidence knowledge requirement in line with answer guide.
- Annual review of assessment instruments should be carried out to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet any legislative requirements.
- Consultation sheets within the ASP's ask for 'client' name, address and telephone number. This should be amended to 'client reference' to ensure GDPR compliance.