



**National Qualifications 2022**  
**Qualification Verification Summary Report**  
**Skills for Work: Engineering Skills**

Verification group number: 412

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

# Skills for Work Courses

## Skills for Work: Engineering Skills (National 5)

External verification visits were carried out remotely by the team this session. Despite centres experiencing difficulties during the pandemic, all centres were found to be satisfactory.

### General comments

One college was delivering the National 5 qualification, and four schools were delivering the National 5 qualification. Geographically, the centres were spread across Scotland.

Three schools were registering candidates for the first time following approval early in the session. One school had accessed the SQA offer of a post-approval visit before their external verification visit in late May.

The other centres have a comprehensive understanding of national standards as they have been offering the awards for a few years. The vast majority of candidates in this session were from S4–S6.

We would emphasise the importance of the visit plan, which is sent to centres before the visit date. This document outlines what has been agreed between the centre and the external verifier prior to the meeting, which may include access to delivery staff and evidence relating to:

- ◆ equal/fair access to assessment
- ◆ assessor standardisation arrangements
- ◆ internal verification strategy/procedures and sampling

Unfortunately, this pre-visit information is still largely ignored by centres. As in past years, it should be emphasised that the external verifier bases their report on centre staff's adherence to centre procedures in their standardisation and recording of assessments, sampling, and internal verification decisions. It is disappointing that centres are not taking heed of this report to make arrangements for external verifier visits. This often leads to visits taking longer for the external verifier to understand the centre procedures before beginning their process.

Centres are reminded that SQA sets the sampling plan of what units and candidates will be selected based on registrations.

Skills for Work: Engineering Skills awards require industrial partnerships to encourage candidates to develop an understanding of the workplace. Due to their location, centres may find difficulty in this important aspect of candidate development of employability skills. This can be successfully overcome by centres simply inviting company individuals to visit the centre and offer a question and answer session to candidates.

One high school has developed excellent links with REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) and INEOS to deliver outstanding practical skills for work in engineering.

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

As most of the centres visited have all been offering these awards for many years, they are demonstrably familiar with the course arrangements and record the requirements from the unit specifications in their internal verification procedures. The one exception to this was a recently approved school. It did not base its scheduling of units in line with course arrangements guidance, and this had resulted in candidates attempting the National Design and Manufacture unit before two skill acquisition units. They had decided to use a kit format for the control of the unit, with the support structure being undertaken at a later date.

All centres remotely visited were using the SQA-produced National Assessment Bank (NABs) materials for candidate assessment. Centres had approved these internally and recorded them in procedures.

## **Evidence requirements**

Most centres have a clear understanding of the evidence requirements for the course units.

The interpretation of the assessment for employability skills in the National 5 Design and Manufacture unit was problematic in one centre. Candidates prepare a short written report on their activities followed by a presentation to their peer group but those who were struggling to comply with the evidence requirements were still being marked as successful. As engineering is a communication process, centre staff should explain that if candidates decide to follow this route, they will be asked constantly to justify choices of processes, etc. Centres may use staff as a peer group if this would help, but the requirements must be completed to be successful.

There is still an inconsistent approach to employability skills in general. It would be beneficial for all centres to develop meaningful partnerships with local engineering employers at the outset of the course to encourage candidate understanding of this in relation to good working practice. Good completion of the skill sections of the units should enable candidates to monitor their progress and allow them to record development. Assessor written feedback on employability skills to candidates should always form part of an individual unit feedback session with targets mutually set.

## **Administration of assessments**

All centres made use of the SQA-produced NABs that have been subject to strict scrutiny, so all assessments were at the appropriate level.

Centres are reminded that the sample should follow the centre policy where the procedure should be stated.

Verifiers are suggesting that all centres should study the SQA-produced Internal Verification Toolkit which will allow external verifiers to see where and why decisions have been agreed upon and recorded.

## **Areas of good practice**

The following areas of good practice were reported during this session.

- ◆ More centres are continuing to invest in modern technology resources and are encouraging candidates to make use of these in their completion of practical tasks.
- ◆ One centre has developed excellent links with REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) and INEOS to deliver outstanding practical skills for work in engineering.
- ◆ Special mention must again be made of the enthusiasm of centre staff in the delivery of these awards.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

The following areas for development were reported:

- ◆ Centres should understand that the visit plan requests that internal verification procedures be presented and explained to the external verifier at the start of the external verification visit, and centres must make arrangements for this to take place.
- ◆ Most centres have a rather indifferent approach to candidate feedback, particularly with regard to employability skills — this is seen on many candidate assessments where no comment is made to encourage them to advance weaker skills throughout the course.
- ◆ Internal verification of individual units should be undertaken at the completion of the units, rather than at the completion of the course, in order to adhere to unit specifications and evidence requirements.
- ◆ Centres need to develop a formal way of standardisation of course team meetings and provide formal feedback to the candidates.
- ◆ Centres can adopt the signature of an internal verifier on assessed and verified samples with dates as good practice.