



**Higher National Qualifications (China)
Internal Assessment Report 2013
English and Communication**

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

During this year, all centres visited have been briefed on the structure and requirements for the New Approach to Quality Assurance. External Verifiers have emphasised the supportive nature of their role and the additional advice available from William Zhang, newly appointed as SQA in-country quality assurance officer.

The majority of centres visited have demonstrated clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of national standards and have achieved a High Level of Confidence rating.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The Unit DE3N 34 – Communication: Analysing and Presenting Complex Communication is routinely delivered according to the Unit specification. The assessment tasks chosen by centres are, in general, valid and reliable. They comprise exemplar and support materials produced by SQA or are centre designed and SQA Prior Verified before delivery.

A few instances of alternative tasks not being immediately available for re-assessment have been noted, and a small number of centres have been advised that candidates have been offered too much support in terms of suggested solutions.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence Requirements for the HN Communication Units are generally clearly understood by centres. Tasks set are relevant and contextualised.

There is a need to ensure that work submitted meets all the Evidence Requirements of the Unit specification and is the original work of the candidates. In some cases the External Verifier has recommended that a copy of a statement of authenticity be attached to assessment evidence.

Administration of assessments

Materials presented for External Verification have been, in the main, well organised, well presented and very accessible for scrutiny by External Verifiers. Effective systems and facilities to progress the SQA HND programme exist and are clear.

Centres are commended generally for their attention to detail in internal verification procedures and documentation. Information and feedback to assessors and specific action planning have been underpinned by a general increase in assessor meetings. In order to meet new QA guidelines a small number of these required more specific detail on information disseminated.

General feedback

There is evidence that candidates are being well prepared and well supported. Several centres allocate tutorial time to provide additional guidance to candidates who require it.

Areas of good practice

Several staff training and development programmes have been commended for their effects in encouraging and motivating staff.

Detailed and supportive feedback and individual tutorials for candidates requiring information or re-assessment have been observed. An Assessment Tutorial Schedule with details recorded and retained can be very valuable to support the candidate and assist the work of the External Verifier.

Recording at least some examples of oral presentation is recommended to provide guidance and feedback to candidates as well as to support internal/external verification procedures.

Specific areas for improvement

The following areas for improvement were noted in a small number of centres:

- ◆ An in-depth annual review of equipment and materials should be conducted, with a clearly recorded action plan for any areas that require to be updated.
- ◆ Minutes of meetings must be sufficiently detailed as to provide clear evidence of dissemination of information to all staff.
- ◆ A robust policy and practice on plagiarism should be explained to candidates at the start of their course programme.
- ◆ Although language skills are still being developed, the professionalism of business communication presented by candidates should never be compromised.
- ◆ A detailed observation checklist should be used to record oral achievement, with precise comments, based on Evidence Requirements, to support candidates' understanding of performance.
- ◆ Centres should consider recording at least some samples of oral work.
- ◆ A new assessment exemplar must be used for any Outcome 1 re-assessment (re-do).