



**Higher National Qualifications (China)
Internal Assessment Report 2014
Hospitality**

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

All centres selected for central/visiting verification demonstrated an understanding of the requirements of the national standards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Tutors/assessors and internal verifiers demonstrated an understanding of the Unit specifications and instruments of assessment. Internal quality assurance systems operated by the centres confirm that tutors/assessors and internal verifiers have the necessary resources (SQA Unit specification and exemplar) to undertake the delivery and assessment of each Unit.

Evidence Requirements

Each centre has a good understanding of the evidence requirements and centres approached the holistic assessment requirements of the Graded Unit independently.

Evidence confirms that centres have adopted strict policies on plagiarism and monitor candidate evidence closely.

Administration of assessments

All centres that were externally verified administered the assessment process in a consistent and professional manner.

Some centres had evidence of pre-delivery checklists and reviews of assessment material throughout the year.

General feedback

There was evidence that assessments were being approached in a consistent manner in each of the centres and in accordance with SQA assessment guidelines. The interpretation of some assessments has created barriers to completion for some candidates; however, clear justification was provided and progress made for future delivery.

Areas of good practice

One centre produced a lecturer's delivery guidance booklet that helped to ensure consistency and standardisation of approach by all involved in the delivery and assessment process.

Centres are proactively supporting candidates to improve language, grammar and articulation.

There is also evidence that tutors are providing supportive and encouraging feedback to the candidates.

Specific areas for improvement

Centres should provide support and guidance on report writing as this was an area of weakness. This was in evidence in Units other than the Graded Units.

Written English continues to be a problem and each centre has its own strengths and approaches to dealing with this. Centres could formalise the support given through the non-teaching staff members, both in the additional language training and personal guidance.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

H317 34	Hospitality Graded Unit 1
DL2G 34	Hospitality Graded Unit 1
H318 35	Hospitality Graded Unit 2
DL2P 35	Hospitality Graded Unit 2
DL3M 35	Gastronomy
DL3G 34	Food & Beverage Service
H198 34	Hospitality Supervision
H1L6 25	Accommodation Management
DL40 35	Kitchen Planning and Design

General comments

The majority of centre staff had a good understanding of the national standards; however, it was also evident that some centres utilised staff from other occupational areas who were unfamiliar with the Graded Unit content and this affected delivery and assessment which resulted in an action plan being created to assist with future delivery.

All centres used SQA-devised materials for assessment and assessment judgements were made against SQA criteria.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It was evident from external verification that the majority of centres were using current SQA Graded Unit specifications and assessment exemplars. These were made available during visiting, central and postal verification.

Evidence Requirements

The majority of centres were using the correct Graded Unit specification and assessment exemplar. One centre marked using the incorrect marking scheme but this was rectified by re-marking the work.

Administration of assessments

There was evidence that centres' interpretation of certain assessments had caused confusion and an unnecessary barrier to candidate completion.

It was also evident that over-marking is predominant in some centres, whilst in others under-marking is present and re-marking was necessary.

There was evidence that all centres are currently using the SQA-devised marking schemes.

Assessment details are checked to ensure validity and currency and this is recorded in a pre-delivery checklist. SQA-generated exemplars were used in all cases.

During the candidates' induction, each candidate is required to sign that they understand the centre's policy regarding plagiarism as contained in the Student Handbook. Also, each candidate submission has a declaration that is signed and dated attesting that the submission is the candidate's own work. SQA guidelines on detecting plagiarism are used to support assessors.

There was use of a clear induction programme checklist that stated candidates' pre-entry levels of English and was countersigned by the candidates.

Records indicate that IT facilities and available software are continually reviewed. The assessment environment and facilities, along with teaching and learning materials, are also specifically reviewed and revised. This assures full currency in terms of meeting the needs of the hospitality industry.

Agendas and minutes of course team meetings were provided.

Pre-delivery checklists were seen when currency of Unit specifications and assessment exemplars was checked. At that time, assessors are required to comment on availability of equipment required for delivery. An inventory checklist of equipment was therefore held.

Teaching delivery and lesson plans were provided for all Units, many noting the changes made to delivery plans.

All prospective candidates undergo a pre-entry educational, physical and social assessment. During induction, candidates are encouraged to record their personal goals and objectives. Further evidence of candidate support is given during individual tutorials. Although attendance is not mandatory, students must make contact with their tutor at least three times during the delivery of each Unit. Student handbooks were seen along with checklists indicating what additional support is available. Additional English language training is available and is delivered by assessors with English as their first language.

Provision was in place to allow candidates a re-sit attempt as necessary. An Appeals Procedure was in place to ensure fairness.

External quality assurance outcomes are discussed during course team meetings. Agendas and minutes were provided. Any action points are noted and relevant staff members must confirm their involvement with the particular actions. Each is checked and signed off by the SQA Co-ordinator.

Almost all of the centres have broken down the marks within the development (Stage 2) to a more manageable marking system to help ensure consistency of marking across the candidate group.

It has become apparent that access to resources to help with particular assessments is not as easy for candidates and tutors as they are in the UK. Whilst access to the internet is available, accessing certain material to assist with, for example, Burns Supper is often blocked or not available through Chinese websites. Centre staff have commented that they do not have the necessary background information in some topic areas to assist which is therefore affecting overall candidate marks. It is also apparent that many centres struggle with the financial budgets within the Units and this is due to uncertainty of the VAT system and monetary value of products in the British pound.

The majority of centres are adhering to the three stages of submission and guidance has been provided to those not currently following this assessment requirement.

Second marking is present in most centres. Internal verification systems have been reviewed and are meeting the needs of the SQA assessment requirements and centre quality assurance policy. Quite a high percentage of candidates failed the Graded Unit but second marking assists in ensuring fairness of marking.

Tutor and candidate interpretation of GU case study requirements is a current barrier. A huge amount of effort and cost is being placed on menu design within one centre, yet the comparative mark is quite low within the marking scheme for this. Emphasis should be placed on meeting the minimum evidence requirements and producing a suitable report.

General feedback

Centres are working hard to conform to SQA requirements for programme delivery and assessment practice. The staff are willing to absorb the advice being provided and to ensure that future delivery meets quality assurance criteria.

Support from SQA is welcomed and helps to develop the centre confidence in delivery and assessment.

Areas of good practice

It was noted that undertaking the internal verification process at the end of each Unit Outcome is good practice since any issues this raises can be resolved in a timely manner.

One centre produced a lecturer's delivery guidance booklet that helped to ensure consistency and standardisation of approach by all involved in the delivery and assessment process.

Centres are proactively supporting candidates to improve language, grammar and articulation.

There is also evidence that tutors are providing supportive and encouraging feedback to the candidates.

Specific areas for improvement

Whilst the majority of centres adhered to three stages of submission, not all centres complied with this SQA assessment requirement and, therefore, candidate work was assessed at the end upon final submission. This did not allow candidates the opportunity to gain feedback at each stage of submission and disadvantaged their final marks.

Where they are not already doing so, it is recommended that centres provide evidence of meetings between tutors and candidates and that a log book/diary is produced which details the conversations held between them at each stage of the case study. The log book helps build an overall picture of the amount of support provided to the candidate. This can provide evidence to justify the marks awarded.

Centres should ensure that candidate evidence meets the minimum evidence requirements at each stage before being allowed to progress onto the next stage. Failure to achieve the minimum evidence requirements may result in a remediation being permitted or the candidate failing to progress further.

This will also help ensure consistency when a candidate is given an overall fail, but has achieved above the 50% pass mark to be awarded a Grade C. The overall mark awarded to pass is 50% and above, not 50% at each stage. It is the minimum evidence requirements that must be achieved in order to progress.

Whilst the Graded Unit is a self-study, project-based assessment, there is permission to provide candidate support on approach, planning and justification; for instance, providing that the evidence is made available for the whole group and not just an individual.

Accommodation management

It is recommended that the teaching plan is revisited to ensure that a check on candidate understanding is built in before progressing to formal assessment

Written English continues to be a problem and each centre has its own strengths and approaches to dealing with this.

It is good practice for centres to ensure that candidate work references the correct Unit number and title to avoid confusion.