



**Higher National Qualifications (China)
Internal Assessment Report 2015
Hospitality Management**

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

The majority of centres selected for verification demonstrated a high level of understanding of the requirements of the national standards.

Qualification verification was carried out during central events in May and July and two visiting events in January and March.

It is encouraging to see that feedback from the reports has demonstrated an ongoing improvement within centres from the previous year and that recommendations have been taken into consideration.

The measurement against the quality assurance management criteria is detailed and centres are becoming more familiar with verification procedures and requirements. As a result, any actions have been agreed and carried out to mutually acceptable time-frames and have been clearly understood.

Each centre is complying with SQA requirements and is effectively using the recommended assessment exemplar and Unit specification. Development of new assessment material has been forwarded to SQA for prior verification.

It has, however, been noted that difficulties still arise regarding report writing skills and the understanding of English grammar. Each centre is clearly demonstrating where support is being provided and where there are areas for future development, this is evident within:

- ◆ tutor feedback to candidates
- ◆ internal verifier feedback to tutors
- ◆ minutes of meetings

It is a requirement of the qualification that tutors have relevant experience to deliver the Units which they teach and this is currently being met to a good standard. Generally all teaching staff have a relevant degree and have undertaken industry experience at some point in their career. Those that teach on the HND from another background are actively undertaking CPD in Hospitality to ensure they are familiar with teaching content and assessment requirements. Each centre is providing a supportive internal quality assurance network with regular meetings and standardisation taking place together with rigorous internal verification.

Most centres have either an on-site practical learning environment, or have relevant industry links to provide internship and work placements for practical teaching and assessments. Those centres that did not meet the requirements throughout visiting verification have demonstrated how industry links have now been set up and these will be effectively reviewed through future verification visits.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Tutors/assessors and internal verifiers demonstrated an understanding of the SQA Unit specifications and assessment exemplars for each Unit and marking schemes/checklists demonstrated a high level of consistency. Support mechanisms are effectively in place, demonstrating support between tutor and candidate and internal verifier and tutor.

Where re-assessment has been required, the centre has submitted work to SQA for prior verification.

Re-assessments/upgrades have been effectively put in place and generally take place at the start of the following session.

Internal verification sampling ratios are dependent on tutor competence/length of service, experience of delivering the internal policies, and whether previous verification highlighted any areas of concern.

Evidence Requirements

In general, there is a good understanding of the Evidence Requirements. Centres are using current assessment instruments and guidance. With exception, centres that were required to update assessment environments to ensure that practical assessments could be undertaken in an appropriate manner, have updated their practices.

There is consistency of marking which demonstrates fairness, support and guidance where applicable, although it was highlighted that certain areas had recommendations for further consideration.

It was noted by internal verifiers that some tutors could expand on their feedback to offer further support to candidates to ensure full understanding is met for future re-submission. This demonstrated good internal quality systems were working since the tutor response either confirmed acceptance or justified an alternative response.

Administration of assessments

Besides some development needs identified within some centres to ensure that practical assessment environments are appropriate, centres ensure that assessments are being undertaken using the appropriate assessment type.

Centres had an effective plagiarism policy in place that candidates signed as read and understood. The form is generally part of the candidate handbook and induction procedure and is completed with each assessment submission. Each centre has its own procedure for dealing with non-compliance which has been effectively evidenced.

Each centre has successfully submitted evidence to demonstrate assessment and verification systems are working. Robust systems have included:

- ◆ using SQA Unit specification and assessment exemplar
- ◆ using SQA marking schemes and/or enhancing them for Graded Unit purposes
- ◆ standardisation processes and procedures at the start of each session with regular meetings throughout the session
- ◆ regular team meetings
- ◆ use of action plans to highlight areas of improvement
- ◆ effective internal verification recording and sampling systems

General feedback

It is encouraging to see the advancement of centres from previous years, which demonstrates an awareness of the need to enhance delivery and assessment methods and to ensure that staff are supported with suitable resources.

The consistency of approach is developing within each centre, and whilst interpretation of some assessment has caused barriers to completion for some candidates, these have gradually been progressed over the past year.

Feedback from centre staff and candidates has reinforced previous comments about support and guidance. Each staff member is actively undertaking CPD to enhance their own knowledge.

Areas of good practice

In addition to areas of general good practice which have been highlighted throughout previous sections, comments from External Verifiers have identified the following:

- ◆ Centres are highly motivated and supportive of candidates and there is a clear network of support within centres through reports and team meetings
- ◆ Good understanding of prior verification processes
- ◆ Some centres have established enhanced industry links to assist with programme assessment practices and completion rates
- ◆ Candidates have provided positive feedback and are enjoying the programme and feel supported by the staff
- ◆ Centres have structured induction and delivery systems in place to assist with consistency of delivery

Specific areas for improvement

Whilst only applicable to certain centres, it was highlighted that some improvements were required in the following areas:

- ◆ Some tutors may benefit from updating knowledge of legislation and VAT requirements since errors in candidate work and marking had occurred (although this was not detrimental to overall results)

- ◆ Ensuring the practical environment for teaching and assessment is suitable and meets the assessment criteria of the Unit being undertaken

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

H317 34 Hospitality Graded Unit 1

H318 35 Hospitality Graded Unit 2

General comments

Central verification took place in May and July.

Each centre is complying with SQA requirements and is using the recommended assessment exemplar) and Unit specification.

It has, however, been noted that difficulties still arise regarding report writing skills and the understanding of English grammar. Each centre is clearly demonstrating where support is being provided and areas for future development.

There have also been some inaccuracies in understanding the requirements of certain criteria within the Graded Unit case studies. Tutors may not have the necessary local knowledge of Scottish lifestyle and/or tradition in order to support the candidate and identify areas of improvement. This is an area that SQA is currently developing to assist with expectations and understanding of local traditions in Scotland, or specific requirements of the case study, to ensure that consistency and fairness is being maintained across all centres.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Tutors/assessors and internal verifiers have demonstrated an understanding of the SQA Unit specifications and assessment exemplars for each Unit and marking schemes/checklists demonstrated a high level of consistency. Support mechanisms are in place, providing support between tutor and candidate and internal verifier and tutor.

Re-assessments/upgrades have been put in place and generally take place at the start of the following session.

Internal verification sampling ratios are dependent on tutor competence/length of service, experience of delivering the internal policies, and whether previous verification highlighted any areas of concern.

Evidence Requirements

There is consistency of marking which demonstrates fairness, support and guidance where applicable, although it was highlighted that certain areas required further action. On a couple of occasions, candidates were allowed to

progress to the next stage of the Graded Unit without successfully achieving the stage previously.

It had been highlighted that some tutors may benefit on updating knowledge of legislation and VAT requirements since errors in marking had occurred.

Administration of assessments

Whilst an improvement on the last year is evident, some clarity is still sought to ensure that interpretation and research do not cause unnecessary barriers to learning and progress.

Pre-delivery tutor guidance is apparent and centres have enhanced lessons to ensure candidates understand the requirements of the Graded Unit. The lessons are followed up with individual meetings and log books/diaries demonstrate where candidates feel they lack knowledge. It was suggested that these log books/diaries are reviewed to highlight areas where concerns arose and that these are included in future lessons.

The internal enhancement of the SQA marking scheme checklist (breaking down points for each task) has ensured consistency of marking and is seen as a progressive advancement on previous years.

Second marking/verification is evident in all centres and is meeting the requirements of SQA and internal policies. There are still a large number of candidates who fail the Graded Unit. The importance of the following is stressed:

- ◆ Understanding of Graded Unit requirements
- ◆ Understanding of case study requirements, especially where information is required on menu choice, local Scottish traditions
- ◆ Successful completion of each stage of the project before progression to the next

General feedback

There is clear evidence that centres are progressively moving forward and are working hard to conform to SQA requirements for programme delivery and assessment. Staff are highly motivated and willing to absorb guidance and support and this is clearly evident through the progression made this past year.

Areas of good practice

It is noted that the internal verification at the end of each stage of the Graded Unit helps to support the tutor with reflective feedback and assists in identifying individual candidate needs for future development. When identified early on, motivation can improve and help candidates stay focused; it also demonstrates tutors are being effectively supported.

Centres are pro-actively supporting candidates to improve language, grammar and articulation. There has been clear progress over the past year but there is scope for further improvement.

Specific areas for improvement

There is a drive to enhance candidate English grammar and report writing skills, however, it is noted that there has been continuous improvement over the past year which is encouraging to see.

Ensuring that the Graded Unit is completed with three clear stages and timescales allocated for submission of each stage has been improved. However, some centres still allow candidates to progress to the next stage before successful completion of the previous one. This has resulted in overall candidate 'fails' and can be demotivating to the candidate. Tutors should allow for a re-submission following discussion and record clearly, on the candidate/tutor log book, the level of autonomy demonstrated by the candidate.