Higher National Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2016
Creative Industries

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 following HN units were verified this session:

GJ3D 47: Creative Digital Media
H4A1 34   Creative Industries: An Introduction
H4A6 34   Editing: An Introduction
H4A3 34   Camera: An Introduction
H4AB 35   Using a Single Camera in a TV Production Team
DM1C 34   Technical Operations, Recording & Editing
DJ3A 34   Working in the Creative Industries
DM0W 34   Creative Project

New delivering centres have been introduced this session and existing centres have completed re-organisation and now appear to have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of national standards. It is apparent that improved training and liaison continues to take place within centres and this is resulting in a more standardised approach to quality management.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

This session there continues to be an improvement in assessors' familiarity with materials and procedures in most centres.

Centres continue to improve their adoption and dissemination of material through various VLE systems, but it is again noted that there still is a variety of approaches and consistency amongst centres, which would benefit from standardisation and sharing of good practice.

The new Radio awards were introduced in August 2015. Only one centre picked up the revised awards in this first year and it has been difficult to get centres together for QST meetings. As a result, assessment and support material may not be being improved and modernised regularly although centres have therefore been encouraged to share good delivery practice as appropriate.

Evidence requirements

Again this year there appears to be a further clearer understanding of evidence requirements for units and how these can be better contextualised and integrated within project delivery that reflects industry practices. Exemplary centres continue to expand an integrated and contextualised curriculum delivery across disciplines.

Encouragingly, most centres are now implementing alternative approaches to evidence gathering which more accurately reflect industry norms, practices and requirements.

Administration of assessments

As reported for the past few years, all centres continue to demonstrate improved methods of delivering assessment and feedback, with all now utilising a variety of electronic communication (VLEs and Dropbox). Disappointingly, the quality and performance of these continues to be mixed and could benefit from standardising and sharing of good practice.

As reported previously, internal verification procedures still do not appear to be keeping pace with developed assessment delivery. In many cases, the adoption of sophisticated electronic communication does not appear to be encouraging the integration of internal verification procedures into curriculum development.

General feedback

With stability of rationalisation within existing centres and the introduction of new centres, this year has seen a reporting of marked improvements in curriculum development and learning and teaching delivery.

As reported last year, candidates continue to report an improved level of 'virtual' communication with assessors, and the worrying diminution of personal assessor contact is being improved as new assessors develop a mature and industry-centred approach to assessment procedures.

Again, the paucity of quality candidate action and development plans (especially employability and progression plans) in some centres continues to be a source of concern. As a result, external verifiers have been advised to share examples of good student personal development planning practice with centres.

It continues to be noted that, in some centres, direct links with industry are lessening and as a result 'real-world' teaching continues to decline. Disappointingly, the focus towards delivering candidates with employability skills appears to be being replaced by a concentration on progressing learners to HE.

Unfortunately, this year one centre was placed on 'hold' for delivering units without adequate resources.

Areas of good practice

See also areas of good practice identified for HN graded units below.

Subsequent to last year's report, most centres are displaying excellent and holistic use of virtual learning environments to fully reflect industry practices. Candidate interviews have confirmed that such experience has major implications for their personal development and future employability.

As indicated last year, more centres are now including other curriculum areas within the Creative Industries to reflect industry developments. This continues to assist in the standardisation of delivery, assessment and investment in appropriate equipment. More importantly, learners are now reflecting on the importance of transferable skillsets for employability within the Creative Industries.

Exemplary centres continue to apply course design with a strong focus on employability. Individual learner support and guidance being provided by the teaching team and industry partners, combined with extensive supported work experience.

As previously indicated, current industry practice continues to be used as a key driver for course developments in exemplary centres. This has been evidenced in assessment specifications, standards and workflows. Positive candidate interviews have demonstrated that many more centres are encouraging 'live' project working and peer group reviewing to mirror industry practice.

Specific areas for improvement

See also specific areas advised for improvement for HN graded units below.

Although external verifiers have been advised to encourage centres to facilitate a candidate-initiated vehicle that can track their personal objectives and skills development throughout the course, there appears to be no progress towards a standardised approach amongst centres to candidate personal development planning.

Although the standard of VLE delivery has improved, many centres would benefit from further developing their VLEs and new media communications to match expectations and requirements of Creative Industry candidates.

As reported last year, staff CPD in some centres is still not reflecting industry developments. Centres are advised to review resources and CPD opportunities regularly to stay current. Centres are also advised to consider more 'masterclass' delivery and links with industry.

Centres must ensure they have adequate resources available to deliver the HNC/HNDs.

Higher National graded units

The following HN graded units were verified this session:

H49S 34   Creative Industries: Television: Graded Unit 1
H9F9 34   Creative Industries: Radio: Graded Unit 1
H9FA 35   Creative Industries: Radio: Graded Unit 2
H49T 35   Creative Industries: Television: Graded Unit 2
DM2P 34   Creative Industries: Radio: Graded Unit 1

General comments

As HN units

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

As HN units

Evidence requirements

There continues to be a clearer understanding of evidence requirements for units with exemplary centres tailoring evidence requirements to accurately match and reflect industry practices.

As indicated last year, centres are now adopting a more integrated and contextualised curriculum delivery and are exploring alternative approaches to evidence gathering as they share good practice with other centres.

The new generation of motivated staff continue to be committed to improving the student experience and employability but they are still operating under considerable time and budget constraints.

Unfortunately, this year there appears to have been little opportunity for QDTs or inter-centre dialogue to explore and initiate alternative methods of gathering and recording evidence.

Administration of assessments

As HN units

General feedback

As HN units

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were reported this session:

♦ Use of various internet-based broadcast channels to develop industry standards, skillsets and audience feedback

♦ Cross-marking and sampling at each stage of the graded unit to ensure standardisation and consistency of marking

♦ Improved use a VLE delivery, communication and evidence gathering (eg Mahara)

♦ Use of current industry practice is a key driver for course developments such as assessment specifications, standards and workflows

♦ Team teaching and cross-marking to support robust assessment process

♦ Implementation of candidate peer reviews

♦ File structure exemplars/templates to support the logical storing and retrieving of evidence requirements

♦ Adoption of unique selling points to delineate centre specialisms such as single camera and multi-camera

♦ Continuing development of matrices to highlight the achievement of integrated unit outcomes

Specific areas for improvement

The following areas were identified for improvement:

♦ Centres are encouraged to adopt candidate-initiated personal recording and reflection.

♦ Consequently, centres are advised to develop their VLE provision to encourage a candidate-centred approach with candidate-initiated recording and evidencing within personal development plans.

♦ Centres are encouraged to utilise internal verification procedures and staff meetings to further develop integrated project-based delivery.

♦ Centres are encouraged to further develop vehicles to encourage integration and participation with other Creative Industry qualification disciplines.

♦ Centres are advised to improve networked storage for video and audio files to support robust storing of candidate materials.

♦ Centres must fully implement sampling strategies into all three stages of the graded unit. Sampling of candidate evidence should be completed at the planning, developing and evaluation stages rather than end loaded.

♦ Centres are advised to ensure that remediation records are included in feedback/marking sheets and that candidates' work is kept for each stage. An electronic copy with a date stamp should be encouraged. The use of e-portfolio was recommended if appropriate.

♦ Centres must ensure they are fully resourced with staff and equipment to enable adequate delivery of units.