

NATIONAL STANDARDISATION REPORT

Entry Level (Sub-Sector 14.1)

Date: Thursday 14 January 2010

Venue: NOCN Meeting Room, Suite 24, The Quadrant, Parkway Business Park, 99 Parkway Avenue, Sheffield, S9 4WG

Time: 11.00am to 3.00pm

1 Context

The National Standardisation event focussed on Entry Level units in sub-sector 14.1 that appear in the Step-Up and Progression (NQF and QCF) qualifications. Units were selected that were widely used by all OCNs and required a range of assessment activities.

To raise awareness about the new Entry Level 1 continuum and requirements for achieving Entry Level 2 and 3, the event included a discussion about expected standards and evidencing of two new suites of Entry Level qualifications currently in development.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this National Standardisation event was to ensure there is consistency in the understanding and application of standards for Entry Level units, which include a variety of assessment activities. Samples were provided by OCNs to inform discussions about standards, and to illustrate expected standards.

Most of the samples reviewed were in a workbook format, some included supporting photographs or images and/or witness statements from the assessor. One example of video evidence was also provided and two samples included print outs of web-based evidence.

The meeting was asked to:

- Provide statements, comments and guidance for centres as required.
- Identify any exemplar documents.
- Look for issues that may have arisen within the units themselves that may cause differing interpretation.
- Compare the methods used to evidence the prescribed methods of assessment.
- Consider both nationally accredited and OCN validated units at Entry Level.

3 Outcomes

The meeting considered what standards they would expect at Entry Level and discussed how they differentiated between the Entry Levels. It was agreed that this was based on a combination of (but not limited to) the following factors; the level of complexity of the task, the autonomy required, the number of elements in a task, the sequencing of the task and the aspect of problem solving.

The OCN validated units submitted for National Standardisation were classified as 'Entry Level', with no reference to a specific level within Entry. Based on the presentation and the standards agreed from the standardisation of National units, the meeting felt that the OCN validated units sampled were suitable for Entry Level and demonstrated Entry Level achievement. The range of achievement from Entry Level 1 to Entry Level 3 in the samples reflected the historical transition from a generic Entry Level to its subdivision into three levels to reflect the range of achievement at Entry Level.

Good practice in assessment was agreed as follows:

- Video evidence provided contextual information, such as how the learner participated, the ambience of the room, the tone of voice used and showed the level of support given to the learner.
- Resources on the 'Money Matters To Me' website <http://www.moneymatterstome.co.uk/>, were well used for the 'Introduction to Personal Budgeting and Money Management' unit.

Exemplars:

Examples of good practice or innovative assessment methods:

- Using IT software for learners to generate evidence for the 'Induction to College' unit.
- A tracking sheet that included a section for the assessor to comment on the amount of support that was given to the learner. An exemplar has been created and is available from your OCN.
- Good structure and sequencing of tasks for learners. Structuring the workbook so that it works through the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in a logical order which allows the learner to build on what they have learnt from the previous task. This supports the learner in demonstrating their ability to complete tasks of the complexity required at Entry Level 3.
- A 'Recognising own skills for Personal Development' workbook included evidence of different types of Entry Level 3 learning and assessment, eg, use of graphics, space for writing and also space for witness observation.

Areas for Improvement:

- Photographic evidence needs to be annotated and clearly linked to the learning outcomes/assessment criteria.
- It needs to be clear on all evidence what assistance/support the learner has been given and whether any reasonable adjustment has been made.
- If a learner has had a scribe for completing a task, then the scribe must record verbatim notes.
- Tracking of evidence generated and feedback could be improved, particularly with the Introduction to Food, Drink and Cooking unit. An exemplar tracking sheet has been created and is available from your OCN.

4 Conclusion

At Entry Level 3 evidence can be structured by the tutor, but must show the learners contribution and demonstrate understanding. The tasks should be straight forward, with some complexity, which the learner can complete semi-autonomously; some support from the tutor is acceptable.

The evidence needs to be meaningful to the learner and be suitable for the age/stage of the learner.

Centres are reminded that they are required to provide evidence for standardisation if requested. Therefore this requirement must be made clear to parents, carers etc as part of the Centre's Safeguarding Policy.