Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Managing Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit

Unit code: DV5C 36

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to equip candidates with the skills, knowledge and understanding to plan and manage quality improvement, self-evaluations and internal quality audits, and to use the Outcomes of quality audits, evaluations and reviews to improve the quality of the learner experience. It is relevant to those employed in Further Education colleges, Community Learning and Development and in other workplace contexts with responsibility for evaluation and quality standards within their organisation, such as staff responsible for planning and managing quality audits and self-evaluations. For self evaluation, this will involve Heads of Department or Senior Managers and for internal quality audit it will generally involve Quality Managers, Quality Assistants or members of the internal quality team with a cross-organisation remit for quality.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1 Analyse the purposes of, and techniques used for, self-evaluations and internal quality audits in a specific context.
2 Plan and implement a self-evaluation and internal quality audit to improve quality within an organisation.
3 Analyse information and produce a formal report.
4 Use the Outcomes of self-evaluations or internal quality audits to make recommendations to improve quality.

Credit points and level: 2 HN Credit at SCQF level 9: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9*)

SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates will usually have completed *Principles and Practice of Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit DV5A 36* or be eligible for APL for that Unit.

This Unit is designed for staff responsible for planning and managing audits and self-evaluations. It is an integral part of the PDA in Quality Improvement.

General information for centres (cont)

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Information Technology, Problem Solving and Communication in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: The evidence required for this Unit will be in the form of a portfolio comprising evidence from (i) analysing the purposes of self-evaluation and internal quality audit within a specific organisational context and (ii) the application of techniques for effective planning and implementation across an organisation or department. The candidate will plan and implement one self evaluation and one internal quality audit within their workplace and produce a report of approximately 1,500 to 2,000 words (Outcomes 1 and 2); a formal cross-organisation or cross department report of either a self evaluation or internal quality audit should be produced with appendices and relevant workplace documentation to support the report (Outcome 3) and a self reflective statement of approximately 500 words on their performance whilst carrying out the process of analysing and taking forward evaluation and audit Outcomes. (Outcome 4). Witness testimony to support the self reflective statement is required.

There may be opportunities for holistic assessment with the unit *Principles and Practice of Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit*, particularly related to Outcome 1.

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Analyse the purposes of, and techniques used for, self-evaluations and internal quality audits in a specific context

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Purpose of self-evaluation and internal quality audit
♦ Range of evaluation methods and techniques
♦ Barriers/challenges to implementing self evaluation and audits
♦ Addressing factors affecting change management

Outcome 2

Plan and implement self-evaluations and internal quality audits to improve quality within an organisation

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Evaluation and audit methods
♦ Evaluation criteria
♦ Planning skills
♦ Communication skills
♦ Management skills – people/information
♦ Interpersonal skills

Evidence Requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2

Candidates will undertake a minimum of one self evaluation and one internal quality audit in their workplace and each of these will involve a minimum of two teams, areas or services. In the context of these activities, candidates will produce a report in the region of 1,500 to 2,000 words covering the knowledge and skills used to plan and to implement self evaluation and internal quality audit across their organisation or department in order to achieve the purpose of the evaluation and audit. The report should include:

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Managing Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit

♦ an analysis of the purpose and objectives of self evaluation and internal quality audit and the range of techniques and approaches used in the candidate's organisation
♦ the rationale for decisions made by the candidate in the planning and implementation of the two processes within their area of responsibility
♦ implementation plans detailing the purpose and scope of the evaluation and audit of their area of responsibility
♦ methods and approaches to be used
♦ range of data required to inform the processes
♦ Three techniques appropriate to the area of responsibility which could be used to gather evidence
♦ examples of questions to be asked to elicit or clarify information
♦ action taken to ensure that individuals and teams have the appropriate skills and knowledge to engage effectively in self evaluation and internal quality audit
♦ action taken to address factors affecting change management and the success of this action
♦ a critical account of methods employed, how they ensured that all participants were appropriately informed and engaged in the processes and how the organisation's procedures were followed and deadlines were met

The candidate's performance will be judged on the appropriateness of their rationale for actions and decisions taken during the planning and implementation stages and how they used their technical, personal and interpersonal skills to resolve difficulties or to address change management issues.

Assessment guidelines for Outcomes 1 and 2

The report will assess the candidate's understanding of the purposes of self evaluation and internal quality audit and their application of the knowledge and skills to plan and implement cross organisation or cross department workplace activities within their area of responsibility. Appendices to the report, for example the individual team self evaluation or audit reports, college documentation, correspondence, minutes of meetings will provide supporting evidence.

Outcome 3

Analyse information and produce a formal report

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Summary and analysis of information from self evaluation or internal quality audit
♦ Analytical techniques
♦ Comparisons and trends
♦ Presentation of information and analyses
♦ Format of formal report

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4

Use the Outcomes of self evaluations or internal quality audits to make recommendations to improve quality

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Analytical skills
♦ Prioritisation skills
♦ Presentation skills
♦ Oral and written communication skills
♦ Actions and recommendations to improve quality
♦ Identifying good practice
♦ Actioning Outcomes from the report
♦ Monitoring progress and impact of actions

Evidence Requirements for Outcomes 3 and 4

Candidates should produce written evidence to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skills required to analyse information from either a self-evaluation or an internal quality audit which they have carried out and to use the Outcomes of the self-evaluation or audit to make recommendations to improve quality. The candidate should produce (i) a formal report of the self-evaluation or internal quality audit as required by the organisation (ii) a reflective report/statement of approximately 500 words on the effectiveness and quality of the feedback they have given. The candidate's statement should be endorsed by the person(s) receiving the feedback as an accurate account of the process and this will form part of the candidate's portfolio of evidence, along with documentation and completed pro formas.

The formal report should:

♦ be produced in accordance with the organisation's house-style and to meet the needs of the target audience(s)
♦ include a summary analysis of the findings from self evaluation or internal quality audit using a minimum of two formats for presenting information (eg graphical, tabular)
♦ include a summary of the actions and recommendations for improvement
♦ identify good practice and outline plans for dissemination
♦ include a statement on how progress on the actions and recommendations for improvement will be monitored

The candidate's reflective report/statement will:

♦ analyse their effectiveness throughout all stages of the self evaluation or internal quality audit process
♦ include the strengths and weaknesses of the process, the rationale for any changes to the plan, and the communication and interpersonal skills used to ensure successful completion of the process within the organisation's timescales

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Witness testimony will be required from the person(s) receiving feedback in the form of an endorsement of the candidate's reflective statement in relation to the usefulness of the oral and written feedback provided.

The supplementary documentation and completed pro formas will provide supplementary evidence of the candidate's ability to apply the knowledge and skills in Outcomes 3 and 4 if any of these are not explicit in the formal report.

Assessment guidelines for Outcomes 3 and 4

The production of the organisation's formal report will assess the candidate's ability to effectively analyse information, meet the requirements of the organisation's procedures and protocol, and to take action to progress Outcomes appropriately. If the formal report does not include all of the skills, knowledge or Evidence Requirements for Outcomes 3 and 4, any gaps must be covered by appendices, for example documentation, correspondence, statements, minutes of meetings.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DV5C 36

Unit title: Managing Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit

Superclass category: GE

Date of publication: January 2006

Version: 01

Source: SQA

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Managing Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The Unit has been designed for candidates who have responsibility for managing the processes of internal quality audit and/or self-evaluation within an organisation or an area of an organisation. It is particularly aimed at heads of department, quality managers or quality assistants who have a cross-organisation or cross-departmental role. This Unit and the Unit *Principles and Practice of Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit* are the two components required for achievement of the PDA in Quality Improvement.

The principal contexts will be the Scottish Further Education environments. The candidate will be required to manage self-evaluation and internal quality audit across an organisation or department and to produce the formal report on one of the processes.

The following outline gives a suggested content for a taught programme.

For Outcome 1 candidates will require detailed knowledge of the purpose of self-evaluation and internal quality audit and an in-depth understanding of the processes and approaches used within their own organisation, including:

♦ Why self-evaluation and internal audit is carried out in the candidate's own and other organisations, ie the purpose.
♦ The organisation's policies and procedures and the relationship of self-evaluation and internal audit to the cycle of quality processes.
♦ Integration of self-evaluation and internal audit process and Outcomes with the organisation's quality strategies, objectives and cycle.
♦ Roles and responsibilities for planning, organising and carrying out self-evaluation and internal audit.
♦ Techniques, approaches and documentation used to capture the evidence, analysis, evaluation and Outcomes. The appropriateness and effectiveness of the approaches and documentation in meeting the organisation's purpose.
♦ Adoption of a relevant framework or audit tools, or the development of own internal framework or audit tools to meet the organisation's purpose and to provide an appropriate match to the requirements of external quality frameworks and standards.
♦ Knowledge of external frameworks and quality standards eg SFEFC/HMIE, BS, ISO, IiP, SQMS, SQA. The internal systems, processes and actions required to achieve and maintain the 'kitemark(s)' which are imperative or a priority for the organisation.
♦ Strategies to overcome potential barriers and challenges to implementing new or changed quality systems. Should the approach be top-down or bottom up?
♦ Developing a quality culture and ownership of quality by individuals within the organisation and/or area of responsibility.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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♦ The organisation's focus and priority for self-evaluation and for internal audit. Is it compliance, quality improvement, quality enhancement, continuous improvement, business improvement, customer care, learners first?
♦ Identification of the forces for change which may be triggered by the quality improvement process
♦ Managing the introduction of change. Factors affecting change and steps needed to overcome resistance.

Outcome 2 will require candidates to have the skills and knowledge to plan, support and monitor the processes of self-evaluation and internal audit in the workplace within their area of responsibility, including:

♦ Analysis of the scope, purpose and objectives of the planned evaluation and internal audit. The rationale for teams and services involved and the elements to be evaluated and audited.
♦ Planning approaches which complement the methods used for evaluation and audit and are relevant to the area or element.
♦ Approaches to ensure the systematic use of evaluation criteria — the strengths, weaknesses, actions, recommendations and good practice are matched to relevant criteria.
♦ Planning the stages and timescales for the evaluation and/or audit to allow the processes to be communicated and completed in accordance with the requirements of the organisation's cycle of quality processes.
♦ Use of appropriate management styles to manage relationships to fully engage staff in the processes. Approaches to harness and value staff expertise, knowledge, ideas and cooperation.
♦ Ensuring that teams and individuals have the training and development needed to contribute positively to the process.
♦ Identifying relevant qualitative and quantitative data as supporting evidence to inform the evaluation and audit processes, eg performance indicators, performance measures, performance against targets, trend and comparative data, minutes of meetings, external reviews and reports, client feedback.
♦ Ensuring the Outcomes of evaluation and audit will impact on the area of service through improvements and enhancements.
♦ Self-reflection of own performance in planning, decision making, communication, interpersonal skills and engagement of staff.

For Outcomes 3 and 4 candidates will require the knowledge and skills to analyse, summarise and give feedback on evidence from self-evaluation and internal audit within their area of responsibility and to ensure that the Outcomes contribute to continuous quality improvement of the area or service, including:

♦ Identification of internal and external readership of the formal report and the needs of this audience.
♦ Requirements of evaluative report writing. Approaches to summarising and analysing evidence and Outcomes from self-evaluation or audit to meet the priorities of the organisation or department.

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♦ Sources of comparative data, use of trend data and benchmarking, eg the organisation's MIS generated reports, team generated statistical reports, external audit and review reports, awarding body statistics, SFC and HMIE reports, customer feedback and satisfaction, complaints, progress on previous action plans.

♦ The range, constraints and limitations of the data and other evidence.

♦ Ensuring evidence is sufficiently robust and is relevant to the appropriate element or section of the quality framework

♦ Using qualitative and quantitative evidence to support judgements.

♦ Approaches to identifying good practice as evidence of quality improvement.

♦ Strategies for sharing and promoting good practice across the organisation.

♦ Writing SMART actions and targets to address identified weaknesses or areas for improvement. Mechanisms to monitor progress on recommendations and actions and the impact of these.

♦ Oral and written communication of report findings to appropriate teams or committees

♦ Strategies to 'close the loop' on quality processes, eg links to operating plans, equipment budgets, staff development planning.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

The achievement of the skills and underpinning knowledge required for this Unit would be facilitated by orientation of delivery towards the candidate's own experience, with opportunities for candidate-centred discussions on topics relating to the Outcomes. These discussions will also develop the skills required to reflect on own practice. Exercises and activities conducted in a group could be used to develop evaluative thinking and writing and would be useful also for developing problem solving skills, interpersonal and feed back skills. It would be helpful to provide examples of good self-evaluation reports for illustration. Role play/simulation exercises in giving and receiving feedback would be helpful to develop these skills.

Candidates will be engaged in the planning of self evaluations and internal audits within their own organisation and could select an example of each to report on for Outcomes 1 and 2. In order to achieve Outcomes 3 and 4 though, candidates will only need to provide evidence of producing analysing evidence and writing a formal report of either a self-evaluation or an internal audit. In addition they will give oral and written feedback, identifying improvements to be made and reflect on their own performance

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Information Technology at SCQF Level 6 could be partially evidenced through the analysis and presentation of data in the formal reporting of findings in Outcome 3.

Problem Solving at SCQF 6 could be evidenced through the planning of the audit or self-evaluation, managing the implementation of the process, identifying improvements to be made and evaluating both the success of the self-evaluation or audit and their own performance.

Communication at SCQF Level 6 could be partially evidenced through the assimilation of information, report writing and oral reporting on the audit or self-evaluation.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Managing Self-evaluation and Internal Quality Audit

Open learning

This Unit can be delivered by open learning. Difficulties in authenticating evidence will have to be addressed by the centre. For further information and advice please refer to *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 — publication code A1030).

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs,* which is available on SQA's website: **www.sqa.org.uk**.

General information for candidates

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This Unit is designed to you with the skills, knowledge and understanding to plan and manage self-evaluations and internal quality audits, and to use the Outcomes of quality audits, evaluations and reviews to improve the quality of the learner experience.

It is relevant to you if you are employed in Further Education colleges or in Community Learning and Development and have a responsibility for evaluation and quality standards.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

1   Analyse the purposes of, and techniques used for, self-evaluations and internal quality audits in a specific context.
2   Plan and implement self-evaluations and internal quality audits to improve quality within an organisation.
3   Analyse information and produce a formal report.
4   Use the Outcomes of self-evaluations or internal quality audits to make recommendations to improve quality.