



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2012**

**Business and Administration**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

# SVQ awards

## General comments

From the sample of centres visited during external verification, the following points were observed:

There was evidence that centres were well aware of the national standards and of the appropriate assessment strategies relating to these awards.

Evidence was well presented and well assessed. Assessment decisions were valid and reliable.

Observations were cross-referenced to performance indicators and knowledge and understanding by being tracked on each sheet.

Work product was also well annotated to help place the evidence in context. The annotation was documented in a variety of ways, all of which were acceptable. Examples included the use of storyboards, personal statements, actual annotation on the evidence record and post-it notes attached to the evidence. The important issue is that, in every instance, the evidence was placed in context.

Centres also included a variety of supporting evidence such as personal statements, professional discussions and witness testimonies. There was an increasing use of voice files to record professional discussion. These were very informative in showing competence and demonstrating a good interaction between assessors and candidates.

Centres also made good use of questions relating to knowledge and understanding. Most evidence for knowledge and understanding was gained through performance. Questions were being used to gain further depth of knowledge, or to seek clarification. Questions were incorporated into observations and professional discussion. Where possible, centres should obtain evidence for this underpinning knowledge and understanding from performance evidence rather than using a bank of questions.

All the above accounted for good triangulation of evidence using both performance evidence and supporting evidence. All evidence was well tracked against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding. The centres employed good audit trails which were easy to follow.

Assessors and Internal Verifiers were appropriately qualified and experienced. Centres recruit assessors for their occupational competence and Internal Verifiers from an existing pool of experienced, occupationally-competent assessors. New assessors and Internal Verifiers were appropriately supported during the time spent gaining the appropriate assessor/verifier qualification. Centres had good induction procedures in place to support new assessors and

Internal Verifiers, although many centres had an experienced team in place and inductions were not necessary at this point in time.

There was good evidence of assessment planning, with assessment being broken down into the stages of planning, assessing, review and feedback. Using these recognised stages helps to support candidates and provides very good feedback on the quality of the assessment evidence.

Centres had very good internal verification procedures in place, providing good feedback to both assessors and candidates. These procedures were well documented. Internal verification sampling procedures and documentation provided a robust quality assurance system. Feedback recorded on internal verification paperwork was clear, structured and helpful for assessors. There was evidence of regular internal verification taking place throughout the life of the portfolio. For internal verification, it is best practice to spread the activity evenly throughout the life of the portfolio. It is also useful to carry out internal verification soon after an assessment decision has been made. This allows candidates and assessors to respond quickly to any feedback from the process.

There were good CPD records available for both assessors and Internal Verifiers. Best practice CPD records contain not only what has been undertaken, but also detailed explanation of the impact of the learning on the assessment process.

Excellent administration systems were in place to support the assessment and internal verification procedures.

Assessment guidance for the new standards is available on the SQA website. The assessment guidance developed by SQA has helped centres gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the national standards.

Where holds occurred, centres very quickly generated appropriate evidence and the holds were lifted in a timely and effective manner. There were only a few holds this year resulting from the following criteria:

- ◆ inappropriate assessment instruments
- ◆ insufficient evidence of candidate performance
- ◆ inappropriate judgement of candidate performance
- ◆ ineffective internal verification

There was an increased use of e-portfolios this year. One main advantage of e-portfolios is the availability of evidence online to the assessor at any time, which means it can be viewed prior to meeting candidates. Also there can be an increased variety of evidence — photographs, video files, voice files, etc.

## **Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials**

In the sample of centres visited there was evidence that centres were well aware of the national standards and of the appropriate assessment strategies relating to these awards.

New standards were introduced during the last year. Feedback from centres seems very positive. The variety of Units appears to suit job roles very well. Centres also like the fact that each award can be made up of Units from different levels. Centres feel that they can now more accurately tailor the award to suit the job roles of their candidates.

Assessment guidance for the new standards is available through SQA. The assessment guidance developed by SQA has helped centres gain an accurate understanding of the national standards.

It was encouraging to note that there were no issues in relation to rules of combination.

SQA held two SVQ network meetings in Stirling and Glasgow earlier in 2012. Feedback indicated that these events helped centres with the introduction of the new standards.

SQA is currently in the process of developing 'understanding standards' material. This material will highlight the type of evidence promoted as best practice.

### **Evidence Requirements**

From the sample selected, candidate evidence was well presented and well assessed. Assessment decisions were valid and reliable.

There was a good variety of assessment evidence with a good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence. The performance evidence sampled included observation and work product.

There was good triangulation of evidence, using both performance evidence and supporting evidence. All evidence was well tracked against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding. There were very easy audit trails to follow.

Centres are continuing to use good cross-referencing between optional Units and core Units.

### **Administration of assessments**

There were good administration systems in place to support the assessment and internal verification procedures.

## **General feedback**

Candidate feedback indicated that they were very well supported by assessors. Most centres provided ongoing additional support between assessor visits via telephone and email.

All candidates sampled had fair access to the assessment process.

## **Areas of good practice**

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Observations were cross-referenced to performance indicators and knowledge and understanding.

Work product was also well annotated to help place the evidence in context. The annotation was documented in a variety of ways, all of which were acceptable. Examples included the use of storyboards, personal statements, actual annotation on the evidence record and post-it notes attached to the evidence. The important issue is that, in every instance, the evidence was placed in context.

Centres used witness signatory lists to identify those who interacted with the portfolios.

Centres also included a variety of supporting evidence, such as personal statements, professional discussions and witness testimonies. There was an increasing use of voice files to record professional discussion. These were very informative in showing competence and demonstrating a good interaction between assessors and candidates.

Centres also made good use of questions relating to knowledge and understanding. Most evidence for knowledge and understanding was gained through performance. Questions were used to gain further depth of knowledge or to seek clarification. Questions were incorporated into observations and professional discussion. Where possible, centres should obtain evidence for this underpinning knowledge and understanding from performance evidence rather than a bank of questions.

All the above accounted for good triangulation of evidence using both performance evidence and supporting evidence. All evidence was well tracked against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding, making audit trails easy to follow.

There was good evidence of assessment planning, with assessment being broken down into the stages of planning, assessing, review and feedback. Using these recognised stages helps to support candidates and provides very good feedback on the quality of the assessment evidence.

Centres had very good internal verification procedures in place, providing good feedback to assessors and candidates. These procedures were well documented.

For internal verification it is best practice to spread the activity evenly throughout the life of the portfolio. It is also useful to carry out internal verification soon after an assessment decision has been made. This allows candidates and assessors to respond quickly to any feedback from the internal verification process.

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### **Specific areas for improvement**

It is important that centres continue to ensure that there is a good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence.

For internal verification it is best practice to spread the activity evenly throughout the life of the portfolio. It is also useful to carry out internal verification soon after an assessment decision has been made. This allows candidates and assessors to respond quickly to any feedback from the internal verification process.

Evidence presented did not always demonstrate competence over time and breadth of scope. This can be achieved by increasing the use of evidence triangulation (observation, work product and supporting evidence) to ensure the performance indicators are met over a period of time.

In addition, assessor observations, work products, personal statements and professional discussions could be annotated by the supervisor (witness) to confirm competence over time, and a wider selection of work product can be used to confirm breadth of scope.