



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Internal Assessment Report

2008

Subject: Learning and Development
Sector Panel or SSC: Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

Date: August 2008

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification which has taken place within Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

Insert details below

SVQs

Direct Training and Support Level 3

Learning and Development Level 3

Learning and Development Level 4

Management of Learning and Development Provision Level 4

Co-ordination of Learning and Development Level 4

PDAs

Certificate in Assessing Candidates using a Range of Methods

Certificate in Assessing Candidates through Observation

Certificate in Conducting Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

Certificate in Conducting External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

Certificate in Supporting Learning in the Workplace

Certificate in Delivering Training in the Workplace

Units

Assess Candidates using a Range of Methods

Assess Candidates through Observation

Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

External Verification of the Assessor and Verifier Units

Centres have become more familiar with the requirements of these units and an increased number of centres have adjusted their internal verification and assessment policies and procedures to better support their natural achievement.

The assessor/verifier Units should be seen as codes of continual practice rather than just an individual's qualification. SQA's refreshed policy as published in August 2008 clearly supports this ethos.

The standards and evidence requirements for A1 are now fairly widely understood and implemented by centres. In terms of V1, V1.3 and V1.4 remain the elements that pose the most difficulties for centres and verifier-candidates to fully achieve, especially in the college sector.

Feedback from external verification visits suggests that the independent assessment of the A and V Units for many centres is regarded as more of a paper requirement rather than a quality assurance mechanism.

The EV Group has recommended to the Sector Skills Council, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) that the requirements of the V1.3/4 elements and the role of the independent assessor be subject to wide consultation as part of the standards and evidence requirements review process in 2008/2009.

External verification of SVQs in Learning and Development

Feedback from a number of centres and external verifiers suggest that some of the mandatory units that make up SVQs levels 3 and 4. require the trainer-candidate to work with individual learners which is not always part of a deliverers' remit (Level 3) or a manager/co-ordinators' remit (Level 4).

Centres have also commented on the list of evidence requirements contained within each unit which duplicates much of what is already contained within the criteria and knowledge requirements.

These comments have been documented in the appropriate sections of the EV Report. The EV Group for Learning and Development has also had the opportunity to feedback these comments to LLUK at a consultation event held at the beginning of 2008.

Centre support

Centres have commented that continued updating of SQA's Learning and Development Webpage has helped support them in implementing Learning and Development SVQs/PDAs.

SQA's Professional Development Workshops for the A and V Units have increased in number and continue to show full occupancy. A new workshop has been added to support centre assessment of the L Units.

Areas of good practice:

The increase in centres offering electronic evidence recording has shown a parallel growth in the frequency of assessor and candidate communications. This is perhaps because emails tend to be responded to on a daily basis as and when they come in. Electronic evidence recording also allows assessor feedback to be more instantaneous and seems to have made evidence more accessible to the internal verifier, promoting interim and formative verification.

The growth of Internal Verification Strategies on a per subject area basis has helped verifier-candidates to gather evidence of bespoke internal verification planning as required for V1.3.

Centres increasingly show evidence of model assessor practice, i.e. adopting thorough planning and reviews, understanding the impact their own practice has on the assessor-candidates with whom they work.

Advice for further development:

External verifier reports highlighted that most development feedback is given in relation to the following areas:

- 1. Continuing Professional Development**
- 2. Meeting standardisation requirements**
- 3. Development and formative assessment of assessor-candidates**
- 4. Referencing of evidence requirements**

1. Continuing Professional Development

Assessors and internal verifiers are required as part of the Assessment Strategy to undertake at least two updating activities per year. Very often CPD records do not focus enough on covering the CPD assessor or

verifier activities listed (to satisfy the A and V Unit assessor/verifier part of the Assessment Strategy requirements).

To help resolve this issue, a solution would be for internal verifiers and assessors of the A/V Units to plan their CPD activities in advance. This would help keep their activities more focused on covering Assessment Strategy requirements and provide external verifiers with evidence of the CPD activities to be undertaken in situations where CPD has not been recorded by the time the external verification visit takes place.

Where non-centre employed staff are used as independent assessors, it is still the responsibility of the enrolling centre to ensure those assessors maintain and record their CPD in relation to the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy requirements.

2. Meeting standardisation requirements

Holding standardisation meetings/activities is a requirement of being an approved centre. However, a number of centres still present general assessor/verifier team minutes without any reference to any real standardisation activities having taken place, such as reviewing previous assessment evidence

Standardisation is about assessors becoming involved in a dialogue with each other about making reliable and consistent decisions. This is not the same as receiving feedback from an internal verifier, which some centres consider as covering the standardisation requirement, although it is accepted that the internal verifier has a responsibility to endorse the standardisation process and the decisions made.

It is also accepted that where there is only one internal verifier and assessor within an award area, the standardization process will very often take place as part of the verification process.

It is recommended that meetings remain the best vehicle for standardisation to take place. However, where meetings are infrequent or difficult to organise, other means of standardisation may be acceptable i.e. video/audio conferencing instead of face to face meetings or electronically reviewed evidence where common agreement is reached. Whatever method is chosen, the agreement and decisions reached should be recorded.

Where non-centre employed staff are used as independent assessors, it is still the responsibility of the enrolling centre to ensure those assessors are included in relevant standardisation processes.

3. Development and formative assessment of assessor-candidates

Assessor and verifier-candidates may require a certain amount of development prior to summative assessment and some may be ready for summative assessment without much development because they have more experience.

It is up to the enrolling centre to identify and confirm the stages of development and assessment to enable agreements with employers/centres/assessor-candidates to be made and to set realistic expectations.

Assessor training and development should cover topics such as methods of assessment and the principles of assessment i.e. validity, reliability etc. External verification reports show these areas to be weak at times.

Where training and development is being provided and monitored prior to assessment, the subject internal-verifier (the IV verifying in the assessor-candidates' subject area) can provide a good source of advice as to the readiness of the assessor-candidate for summative assessment.

4. Referencing of evidence requirements

The A and V Units list the evidence requirements that must be covered. At times referencing is only carried out in relation to the performance criteria and knowledge, which can result in important aspects of evidence

being missed out. For example, assessment methods which are mentioned in evidence requirements section of the A1 Unit may not be covered.

It is important that centres ensure their assessor/verifier-candidates reference their evidence to the evidence requirements as well as the criteria, knowledge and scope.

HIGHER NATIONAL UNITS

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

Two HN verification visits were carried out during the session in relation to the HNC Learning and Development. Candidates at both centres were well supported and there were no issues relating to the assessment or internal verification of the programmes.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Clear assessment processes were evident in both centres including clear and constructive feedback to candidates.

One centre had contextualized an assessment for a particular group of candidates from the same organisation. This provided them with a realistic and familiar case study which encouraged a meaningful application of the skills and knowledge developed during the programme.

HIGHER NATIONAL GRADED UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF HN GRADED UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

None verified this session.

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comment*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

N/A

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

N/A

NATIONAL UNITS

(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

DA3F 04: Assessment and Moderation

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

There was one visit in relation to the above unit this session.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

The assessment process was clear, and candidates were well supported.