



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Moderator Report

2006

Subject: Learning and Development

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

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS MODERATED

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
Learning and Development Level 5

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 moderation of centres.

Include:

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

General comments:

Centres are now interpreting the A and V unit standards and evidence requirements much more consistently compared with the past two years. This is evident in the reduction of centre enquiries coming through, and in the level of developmental feedback included in External Verifier Reports. Factors that have contributed to this include:

Increased centre support. Centres have commented that SQA's Learning and Development Webpage and CD ROM have helped them enormously to evidence requirements etc.

The revised Professional Development Workshops for the A and V Units have been well received as has the Professional Discussions DVD which features team members. The CD ROM is about to go on the Learning and Development Webpage soon.

The SVQs and PDAs in Learning and Development – centres again are beginning to get to grips with the unit structure and evidence requirements.

Most centres feel that the evidence requirements for the A and V Units are generally straight forward and easy to generate evidence for. However, a number of centres feel some of the evidence requirements for the L Units are too narrow and prescriptive eg asking for a singular record where centre has identified evidence could naturally come from a variety of sources.

Areas of good practice:

Many centres are using evidence requirements checklists which have helped focus the evidence gathering process.

A number of good quality CPD records are beginning to come through showing how activities have confirmed and/or updated practice.

Centres have generally become more confident in applying/interpreting evidence requirements. External verifier visits show that centres are building on their past experience and generally use the feedback they receive from previous EV visits very positively.

Advice for further development:

The following comments are mainly in relation to the delivery of the A and V Units which account for approximately 90% of the work of our External Verification Group.

It is important that assessor and verifiers of the A and V Units consider the A and V Units as a specific award area with its own distinct assessor/verifier team.

As per other specific awards areas this can be further broken down into system requirements, assessor/verifier requirements and assessment/verification practices.

Systems requirements

Centres offering the A and V Units should identify a clearly defined assessor/verifier team inclusive of those working part-time/occasionally. The team, just like any other, should meet their centre's quality assurance systems i.e. follow the assessment cycle, hold regular standardisation meetings, track assessor/verifier-candidate progress and achievement etc.

Roles and responsibilities of the individual team members should be clearly allocated (assessor, independent assessor and internal verifier) at the outset, when the assessor/verifier-candidate embarks on his/her award.

Assessors and verifier requirements

Assessors and internal verifiers of the A and V Units should understand the requirements of the A and/or V Units, and have a sound working knowledge of them (in other words practice to A and V Unit Standards) before they assess/verify them.

The above is a CPD requirement laid down in the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy.

To meet this requirement, stated above, those assessors/verifiers already holding 'D Units' for example should have undertaken appropriate CPD. For example, assessors could attend appropriate briefing sessions or standardisation meetings, develop assessor team and individual Action/CPD Plans to show that they will be working to A Unit standards, and finally receive some form of confirmation that they are working in line with those standards i.e. endorsement via a successful monitoring/IV report.

Assessors and verifiers cannot be expected to work fully in line with A and V Unit requirements (and undertake appropriate CPD) unless their centres' quality assurance systems are set up in a way that support the principles of these units. Some centres have found it beneficial to audit their assessment and quality assurance procedures as a first step in providing the appropriate assessment/internal verification environment. See Case Study

Assessment/verification practices

Assessors of the A and V Units are also role models for assessor-candidates. As such, their activities should exemplify good practice, such as clear assessment planning with continuous and quality review. Constructive feedback and well communicated and recorded assessment decisions are also important in exemplifying effectiveness in assessment.

Similarly, internal verifiers and their centres should follow the practices of V1, providing their assessors with the necessary support. Unlike D34, the V1 Unit includes a complete element dedicated to the monitoring of assessment practice which, as previously mentioned, may require centres to revise and strengthen their existing procedures.

HNs

HN Unit provision in Learning and Development is such that are externally verified by a very small number of external verifiers. They are well established units, the evidence sampled showed a satisfactory level of candidate competence.

The newly introduced HNC in Learning and Development, which is recognised by CIPD for Associate Membership, was successfully delivered by one FE centre during session 05/06, and it is anticipated that additional centres will offer it from session 06/07.

The PDA in Training and Development, a subset of the HNC L&D, is currently offered by three centres and is proving attractive for those who are already in employment in a training role.

External verifier performance

Completion of External Verifier Reports is really the only area that I am in a position to comment on under this heading.

Completed External Verifier Reports show much more comprehension than in previous sessions. Full comments are given in virtually all sections of the EV8a. Therefore, overall group performance has come out very well.

Like every External Verifier Group, there are some consistency issues that we all need to consider. Although the collective external verifier reports for 2005/2006 show a fairly consistent approach to externally quality assuring the A and V Units, we do as individuals have areas where we tend to focus more or less than others. This of course is positive if we can meet the challenge of using each individual's depth and breadth of understanding and experience as a kind of cross-fertilizer for the rest of the group.

As an EV Group, our planned CPD for 2006/2007 includes:

- ◆ Development of exemplar External Verifier Report(s).
- ◆ Exercises to promote consistency across team members (partially to consolidate what SQA says in its guidance)
- ◆ Workshop event with CIPD to help all group members get up to speed with issues surrounding the 'L Units'
- A number of individuals within the group have expressed the need to gain feedback on their performance as external verifiers. I feel if 'shadowing' was introduced, then this would be of great benefit to all of us within the group, SQA and eventually centres. This also helps us harness 'an open culture' which ultimately helps us to be more effective as a group and individually.