

**Higher National Qualifications**

**And**

**Scottish Vocational Qualifications**

**Senior Moderator Report**

**2006**

**Subject:** **SVQs relating to OPITO & Oil Related Awards (52) and Customised Awards relating to the same sector**

**Sector Panel or SSC:** **Opito and Cogent**

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.

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## SVQ AWARDS

### TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS MODERATED

G5XW	21	Processing Operations: Hydrocarbons SVQ Level 1
G5XX	23	Processing Operations: Hydrocarbons SVQ Level 3
G5XY	23	Processing Operations: Hydrocarbons (Control Room) SVQ Level 3
G316	22	Processing Operations: Hydrocarbons SVQ Level 2
G6X3	22	Offshore Deck Operations SVQ Level 2
G36B	22	Engineering Maintenance SVQ Level 2
G5Y6	22	Well Services: Mechanical Wireline SVQ Level 2

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### General comments:

The sector has been affected by very high oil and gas prices which continue to escalate and predictions abound for a \$100 barrel of oil or equivalent for gas in the not too distant future. This has resulted in a general “best endeavours” policy to produce the maximum amount of oil whilst prices are high and to develop fields quickly. Some companies are working on lifting costs of \$18 to \$20 per barrel so the opportunities for profit are great. Companies requiring increased manpower are finding it increasingly difficult to attract the right sort of personnel. Many are suffering manpower shortages and it is against this background that this round of external moderation has taken place. Many Centres are finding it difficult to resource assessors and internal verifiers, however, it is evident that companies can see the benefits in term of efficiency of having a skilled and competent workforce. Training and assessment have not been sacrificed due to the increased workload demands being placed on individuals. Two Centres visited had a combined workforce shortage of 240 people and they quoted that the current workforce was being “bled.”

There needs to be a general understanding gained within Centres that those assessors and internal verifiers with “D” Units (D32/33 and D34) must work to the standards demanded by A1 and V1 respectively. A few Centres go well out of their way to ensure that this is happening and provide retraining and “away days” to facilitate the learning process. Others cite, too readily, the difficulty of bringing together offshore assessors and shore-based internal verifiers.

Centres also need to be reminded that the work of unqualified assessors and internal verifiers needs to be reviewed, checked and countersigned by a qualified assessor or internal verifier.

Some Centres still have problems with effectively cross-referencing evidence to the standards. This is very patchy, however, and can come down to just one of the assessors providing inadequate briefing to the candidate. Internal verifiers normally pick up on this and recycle the portfolio. It is the candidate who is disadvantaged by this.

Again due to current workloads it has been noted that the numbers of assessors and internal verifiers attending standardisation meetings and events has declined. Centres have tried to redress this by additional e-mailing.

It is stressed to Centres that the candidate responses to questioning need to be recorded and the responses “ticked” by the assessor. This is needed as the questions are generally site specific and the answers not therefore known by the external moderator.

There are still instances of assessment records being completed in pencil and although there is no evidence there is potential for alterations to be made.

Centres are often not aware of the existence of the Assessment Strategy and think that the documents containing the standards are all that is required. The absence of Assessment Strategy documents has not compromised the quality of assessments or systems.

**Advice on good practice and areas for further development:**

- Several Centres are proud of their policy of continuous improvement and it certainly shows.
- Given that external moderation happens only periodically Centres have been encouraged to carry out internal audits and management reviews of the SQA requirements. In many organisations these events are scheduled on a regular basis and the SQA requirements have been easily incorporated.
- The National Occupational Standards are currently being reviewed. It is noted that Centres have managed to provide discipline experts to assist in the industry work groups. This not only provides an opportunity for CPD but also ensures that the occupational standards are well understood. There could be a basis for holding further meetings together once the standards have been finalised and are being implemented.
- Most Centres are now very mature and this is reflected in the quality and standardisation of candidate portfolios.
- A few Centres have perfected the cross referencing of evidence to the standards. This is often shown as two-way referencing which makes navigation through the portfolios easy.
- Candidate support was generally found to be of a high order.