



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2016  
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

This report relates to verification activity in 2015–16 for the SVQ in Business and Administration. It covers the following areas:

- ◆ types of evidence
- ◆ continuing professional development (CPD)
- ◆ assessor/internal verifier qualifications
- ◆ assessment planning
- ◆ internal verification
- ◆ standardisation
- ◆ network meetings

In the sample of centres visited during external verification the following was observed.

### Types of evidence

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

Candidate evidence in the portfolios was well presented and well assessed. Assessment decisions were valid and reliable. There was evidence of good audit trails of evidence which were easy to follow. These audit trails were supported with good evidence matrices.

There was a good balance between performance evidence (observation and work product) and supporting evidence (professional discussion, witness testimony, questions) which results in good triangulation of evidence.

Observations were holistic in nature and well annotated against the performance indicators and knowledge and understanding. Some observations were unit specific whilst others were more holistic in nature.

Where appropriate, work product was well annotated to help place the evidence in context. The annotation styles and approaches used included the use of a 'storyboard', 'personal statement' and 'actual annotation on the evidence'. All are considered acceptable with the important aspect being that the evidence is placed in context to show the candidate's role in the production of the evidence. Portfolios also included a variety of supporting evidence such as personal statements, professional discussion and witness testimonies.

Centres also made good use of questions relating to knowledge and understanding, most of which was generated through performance and, where appropriate, questions were being used to gain further depth of knowledge or to seek clarification. Questions were incorporated into observations and

professional discussions if this was appropriate. Where possible, centres should obtain evidence for this underpinning knowledge and understanding from performance evidence rather than using a bank of questions.

Centres continue to use good cross-referencing between optional units and between optional units and core units. This helps avoid the duplication of evidence.

Witness signatory lists were used to identify those who interacted with the portfolios.

There was a continuing increase in the use of e-portfolios. Centres maintained the good practice developed with paper-based portfolios into their use of e-portfolios.

### **Continuing professional development**

All centres were able to show updated CPD records for assessors and internal verifiers. Best practice with CPD records exists when they contain not only what has been undertaken but also the impact of this learning on the assessment/internal verification process. The external verification team are now seeing this best practice across most centres.

### **Assessor/verifier qualifications**

Assessors and internal verifier records reviewed showed that they were occupationally competent and hold (or are working towards) appropriate assessor and verifier awards. Staff were experienced in the delivery of work-based qualifications and have a full understanding of the requirements of the awards.

### **Assessment planning**

There was good evidence of assessment planning with assessment being broken down into the stages of planning, assessing, review and feedback. This supportive approach allowed candidate feedback on the quality of the assessment evidence.

### **Internal verification**

Centres had very good internal verification procedures in place which included good feedback to assessors and candidates and 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 which can be encouraging for assessors and candidates alike. Internal verification documentation offered structured, helpful feedback to assessors and candidates. There was evidence of regular internal verification activity throughout the life of candidate portfolios. For internal verification it is best practice to spread the activity evenly throughout the life of the portfolio and it is 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.

### **Standardisation**

From the evidence viewed there was evidence of regular, formal standardisation meetings being held in centres. In addition, there were many opportunities for informal discussion. Standardisation meeting minutes confirm the outcomes of qualification verification are disseminated and internal verification records confirm the action points are monitored.

### **Network meetings**

Two networking meetings were held during the year. Both were well attended with positive feedback having been received. This year we had another session on FAQs and allowed discussion time for networking. This networking time was very much appreciated by centres.

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

There was evidence that centres were well aware of the national standards and the relevant assessment strategies. Centres were applying these national standards consistently across candidates.

### **Instrument of assessment**

The candidate portfolios sampled were well presented and well assessed with all candidates having fair access to the assessment process. There was a good balance between performance evidence (observation and work product) and supporting evidence (professional discussion, witness testimony, questions) with good cross-referencing across and between both core and optional units.

The assessment methods chosen were appropriate to the units and the level the candidates were working at.

Exemplification of materials was enhanced by the following:

- ◆ Understanding Standards material
- ◆ assessment guidance material
- ◆ frequently asked questions material

Centres also reported that they found the SQA website helpful.

Feedback from centres about the current standards seems very positive. The variety and range of units appear to suit job roles very well. Centres also like the fact that each award can be made up of units from different levels which allows centres to tailor the award to suit the job roles of their candidates.

## **Evidence requirements**

Centres are well aware of the requirement to comply with the assessment strategies related to this award.

Assessment decisions were consistent and accurately judged evidence against the standards and in a fair manner thus ensuring that all assessment decisions were both valid and reliable.

As previously mentioned in this report, there was good triangulation of evidence. All evidence was well tracked against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding.

All candidate evidence was referenced against the current assessment specification and was correctly annotated to clearly show where coverage of performance indicators and knowledge and understanding can be found. All evidence sampled was naturally occurring.

Candidate reflective accounts (storyboards) were exceptionally well written, well referenced against the relevant units they covered and fully backed up with work product and other supplementary evidence, which is good practice.

There was good evidence of assessment planning with assessment being broken down into the stages of planning, assessing, review and feedback.

## **Administration of assessments**

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

## **General feedback**

See comments in the general comments section above.

## **Areas of good practice**

There were strong CPD records available for assessors and internal verifiers. Best practice CPD records should contain not only what CPD has been undertaken but also the impact of the learning on the assessment and internal verification process.

Witness signatory lists were used to identify those who interacted with the portfolios.

There were good examples of assessment planning with assessment being broken down into the stages of planning, assessing, review and feedback. This approach provides good support for candidates and provides very good feedback on the quality of the assessment evidence.

Centres use a workplace checklist (site selection checklist) to ensure that all candidate workplaces have the appropriate equipment to meet the requirements

for Business and Administration SVQs. This process also checks that candidates have access to appropriate reference and learning materials.

Work product was also well annotated to help place the evidence in the relevant context. The annotation was documented in a variety of ways, all of which are acceptable, including the use of a 'storyboard', 'personal statement', 'actual annotation on the evidence'. The important aspect here is that the evidence is placed in context.

There were examples of a comprehensive initial assessment of each candidate being conducted during the induction process. The Core Skills profile, previous certificates and candidate job roles were all reviewed and aligned with the requirements of the SVQ and the appropriate units and level of award chosen.

There was evidence of regular standardisation meetings taking place in addition to continuous informal discussion between staff relating to candidates and units.

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 candidate 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.

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

Observations were tracked down the side against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding.

Centres also included a variety of supporting evidence — personal statements, professional discussion and witness testimonies.

Centres made good use of questions relating to knowledge and understanding. Most evidence for knowledge and understanding was gained through performance.

From the sample viewed, the assessors knew their candidates well which provided positive candidate support and helped with the confirmation of authenticity of evidence submitted by each candidate. Witness testimonies also help support authenticity. All evidence was signed and dated by assessor and candidate.

Standardisation meeting minutes viewed confirmed the outcomes of qualification verification and these were disseminated within centres. Internal verification records confirmed that the action points were monitored.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

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 from a bank of questions.

Centres should endeavour to ensure that there is a good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence.

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.

Candidates should be discouraged from putting entire policy documents in their portfolios. To ensure candidate knowledge and understanding centres could encourage candidates to copy the cover of the policy document for the portfolio. The assessor could then question the candidate on the contents of the policy document. Once the candidate's knowledge of the contents of the document has been confirmed then the candidate and assessor could sign and date the cover within the candidate 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 internal verification process.

Where action points arose centres generated appropriate evidence in a timely and effective manner. Action points were in response to the following criteria:

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

There were only a few centres that incurred action points.