



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2016  
Construction:  
Plant and Operations**

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 year saw a very positive overall standard of verification on visits undertaken by the team. The number of visits again has increased on the previous year and with more approvals being undertaken this also looks positive going into the next reporting period.

As with the previous year, the majority of centres reported that they were remaining positive that the upturn in the construction sector is continuing. This should be confirmed with an increase in the number of candidates being registered.

As with previous years, the evidence verified and the interviews conducted with centre staff over the reporting period confirmed that centres understand what is required from them with regards to interpretation of the national standards. Centres are ensuring that the quantity and quality of evidence gathered meets the levels required for the awards.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The verification reports submitted throughout this reporting period clearly indicate, as a result of the interviews with the assessors and verifiers during verification visits, that centres and their staff continue to have a good working knowledge of the contents of the unit specifications across all of the awards within the verification group. This is confirmed by the standard of primary and supporting evidence generated/gathered by the candidates and the assessors.

Centres continue to use a variety of centre-devised assessment instruments and checklists that they use, and which comply with the awarding body requirements.

## Evidence requirements

The assessment guidelines and assessment strategy give examples of both primary and secondary evidence that is required for the awards. Centres generally follow what is required and this is confirmed in the standard of candidate portfolios presented for verification.

In line with the recommendations of the assessment strategy, centres during last year's visits had been encouraged to introduce or develop the use of witness testimony supplemented by detailed witness testimony for the Level 2 qualifications. There has been clear evidence that a good number of centres have done this and we will continue to encourage the development of these evidence strains.

## **Administration of assessments**

Discussions with centre staff during visits continue to reflect that not much has changed in the methodology that centres use to ensure that they programme visits for assessors to realise the best opportunities for the collection of evidence.

Centre administrators and assessors remain active in contacting employers and candidates alike to arrange site visits which correspond with live work activities to maximise the evidence-gathering opportunity. This provides assessors with the best scenarios to make judgements on the competency of their candidates against all of the award specifications.

As in previous years this is quantified by the fact that almost all assessment of candidates continues to be based on live work activity in real-time working environments.

The Experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPAP) route continues to allow centres the opportunity to have an alternative assessment route where candidates are assessed away from live sites. Centres can then lift potential barriers to achievement by giving those candidates, who for some reason or other do not have access to a live site (unemployment, lack of machinery on site etc), the opportunity to be assessed — enabling them to either gain employment or to enhance their qualifications.

Internal verifiers continue, where required, to provide constructive feedback to assessors and verifiers confirm that assessors act on the comments given to them.

## **General feedback**

**Feedback to candidates** — Assessors continue to advise candidates to gather the appropriate supporting workplace evidence, and to get it endorsed by a supervisor or manager to support its authenticity. This procedure positively assists the assessors in supporting his or her direct observations so ensuring that all the evidence requirements for the awards are met in as short a time as possible.

Assessors provide feedback to the candidates following the direct observations of their activities in the workplace.

**Feedback from candidates** — Candidate interviews conducted during this reporting period confirm that candidates are happy with the support they receive from all members of centre staff throughout their assessment process.

**Access to assessment** — As with the previous internal assessment reports, no centre or assessor has reported any difficulty in gaining access to candidates who are in employment for the purpose of carrying out live assessments in the workplace.

## **Areas of good practice**

The general areas of good practice commented on in previous reporting years have continued to be the same this year, indicating that centres are consistent in their approach to the assessment and verification process required. These areas are as follows:

- ◆ The use of good, comprehensive additional supporting evidence such as operator logbooks, timesheets, photographs/video footage of work processes, relevant course certification, site documents, job cards
- ◆ Good descriptive and detailed observation reports
- ◆ Positive candidate feedback records
- ◆ Good comprehensive internal verification recording procedures
- ◆ The use of professional discussion for Level 2 qualifications
- ◆ The use of centre-adapted job sheets/diaries which have been developed to bridge the gap where candidates do not complete industry-issued logbooks
- ◆ The use of candidate handbooks detailing the whole assessment process and supplying the candidate with contact details of assessors, verifiers etc so that the assessment process runs very smoothly

## **Specific areas for improvement**

The following are points where improvements can still be made by centres:

- ◆ Cross-referencing of evidence — Progress continues to be positive, however there is always room for improvement.
- ◆ Individual CPD records — Improvement continues in this area. An SQA devised template for recording CPD has been offered to centres during visits. This will help improve the recording of activities.