



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Floorcoverings**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

SVQ awards

Titles/levels of SVQ awards verified

G88D 22 Floorcoverings Level 2

G8E3 23 Floorcoverings Level 3

General comments

There were only two centres visited for this award.

Both centres visited had a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The centres were working with the most recent versions of the nationally devised assessment instruments and Unit specifications and were using them effectively. They were recording candidate achievement by means of an individual portfolio system and had appropriate documentation to support the process. This linked in with recording/reporting mechanisms from Construction Skills and proved to be very effective.

Discussions with assessors and Internal Verifiers confirmed centres were very conversant with the requirements of the award and any development points noted were more fine-tuning as opposed to significant lack of knowledge.

Comments from the External Verifiers (EVs) regarding the quality of the work presented for sampling also confirmed that centres were fully conversant with the requirements of the award. It is pleasing to note that the standard of work presented has improved overall, ranging from good to exceptional.

It is also encouraging to note that centres have acknowledged the importance of concentrating on the quality of finish of the practical work in the early stages of the award. The need to fully develop candidates' skills at this stage is critical as it prepares them for the more demanding criteria at later stages in the course.

An essential part of this process, which has been highlighted in almost all the reports, is the need to give candidates feedback that is constructive and timeous. This allows the assessor to set standards early on in the formative assessment process and will undoubtedly assist candidates to achieve the required summative standards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In the centres visited, all the assessment teams were familiar with the course structure and documentation.

Both centres were satisfying the requirements of the Unit specifications in a range of ways that were maximising the candidate experience. In both centres there was a distinct move towards more student-centred learning and a more flexible, blended approach. In one centre, candidates were accessing centre-developed learning materials remotely through their VLE.

Candidates were gathering evidence from a range of activities and experiences to satisfy the requirements of the generic Units. This in itself demonstrated a great depth of knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the award from the assessors, who were able to track candidates' progress across a range of disciplines.

Last session EVs noted there was a requirement for assessors to develop, or further develop, a comprehensive tracker system to ensure that opportunities were not lost in recording evidence for the generic Units. EVs have reported this session that there has been a lot of work done in this area and the situation is improving all the time. Both centres are putting more responsibility onto the learner to gather and record this type of evidence (in line with Curriculum for Excellence).

In the current climate of falling numbers and composite groups it is essential centres ensure that all of the course content is fully covered. To maintain viability centres are continually developing learning materials which are more student centred (rather than all lecturer led) to assist in the delivery with an ever increasing amount of intranet- and VLE-based materials.

Evidence Requirements

Both centres continue to demonstrate a wide and innovative range of approaches to gather evidence for this award. They are able to create an assessment environment conducive to gathering the required evidence in terms of: standard; amount; relevance and reliability.

Assessment teams should be proud of their continuing ability to interpret standards, create a positive learning environment and provide the opportunity for their candidates to generate evidence in increasingly challenging situations.

Administration of assessments

The centres visited were using centre-devised assessment materials which were at the appropriate level and met all the PCs for each Unit. Through discussions with candidates, EVs confirmed that, in all cases, assessments were being administered at an appropriate time during the delivery of the course and there were some good examples of an integrated approach being adopted for the more generic type Units/assessments.

In all cases candidates were given responsibility for tracking their own progress through a portfolio approach. In all instances, candidates were being provided with good, clear, constructive feedback on an ongoing basis which helped them develop confidence.

In all cases the assessors were making fair, reliable and consistent decisions across the range of Units being delivered.

Internal verification was taking place in both centres and was proving to be reliable and effective. In both centres specific mention was made of the efficient systems in place which mostly included electronic documentation and recording systems. Centre staff were all working to the V1 standards.

Further general feedback

Feedback to candidates

In both reports, EVs commented very positively on the quality of feedback given to candidates. Centres had acknowledged comments from previous EV visits and now seem to have struck a balance in terms of quantity and quality of feedback.

As previously mentioned in this report, centres have acknowledged the importance of feedback in the formative and summative assessment process and are using it to good effect.

Feedback from candidates interviewed

In all cases, discussions with candidates confirmed that feedback was very beneficial to them and had formed an important part of their course. They commented on how feedback was seen as a positive element of their course and that the support which they received from their lecturer/s was very good.

In all cases candidates felt that the structure of the course was good and well managed. The course content was very relevant to their activities in the work place and they had been given opportunities to attempt certain aspects of their craft in college, which they may otherwise not have been able to do in the workplace (determined by the specialism and size of company they were employed by).

The knowledge and understanding element of a course such as this can sometimes prove to be a challenge for some candidates but almost all of those interviewed could see the relevance of Core Skills and the future benefits.

Access to assessment

In all cases there were no barriers to assessment and in the current climate centres were demonstrating an even greater than usual amount of flexibility to ensure candidates were not disadvantaged in any way. To accommodate employer and managing agent requirements, centres were amending attendance patterns and providing, in some instances, additional time outwith the normal working day to allow candidates to prepare for, or attempt, assessments. Candidates in this situation were very appreciative of this approach which allowed them to keep on-track with their studies as well as to satisfy their employer's demands.

There were examples of additional support being provided for candidates with additional needs, which ensured they had fair access to assessment.

Other points which are recurring and considered significant

From the two reports submitted to compile this report, the only point which would be considered significant in terms of evidence was the issue of 'missing' or 'unavailable' Work Based Evidence Reports for one centre. These are a requirement for the award. EVs must have sight of them for all four years and also sign off a sample.

This award was due to expire this session but has been extended until 2012 which will allow time for a review to be undertaken.

One centre asked for the off-the-job part of the course to be reviewed as they felt the current 16 weeks was not sufficient to cover all the content. (Discussion with Sector Skills Council.)

Areas of good practice/areas for improvement

The areas of good practice noted were:

Group internal verification

In one centre the team had their set dates for internal verification to take place and carried them out as a group activity. This ensured that feedback to assessors was instant and also that discussions by the whole team took place providing support for assessors and continued improvement through self-evaluation.

Modern methods and materials

One centre had used their industry contacts to provide in-house demonstrations of new materials and techniques. This was beneficial for the candidates and excellent CPD for staff.

Project work

Both centres were using projects to very good effect encouraging candidates to take responsibility for their own learning. In one centre candidates could gain remote access to learning materials with tutor support whilst in the other candidates had a portfolio of projects and could gain tutor support through e-mail. Both of these approaches also enhanced candidates IT skills.

Specific areas for improvement

As previously mentioned, the Work Based Evidence reports were a concern for one centre and clarification should be sought regarding timescales and responsibilities for completion.