



**Higher National Qualifications**

**And**

**Scottish Vocational Qualifications**

**Senior Verifier Report**

**2007**

**Subject: Care**

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

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## HIGHER NATIONAL UNITS

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### General comments:

##### Introduction

**258 Verification visits were undertaken to centres during session 2006 – 2007 to 158 SQA Approved Centres. This figure includes**

- **18 HN visits – 15 HNC Social Care 3 HNC Health Care**
- **29 Graded Unit Verification – central and visiting**
- **12 Development visits**

**This figure is in line with session 2005-2006**

##### HNC Social Care

The revised HNC Social Care, introduced by colleges in August 2006 presented a number of challenges to ensure compliance with national standards, due to the inclusion of 3 or 4 SVQ units in the mandatory section of the award and a graded unit in the form of a practical assignment. In addition a number of non college centres, including employers and independent training providers, are approved to offer HNC Social Care. These centres can offer innovative ways to deliver the award, which allows candidates such as nightshift workers better access to training opportunities. A Qualification Support Team for the HNC Social Care, was set up by SQA in May 2006, which represented centres providing HNC Social Care. The group had the following remit

- Consult with colleagues and partnerships and obtain feedback on units, articulation etc and feedback to this group.
- Provide materials for exemplification of standards
- Amend units/ write new units where appropriate
- Promote the qualification
- Assist in quality networks/workshops etc

**As a result of the work done by this group a number of changes have been made to the mandatory HN Units, which will be introduced in session 2007 -2008. These include**

- **Separation of evidence requirements, which are mandatory, and assessment guidelines, which are not. This will make the Units easier to understand and will facilitate integration of assessment.**
- **Changes to the Graded Unit including clearer marking guidelines.**

**A workshop on Integration of Assessment in HNC Social Care was held at the SQA Quality Networks in Aberdeen and Glasgow in March 2007. The advantages of integration of assessment for the HNC Units is that it avoids over assessment and is holistic which encourages candidates to integrate their knowledge which facilitates the assessment of the SVQ Units. It is clear that the HNC Social Care is being assessed in innovative ways, including oral presentations. Authentication of candidate work is the responsibility of delivering centres and many ask candidates to sign a declaration regarding plagiarism. The introduction of online assessments, devised and prior verified by SQA through the SOLAR Project will enable colleges to vary the assessments instruments and the use of secure password and other security checks will provide additional methods to authenticate candidate work.**

**15 centres were subject to visiting verification visits for HNC Social Care and all visits were satisfactory.**

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

### **Good Practice**

- Links between the HNC Social Care and the SVQ Level 3 are more evident
- HNC assignments are being mapped to the knowledge requirements of the SVQ
- SVQ assessors are participating in team meetings for HNC Social Care
- Many centres are utilizing the graded unit for SVQ evidence

### **Areas for Further Development**

- Integration of assessment across HNC Units is encouraged and the revisions to the Units made by the Qualification Support Team should facilitate this
- Authentication of candidate work is challenging and centres are encouraged to vary assessments from year to year to ensure that standards are being maintained
- The SVQ units within the HNC need to have more robust assessor observations and less emphasis on product, particularly those which are not the candidate's own work eg policies and procedures copies of care standards etc

### **Good Practice**

- Collaboration and sharing of teaching and assessment materials

### **Areas for Further Development**

- Centres will require to develop expertise in the marking of graded units
- Central verification of the graded unit will be required

## HIGHER NATIONAL GRADED UNITS

### TITLES/LEVELS OF HN GRADED UNITS VERIFIED

#### Graded Unit HNC Social Care

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### General comments:

All centres used the centrally devised graded unit specification produced by SQA. A central event was held in June for the HNC Social Care Graded Unit verification. A sample (min 12) of completed graded Units was chosen from 29 centres and all were accepted. However, there was still some lack of congruence in the marks awarded by centres and those awarded at the central verification event. Two centres were advised to adjust marks upwards by 5-10% and six centres to adjust marks downwards by 5-10%. The marking in one centre was found to be inconsistent and the centre was advised to devise a policy for cross marking and internal verification of graded units. The revised graded unit, to be introduced from August 2007 has clearer guidelines and mark allocations which should further assist standardization within and among centres.

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

##### Good Practice

- Graded units are providing opportunities for candidates to evidence holistic client centred practice
- **There was clear evidence of cross marking and internal moderation all centres**

##### Areas for further Development

- **Revised Graded Unit specification will require to be monitored and verified in the first year of implementation**
- **New exemplars will be required on the SQA secure website**

## SVQ AWARDS

### TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

#### **Cognate group 82**

Care Level 2

Care level 3

Care Level 3 Promoting Independence

Care Level 3 Children and Young People

Care level 4

Registered Manager Award

Health and Social Care Level 2

Health and Social Care (Adults) Level 3

Health and Social Care (Adults) Level 4

Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) Level 3

Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) Level 4

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### **General comments:**

185 External Verification visits took place to 158 approved centres offering SVQs in Care during the year 2006 -2007. Four centres are currently on hold and action plans are in place in all of the affected centres to ensure that remedial action is undertaken. There remain a significant number of candidates registered for the Care awards which have entered their lapsing period. Centres have been encouraged to prioritise these candidates for completion and to withdraw those who have made no progress for a significant period of time. The number of candidates registered within a centre represents only a snapshot of the centre's activity on the day the External Verification visit was undertaken. The number of active candidates in Scotland is, therefore, an ever-changing figure. However the statistics from the External Verification reports indicate that there are 9895 candidates undertaking SVQ awards.

12 development visits were undertaken to new and existing centres throughout the year.

**SQA Quality Networks were held in Aberdeen and Glasgow in March 2007 and both events were very well attended. Three workshops relating to SVQ were held at each event. The workshop topics were**

- **Expert Witness Evidence**
- **Integration of knowledge**
- **Assessment planning**

**The workshop topics reflected the findings of External Verification visits as being the areas in which centres needed direction and support**

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

### **Good Practice**

- Overall, completion rates for the revised SVQ awards have been very good.
- Holistic approach to assessment is ensuring that candidates are not being over assessed and are able to contextualize knowledge and skills gained
- There is evidence that many centres have revised their candidate selection procedures to ensure that the candidate is in a suitable job role for the award being undertaken.
- An increasing number of Assessors and Internal Verifiers are now qualified in A and V awards
- The standard of internal verification which reflects holistic assessment continues to improve and centres are producing and regularly reviewing Internal Verification strategies that are dynamic, fit for purpose and tailored to the circumstances of the centre
- Centres are being encouraged to develop strategies for the use of Expert Witnesses and there is increasing evidence of it's use in situations where opportunistic evidence can be used and where the presence of an assessor might be intrusive, particularly when they are not work based.
- An increasing number of centres are assessing candidates for whom English is not the first language. There is evidence of appropriate and ongoing support being provided.
- SQA documentation is being widely used and most centres have a single portfolio of candidate evidence, which ensures evidence is easy to track
- Textbooks to support the new awards are widely used and materials are available providing a Scottish context.

### **Areas for Further Development**

- Assessment planning is crucial to holistic assessment. Assessment plans should be informed by, and reflect the evidence requirements for each unit. The evidence requirements detail the minimum acceptable level of Direct Observation required for each SVQ Unit and it is clear that many assessors are not reading the evidence requirements for each Unit.
- Candidate portfolios still contain product evidence that consists of blank forms and copies of policies and procedures. Assessors are encouraged to study the evidence requirements for each unit for guidance on suitable work products
- Recording of CPD of Assessors and Verifiers needs to be more systematic in centres and should focus on evaluation and review of learning undertaken. Centres need to be reminded that the CPD of Assessors and Verifiers is in relation to the assessment and verification process and that this includes attendance at standardization meetings, which are still poorly attended in some centres. Contracts/agreements with assessors specifying minimum requirements for continuing in the role of assessor are encouraged.
- The knowledge requirements of the revised SVQ's are still causing some concern. Evidence of knowledge can no longer be inferred from practice and centres need assistance from External Verifiers to ensure that candidates' evidence of knowledge is robust and embedded in reflective accounts.

## **NATIONAL UNITS**

**(i.e. Freestanding units which contribute to NPAs or NCs etc.)**

## **TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED**

**INTERMEDIATE 2 UNITS FORMING PART OF THE PROJECT BASED NATIONAL COURSES IN CARE (PBNC) WERE SELECTED FOR CENTRAL VERIFICATION. A SAMPLE OF CANDIDATE WORK FROM FOUR COLLEGES WAS SELECTED AND THE VERIFICATION WAS SUCCESSFUL IN ALL CASES**

## **FEEDBACK TO CENTRES**

### **General comments:**

The portfolio of National Units in Care has recently been reviewed and many units have been revised and updated. The centres were all using National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials to assess candidates. It was evident that some NAB materials were not sufficiently stretching as all candidates scored very high marks. The Unit in question has been reviewed and new NAB items will be available for session 2007-2008

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

National Assessment Bank materials ensure standardization across all centres and there was evidence of Internal Verification of candidate work. Marking guidelines had been followed and interpreted correctly in all centres