



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Verifier Report

2007

Subject: Construction (Plant & Ops) 186

Sector Panel or SSC: ConstructionSkills

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.

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

Construction Plant Maintenance	-G7CA-22 & G7CC-23
Specialised Plant & Machinery Operations	-G5F8-22
Construction Plant Operations	-G898-22
Lifeboat, Davit, Winch, Evacuation, Rescue Equipment Systems & Life saving Appliances Technician (Industry Level 2)	-G8AW-04

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

Plant Maintenance:

There are currently 3 centres offering the awards, the candidates mainly remain young apprentices working for plant hire/maintenance companies.

Those who work for companies that are In-Scope with the ConstructionSkills, i.e., pay into the Levy System, are funded through ConstructionSkills.

The candidates come from a wide geographical area which means that some of them have to be accommodated as they work away from home, this obviously puts an added burden on them, however they show great resolve which is evidenced by the fact that the retention rate of the candidates is high with the majority of candidates achieving level 2 progressing to the level 3 award.

The centres remain very inventive in the way they supply and ensure their candidates have access to the wide range of plant and machinery, consumables and testing equipment/rigs that is required to ensure all award areas of assessment are covered.

Plant Operations:

Unlike the plant maintenance award the vast majority of candidates undertaking the award are mature operators who require the SVQ in order to gain the Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS) Card in order for them to gain access to major construction sites

The number of young candidates (18-20 year olds) in long term training and assessment courses is very low and is mainly carried out at one centre.

The Major Contractors Group (MCG) within the construction industry has increased its demand for plant operators to hold a recognised plant operative card issued by organisations affiliated to the Construction Skills Certificate (CSCS), the minimum qualification requirement for this scheme is a S/NVQ, this is the main factor that has been responsible for the increase in the number of candidates being registered and certificated for the award, statistics show that the number of candidates will increase over the next few years.

A Quality Network Workshop was held on 25 September 2006 at the Dunblane Hydro, attendance was very good and the feedback from those who attended was very positive, the general consensus was that this would be a good thing to have on an annual or bi-annual basis so that networking could take place where ideas and suggestions could be discussed in the right form.

The majority of centres have candidates undertaking the G898 Award; the centres who still have candidates registered for the G5F8 should be reminded again that all candidates must complete the award before the end of July 2008 when the award expires.

The CPCS Card is currently being reviewed, the main point which would effect SQA is that to gain a Red Trained Operators CPCS Card, the requirement for a candidate to achieve the SPA would be replaced by a CPCS Technical Test. The requirement for the level 2 SVQ would still remain for a candidate to get the Blue Competence Card.

If these changes do come into affect, which is highly likely, then the SPA will see a vast reduction in activity. Centres could still offer this award to companies out with the construction industry, however, in order for this to happen, the requirement for the CSCS Health and Safety Test would need to be removed and the practical assessments amended so that they do not have specifications which are construction industry specific – which they currently are.

Specialist Awards – Lifeboat Award

No verification took place; the ONE centre only had a post approval visit for this award during the session. The only activity that the centre had carried out was induction and assessment planning which was all in order.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Plant Maintenance

Centres have adapted well to the requirement of the assessment strategy which demands that the majority of evidence be gathered by the candidate in the workplace, this has been achieved by recruiting and training work based recorders, some candidates due to size and nature of the companies they work for still have problems in gathering certain aspects of work based evidence, the shortfall is then gathered whilst at the college.

The colleges have adapted a work based culture to account for this however they should encourage the candidates.

The verification visits conducted at the 3 centres offering the awards found:

- That there was clear evidence that staff at all levels have a very good understanding of the awards and the type of evidence required to be presented by the candidates.
- There was a high quality of both centre generated and workplace evidence in the candidate portfolios.
- The standard of resources and facilities made available to candidates were of a high standard which provided fair access to assessment for all of the candidates.
- Overall the quality of assessment, assessor and verifier decisions were endorsed and commended.

Plant Operations

Verification has shown that the majority of centres have adapted well to the new awards and especially those who attended the Dunblane Workshop have benefited greatly from the advice given to them on the day. This was evidenced during the verification visits where:

- There was clear evidence that secondary evidence provided by the candidates was being used to good effect
- Assessment and verification decisions were sound
- Observation reports were generally well detailed, some improvements can however be made in this area, mainly in ensuring that the assessor puts in as much detail as possible
- CPD records were available; again some improvement can be made here
- Centres recognised the need for Standardisation of Assessment to be carried out
- Centres were adhering to the Assessment Strategy
- Good induction of candidates was taking place.