



Understanding & applying standards for delivering SQA Certificated Qualifications

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Aims

- ◆ To familiarise delegates with some aspects of the SQA approach. For this session the aspects are:
- ◆ Re-assessment
- ◆ Unit standardisation
- ◆ Good practice
- ◆ Identify key areas and explore these
- ◆ Provide Guidance for Centres

Recap on The criterion-referenced assessment model

- ◆ Focuses on measuring the skills and knowledge of the candidate being assessed against a previously identified benchmark or standard
- ◆ Available to assessors and learners alike.
- ◆ Designed to be a measure of performance that is objective and can be interpreted within clearly defined parameters related to the learning task.
- ◆ Note: when the candidate's skill is being assessed, you may find the term “competency” based assessment used.

What is a Unit specification?

- ◆ An important document which defines the boundaries within which a learner is assessed, and the standards to which assessment or achievement must be made.
- ◆ Not primarily concerned with material for learning and teaching
- ◆ Unit specifications are made up of three sections:

Unit specification

General information Section

- ◆ Summarises what the Unit is about
- ◆ Includes key points, e.g. the credit value, recommended entry, a summary of the Unit and the Outcomes, administrative information etc.

Unit specification

Statement of Standards Section

Mandatory part of the Unit specification which clearly states:

- ◆ The **Outcomes** that have to be achieved
- ◆ The **Knowledge and Skills** values for each Outcome (i.e. the content)
- ◆ The standard of achievement which must be reached
- ◆ What **evidence** must be produced to successfully complete the Unit

Unit specification

Support notes Section

- ◆ Doesn't have any mandatory force
- ◆ Provided for useful guidance
- ◆ Expands on the information given in the statement of standards:
- ◆ Outcome Knowledge and Skills values with examples of content
- ◆ Assessment Guidelines with examples
- ◆ Gives clear advice on major aspects of delivery

Re-assessment

- ◆ One aspect of SQA HN assessment practice that centres should incorporate in their policies, is when to allow additional attempts if a candidate does not fully achieve / pass at the first attempt.
- ◆ General policy for HN Units, refined in Unit Specifications.

Re-assessment – Graded Units

- ◆ Specific policy for HN Graded Unit Examinations
- ◆ Specific policy for HN Graded Unit Projects, where marking in stages and additional grading criteria are involved
- ◆ Have their own processes
- ◆ Refer to: Guidance for the Implementation of Graded Units in Higher National Certificates and Diplomas Publication code: CA4405

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/17%20Implementation_of_Graded_Units_guide_CA4405.pdf

Re-assessment Workshop Activity 1

- ◆ Aim: to familiarize participants with SQA guidance and its application
- ◆ Read the two extracts from SQA documents relating to re-assessment
- ◆ Discuss each question with your colleagues at the table and agree an answer from the choices given
- ◆ (Open Book – you may refer to resources, supervised and time limited)
- ◆ You have 15 minutes

Re-assessment Activity 1 feedback

- ◆ 1. How many reassessment attempts are candidates normally allowed? **Centre policy**
- ◆ 2. An 'exceptional circumstance' could be a candidate not being bothered to sit an assessment? **False**
- ◆ 3. Where a candidate requires a second attempt with a new assessment, it must take place at the end of unit delivery time.? **False**
- ◆ 4. Remediation must take place in the week after the assessment was attempted? **False**

Re-assessment Activity 1 feedback

- ◆ 5. All assessments can have part re-attempt rather than a re-assessment? **False**
- ◆ 6. A re-assessment can be easier than the first assessment? **False**
- ◆ 7. If a candidate fails one Outcome assessment they must take them all again **False**
- ◆ 8. A candidate is allowed to undertake re-attempts of the questions they get wrong in an Examination Graded Unit 1? **False**

Re-assessment Activity 1 feedback

- ◆ 9. In an open book scenario, a candidate getting more than 4 knowledge items wrong out of 14 required, must take a new assessment with all new questions and answer the whole thing?
False
- ◆ 10. All ASP's/Exemplars are guaranteed to be correct because they are produced by SQA? **False**
- ◆ 11. The assessments in the ASP/Exemplar for a specific Unit are the only way that that Unit can be assessed.
Normally False
- ◆ 12. In a (practical) task based Assignment covering more than one Outcome or Unit, assessors may provide ongoing feedback on progress, which can trigger remediation. **True**

Re-assessment Workshop Activity 2

- ◆ Re-assessment or Remediate
- ◆ Using the information in the Re-assessment exercise, discuss each scenario and agree a response for each
- ◆ You have 10 minutes

Re-assessment Activity 2 feedback

- ◆ 1. A candidate has one correct response, incorrectly answered three questions and not answered the other three questions.

Reassessment

- ◆ 2. A candidate has two correct responses, two out of three parts in another question correct, incorrectly answered two further questions and not answered two questions.

Reassessment

- ◆ 3. A candidate answers four questions correctly and one part of a fifth question. Of the remaining two questions one is incorrect, whilst the other makes a little sense but is not clear.

Remediate (Professional Judgement)

- ◆ 4. A candidate answers five questions correctly but has a calculation error in a sixth answer and the last response is in the main incorrect.

Remediate, re-do 2 questions

Re-assessment Workshop Activity 2

- ◆ It is worth noting that the previous exercise was considered on a quantitative basis
- ◆ Assessors would decide on the acceptability of candidates answers using their Professional Judgement

Re-assessment general comments

- ◆ For some subject assessments, tracking remediation activity is encouraged – verifiers can then judge standards (What failed?– what passed?)
- ◆ Schedule Time for re-assessment or remediation to best suit candidates

Re-assessment General comments

- ◆ Re-assessment or remediation will depend on:
 - The Unit Specification – are there rules? e.g. error tolerance /cut-off scores /thresholds/
 - The type of assessment and assessment conditions
 - Decisions made at standardisation / internal verification meetings
 - Professional judgement
 - Guidance from External Verifiers

Course planning – Unit delivery

- ◆ Lesson planning and assessment scheduling
- ◆ Although sampling for assessment may take place – all Knowledge and Skills items from each Outcome must be taught.
- ◆ Resources – online – collaborative- textbooks etc.
- ◆ Decision Logs (Formal record of standards agreed between assessors and IV)

Unit delivery Master Pack Workshop

- ◆ A particularly useful method of helping ensure conformity and providing effective and efficient assessment practice, is to produce and maintain SQA HN Unit Master Packs. (Electronic or Hardcopy.)
 - ◆ Please take a few minutes to discuss with your colleagues and write down, typical items your centre would put into a Master Pack.
 - ◆ (Note down where items have to be checked immediately prior to commencement of teaching)
- (10 minutes)

Unit Master Pack

- ◆ Unit Specification (version checked)
- ◆ Names of Assessors and IV's for this unit
- ◆ Teaching and assessment schedules
- ◆ List and examples of resources. (Reviewed?)
- ◆ Pre-delivery IV checklist completed
 - Includes Exemplar / ASP / Centre devised
- ◆ Previous IV forms completed for this unit (Including feedback and Actions)
- ◆ Assessment Instruments

Unit Master Pack

- ◆ Solutions / Marking Schemes for the assessments.
- ◆ Examples of previous marked and Internally Verified candidate responses / folios. Particularly where examples are at the margin of pass / fail
- ◆ Decision Logs – any assumptions made
- ◆ Correspondence or any SQA Guidance on standards acceptable within this unit.

Internal Assessment Reports

- ◆ IAR's provide a summary of findings and trends in Centres Internal Assessment activities
- ◆ Produced annually for all major Verification Groups
- ◆ They are based mainly on the reports completed by QV's after visits. Also feedback through other QV activity
- ◆ They contain details of Good Practice and Recommendations found.
- ◆ IAR's are published on the SQA Website
 - (HN Subject Area) Note these will be weighted towards centres in Scotland

Good Practice

- ◆ The procedures and/or practices that centres have adopted that more than meet standard requirements (that is what makes it good practice.)
- ◆ Good practice goes beyond normal and expected practice and effort.

Examples

(Within centres) There has been a greater recording of meetings showing how papers are to be marked, how differences between markers are overcome, and how to ascertain the standards associated with these Units. Whilst standardisation and internal verification are a mandatory requirement of the quality assurance process, there has been a genuine development in the way that these meetings are being used to ensure that appropriate standards are identified and adopted more consistently.

HN Business Graded Unit 2015

Examples

- ◆ The use of digital drop boxes for candidate assessment submissions and online marking by assessors. The software also records when candidates submit on time and gives candidates access to their results out with timetabled classes
HN Travel & Tourism 2015

Examples

- ◆ The Assessment Material Cover sheet for Each Candidate includes Unit details, Candidate details, Assessor name, Internal Verifier name, Internal Verifier recording of sampling with feedback if required, Candidate Signature and declaration of own work. It also contains: The Centre re-assessment policy and the policy on candidate's right to appeal against assessor decisions, including who to contact.

This is a most useful approach to consolidating required information.

- ◆ HN Information Technology 2015

Questions

