

## SVQ Health & Social Care EV Team EV Standardisation - Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010

### Points Discussed and Agreed

- **E- Portfolio** – As EVs we expect to see the same information from centres using e-portfolios as we expect to see from centres using paper based systems. SQA provides a guidance document for centres considering using e-portfolios and who are looking to ensure that the system they use meets SQA requirements. It is important that evidence provided by centres, whether it is in paper or electronic format, is accessible to the EV on the day of the visit and is trackable – It is the centre's responsibility to ensure all information is available to the EV on the day of the visit. If the EV cannot access the evidence or cannot track it then this is a non-compliance matter.
- **Tricky to meet pcs** – Sometimes candidates have difficulty getting real work examples for some pcs. If this is the case then the assessor should refer the matter to their IV and then get their agreement for the candidate to provide information about what they **would do** in that circumstance. THIS IS FOR A MINIMAL NUMBER OF PCS only. If candidates cannot get evidence for a number of pcs in a particular unit then this is an indication that they have not made an appropriate unit choice that reflects their everyday work practice. Questions about what candidates 'would do' should only be used **as a last resort** if candidates are unable to provide evidence from real work practice. In these instances it is good practice for the centre to have evidence of the dialogue between assessor and IV on this matter showing how the decision has been reached for the candidate to provide 'I would' evidence for the pc on that occasion.
- **Professional Discussion** – There are a number of ways professional discussion can be used. It can be helpful for the assessor to discuss aspects of practice with the candidate and record this at the end of a reflective account – particularly when the candidate has completed their first reflective account and may need some guidance to tease out their knowledge and how this links to practice. Professional discussion can be planned, where the candidate is asked to go and research something and then meet with their assessor to talk through what they have learnt and how this relates to practice. PD can also be spontaneous and happen from a naturally flowing conversation between assessor and candidate at a planning meeting. At the end of an observation the assessor may have a discussion to draw out some of the candidate's knowledge and record this in the additional evidence box on the evidence gathering form (this can be deemed as questions **or** PD as there is not always a clear distinction between the two in this instance – what may start as questions could turn into a discussion). Professional Discussion is a useful tool to use with candidates and is to be encouraged. When recording PD on the evidence gathering form it can be helpful to write RA/PD or DO/PD rather than class the piece of

evidence as two separate pieces. It may be that you feel writing DO/Q is more appropriate, as what has taken place may seem more like questions and answers after a DO rather than a discussion – this is also OK as this is not an exact science.

- **Evidencing Knowledge at HSC Level 4 and in the LMC** – Some centres are finding that their candidates are struggling with meeting the level of knowledge required for the LMC and the HSC Level 4. It is important that assessors have the required expertise, knowledge and their CPD is up to date to enable them to effectively support these candidates. It is important for candidates to be in the appropriate work role that matches the SVQ they are undertaking and that they have worked in this role for a sufficient length of time to be familiar with their responsibilities and the functions of their role. It is also important that they have had appropriate training to equip them to undertake their role. They should have access to, or be guided to use, appropriate knowledge resources to enable them to research what is necessary for that level of qualification. Ultimately employers need to take responsibility for placing candidates on appropriate courses and ensuring they are competent in their role and ready for assessment– it is not the assessor’s role to make a candidate competent and if work is not at the required level it is OK to return it to the candidate. At this level candidates need to be self-directing in their studying.
- **Theory** – It is important that where theory is referred to in the units that the candidate is able to show how they apply their knowledge and understanding of this to practice. At both level 3 and level 4 it is expected that candidates mention the name of the theory they are referring to as well as the theorist. It is helpful if candidates can mention the source of the information they are referring to so that the assessor is able to check this for accuracy. Candidates are not expected to be social science experts and so they do not have to write at length comparing and contrasting theorists however it is important that they take a theory and show how it provides them with insight into the work they do with the people/children using their service.
- **Question Banks** – Centres should not routinely produce lists of questions to cover knowledge points, thus detracting from the importance of candidates showing how their knowledge integrates with their practice. Wherever possible candidates should be encouraged to evidence the integration of their knowledge through their reflective accounts. If assessors ask candidates questions for knowledge points they should encourage the candidate to show how their knowledge links to their practice in their response. If candidates are asked questions for pcs they should, where possible, provide real work examples from their practice to meet the pc – technically it would be better in this instance to ask the candidate to write a **short** reflective account to cover that point rather than ask a question - however a question is acceptable in this instance.

- **Holistic Assessment** – This is strongly recommended for the Health and Social Care suite of qualifications as this ensures candidates do not produce unnecessarily large amounts of evidence leading to over assessment (which disadvantages the candidate). Holistic assessment planning is to be strongly encouraged in centres.

*“You are encouraged not to approach the SVQ on a unit-by-unit basis but to see how normal day-to-day workplace activities will provide evidence of competence for several SVQ units. This ‘holistic’ approach may not happen when you start.....however...after you become more familiar with the standards you should use this more holistic approach to your work.”* SVQ Health and Social Care Assessment Strategy.

When assessing holistically it is better if Internal Verification happens on a timed approach rather than on a unit-by-unit approach e.g. IVs sample evidence types at different stages. When working on common knowledge points across units it is important to ensure the points are claimed in the context of the individual unit themes (e.g. data protection in relation to health and safety for unit 32 and data protection in relation to care planning for unit 328).

- **Assessment Strategy** –It is important for assessors and IVs to regularly read the assessment strategy, as this is what the EVs inspect the centre against. Centres are required to follow the assessment strategy and failure to do so is a non-compliance outcome. EVs will look to see that in the portfolios sampled centre practice is consistent – so it may be that one portfolio out of 14 sampled has a small amount of correction fluid in it. The EV will comment on this but as it is only one portfolio it will not be seen as representative of the centre’s accepted practice and they will be advised to remind candidates, assessors and IVs that this is not acceptable – it is good practice if assessors provide written feedback to candidates if this happens so it demonstrates that the centre is not accepting this. If candidates work with only one service user they should contact SQA for guidance.
- **IV Feedback in Candidate Portfolios** –IV Feedback is primarily for the assessor to take forward with the candidate and is not expected to be located in the candidate’s portfolio (*although if centres choose to have the IV feedback in the candidate’s portfolio then that is fine*). However, it is expected that all IV feedback is made available to the EV during an external verification visit. IV feedback is directed to the assessor and not the candidate. Some centres may choose to have a separate IV feedback form for new or trainee A1 assessors, where they are able to provide additional guidance and support to enable the assessor to develop in their role. It is good practice for the IV feedback to; be detailed and specific about what has been looked at; detail the decisions they have come to and why this; provide guidance on action that is required. Once action points have been addressed it is important to have a system where it is shown that the IV has seen and agreed the remediation.