



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Verifier Report

2008

Subject: HNC Social Care

Sector Panel or SSC: Qualification Development Team and Care Stakeholders Group

Date: 4 August 2008

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.

HIGHER NATIONAL UNITS

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

DH3K34 Social Care Theory for Practice

DH3M34 Psychology for Social Care Practice

DH3N34 Sociology for Social Care Practice

DG5D34 Team Working in Care Settings

DH3W34 Understanding Loss and Grief

DMOF34 Caring for Young People in Secure Settings

DK4R04 Promote Effective Communication

DK4K04 Promote Manage and Maintain Health and Safety and Security

DK4I04 Promote Choice Well Being and Protection of Individuals

DK4H04 Promote Choice Well Being and Protection of Children and Young People

DK5704 Reflect on and Develop your Practice

This is the first senior verifier report dedicated to the HNC Social Care. The external verifier team met together at the start of 2007-2008 session when we planned our activity for the year, and again in April when we looked specifically at the Graded Unit comparing the original marking scheme with the revised one. This was a really positive workshop which we all found extremely helpful as we commenced our visits to centres.

Together we undertook forty five visits for the HNC and twenty seven visits for the Graded Unit. Visits were made to college and non college centres delivering the HNC in Social Care and looked at the units identified above, the SVQ units in the award and the Graded Units. During our meeting at the start of the session we made the decision to concentrate our verification on Social Care Theory for Practice, one Social Science Unit, the Graded Unit and HSC33 Reflect on and develop your practice. We were particularly looking to see how well centres were integrating their assessments and how candidate work was being used to inform the SVQ units in the core of the award.

We had anticipated that visits would commence early in the session and that we would be able to follow up on the discussions held at the Quality Network and provide guidance and support as well as verification of completed work. This did not happen due to the decision to delay visits to centres offering SVQs until after February 2008. Furthermore, I had not anticipated at the start of the session that some centres would be allocated a different verifier for the Graded Unit, and although we were able to resolve the majority of these situations there were a small minority who were visited twice by different members of the team.

Overall the standard of work examined was good, meeting the national standards, and compliant with the assessment strategy. No holds on certification were placed on the HNC Social Care. The majority of centres had attended the Quality Network held in November 2007 and had made good use of the workshop materials provided.

There was an increase in the number of centres achieving good integration of assessment, there is still, however, scope for many more centres to adopt a more holistic approach to the assessment of the HNC units in particular to make greater use of evidence generated for the Graded Unit to inform the SVQ units within the award. Advice and guidance on the achievement of this integration was provided at the Quality Network and by the team during their visits to centres.

Centres visited were a mix of those still using the original Graded Unit and those using the revised one, the results of the verification of these is covered in the section of the report headed Graded Units.

The SVQ units within the HNC showed a greater depth of knowledge and understanding in the main this year, although there continues to be a noticeable difference between candidates from the employed route and those who are full time students.

The main issue would appear to be the suitability of the work placements selected for candidates not employed in the sector, I found some examples of Social Care students placed in primary schools as classroom assistants and understandably finding it difficult to complete their course work and in particular the SVQ units.

Some concerns remain regarding the direct observation of practice; in a few centres this was still found to be minimal and lacking in focus on real work activities tending to focus on health and safety checks and in some cases observation of the candidate in supervision with their manager.

There continue to be centres where the SVQ units are assessed outwith the HNC teaching team and where little contact exists between the two areas, this clearly disadvantages candidates as the SVQ assessor is not involved in the contract with the workplace and the validation of real work practice required by the Graded Unit which can often provide good observed evidence for the SVQ units.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good practice noted in the reports including the following:

- Handouts prepared from learning materials make good use of value challenging exercises.
- Joint working between HN programme co-ordinator and SVQ verifier is commended.
- First class feedback is given to students, which serves to reward and encourage them.
- Very useful handout for students listing appropriate web sites.
- Holistic assessment based on the workbook model is very good practice.
- Very well developed Virtual Learning Environment with the units and graded unit on it.
- Some very good explanatory packs for students.
- Use of integration between social care theory and core skills.
- Variety of delivery methods ensures equality of access.
- Additional column added to candidate's work to enable SVQ units to be matched
- Good evidence of robust internal verification.

Areas for further development identified:

- Integration or the lack of it seems to come down to staffing and motivation within the college. Everyone accepted the benefits but cited organisational issues as preventing progression with this.
- Centre felt they were unsure as to where to start holistic assessment although could see where some possibilities were once we had discussed it.
- Keen to integrate but staff shortages prevented them from doing it this year.
- Centre over-assessing, testing for all outcomes.
- System to identify remedial work required.
- Centre should have a pro forma for assessments to enable structured feedback to be given.
- Centre needs to examine the scheduling of the SVQ component to ensure students are not overloaded.
- Further work on SVQ signposting required.
- Ensure currency of reference, teaching and learning materials.

HIGHER NATIONAL GRADED UNITS

TITLES/LEVELS OF HN GRADED UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

F29134 Social Care Graded Unit
DH4634 Social Care Graded Unit

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

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- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

There was a marked division between centres using the original Graded Unit and those who had made the change to the new unit.

Those centres who had adopted the new Graded Unit all found the revised marking scheme to be a great improvement and the results obtained showed a greater spread of marks and therefore a more balanced picture across grades A to C. They also appreciated the ability to offer candidate's a small amount of remediation as a means of achieving greater clarity in their responses.

There are some further developments still required in relation to the graded unit. The first of these is in terms of the placing within the marking scheme of the two marks awarded for the validation of practice in the workplace. In two identified instances I noted that these marks, placed in the development section, were sufficient to tip the balance from fail to pass, this was a concern as neither candidate had demonstrated competence in the understanding of, or application of social care theory. There were also two centres where a candidate had scored 0 in one of the sub sections of the development stage however had been allowed to pass as the total mark was over the pass line.

Additionally, although there was an improvement noted overall in the candidates ability to record their care planning using social care theory this year, in many instances this improvement was achieved to the detriment of their demonstration of knowledge in the applied social sciences. It might, therefore, be useful in the new session to provide some further guidance for centres through the next Quality Network, in relation to the depth of knowledge required by candidates to achieve a pass the applied social sciences aspects of the unit.

The team all feel that it is important for us to continue to monitor the Graded Unit closely as it is becoming possible for tutors to train candidates to achieve an A pass through the provision of too specific guidance notes, and through the use of a formative assignment in preparation for the final assessment. While support to candidates is good practice there is a fine line between support and coaching for success.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

Insert details below

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General comments:

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

Good practice noted in the reports included the following:

- College got the students to keep all HNC essays, graded unit and SVQ units in the same portfolio. This again is to encourage individual responsibility and accountability for their own work and also allows better integration as the students has all the information to hand. Certainly was easier to EV on the visit as everything was there
- Integration of assessment between Social Care Theory for Practice and Psychology enabled candidates to have a rounded view of theory and provided good links into the SVQ units.
- Joint working between the HN programme co-ordinator and the SVQ internal verifier.
- Candidates provided good evidence, observations from assessors were clear and relevant
- Signposting SVQ evidence within the content and assessment strategy
- Managing SVQ assessment within the HNC programme and induction of and support for assessors from within HN team

Areas for further development identified:

- Centres need to pay attention to the evidence requirements for the SVQ units. HSC33 has a requirement that assessment should be done over time.
- Map opportunities for evidence generated in HNC assessments to serve as knowledge points for SVQ.
- Ensure that products are candidates own work and that completion certificates from training are supported with explanations of learning.
- Need for closer integration between HNC and SVQ units
- Need for adequate visits to observe candidates actual work practice
- Ensure assessor working toward A1 obtain these and are supported by internal verifiers.
- Examine the scheduling of SVQ assessment to ensure candidates not overloaded at end of year.

NATIONAL UNITS

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

TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS VERIFIED

Insert details below

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General comments:

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