



**Higher National and National Units**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022**

# **Sports Coaching**

**Verification group number: 629**

## Introduction

There were 24 virtual visits carried out for this verification group during session 2021–22 from a total of 40 selections. Three centres were not running. All centres submitted candidate evidence electronically.

It is appropriate to note in this QVSR that, of the 24 visits carried out, 20 were for centres offering the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Scottish Football Association: Refereeing at SCQF level 7 (GA51 47). There was a focus on qualification verification activity during this session to reflect a change in the quality assurance model used in this group award. In previous sessions centres offering this award did so under one centre (SFA Hampden) submission. In 2019 a decision was made for centres to offer the award under their own centre number. Those already offering were auto-approved; new centres coming forward submitted approval applications. Those sampled for qualification verification visits were a mix of centres that have offered the qualification over a number of years and those newly approved.

The following group awards were sampled during the qualification verification activity.

G9GF 46      National Progression Award in: Sports Development at SCQF level 6

Units sampled from this group award:

F7JL 12      Sports: Activity and Participation Opportunities in the Community (Higher)  
F7JM 12      Sports: Investigate Activity Development Opportunities in an Organisation (Higher)

GA51 47      Professional Development Award (PDA) in Scottish Football Association: Refereeing at SCQF level 7

Units sampled from this group award:

FF2Y 34      Laws of the Game  
FF2X 34      Practical Refereeing

GP7X 15      HNC Sports Coaching and Development

Units sampled from this group award:

J2AR 34      Sports Coaching Practitioner: Knowing Coaching  
J2AS 34      Sports Coaching Practitioner: Knowing Others  
J2AT 34      Sports Coaching Practitioner: Knowing Yourself  
J2AP 34      Human Anatomy, Physiology and Biomechanics in Sport  
J2AW 34      Sports Coaching and Development: Developing Professional Practice

## Category 2: Resources

### **Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.**

Almost all centres were compliant with this criterion. There was evidence that centres had appropriate facilities and equipment, and that pre-delivery checks of teaching and assessment materials were being carried out. Course outlines were shown and there was evidence of risk assessments being carried out. Centres were using the app for the Laws of the Game and the SFA teaching resources provided.

#### **Good practice**

- ◆ Each candidate issued with their own 'referee pack' giving a feeling of ownership and pride to the course. Logbook, whistle flags etc. helped the learner to engage, and was a good motivational tool.
- ◆ Each candidate is provided with whistles and misconduct cards, with provision also from the SFA of a resource pack to each pupil of flags etc.

#### **Recommendations**

- ◆ The centre may wish to consider including details of course documentation such as unit specification version numbers and dates on pre-delivery checklists.
- ◆ The centre may wish to note version number and date of unit specifications for both units as part of their pre-delivery IV documentation.
- ◆ In addition to the SQA documents accessed relating to the qualification the centre should access unit specifications for both units as part of their pre-delivery routine and note version number/date of document on pre-delivery documents.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider using a standardisation meeting log to record details of meetings and informal conversations relating to the qualification.
- ◆ Consider a stand-alone standardisation document for the qualification or attach greater relevance to pre-delivery requirements for the qualification within departmental standardisation meetings.

## Category 3: Candidate support

### **Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.**

All centres were compliant with this criterion. Centres gave information on progression requirements and showed evidence of how candidates with additional support needs are put into place. There was evidence of in some centres of encouraging wider gender participation in some sports activities.

### **Good practice**

- ◆ The centre has a one candidate one device policy, with each candidate having personal access to a Chromebook for work.
- ◆ While not perhaps available to all centres due to timetabling pressures and electives, it was noted that the centre sought to only offer this award to 6th year pupils. This appeared advantageous through a general improvement in maturity, and the ability to have previously gained Higher English and PE which helps to underpin the group award. Conversations are carried out with every candidate who applies to ensure suitability, and a football background is softly encouraged.
- ◆ The Sports Department presented a positive relationship with the school's additional support needs (ASN) Department in creating a support pathway for any pupil who has been identified with an ASN and has selected this group award as one of their electives. Discussions regularly take place between departments, and appropriate support put in place and implemented.
- ◆ There is an opportunity for applicants to undergo summer activity within workshops which may target academic writing for instance.

### **Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.**

All centres were compliant with this criterion. Scheduled face-to-face contact with an assessor took place to cover theoretical and practical elements.

There were different timetabling models in place. The PDA SFA Refereeing Award is mainly offered to S5/S6 learners. Active Schools provide feedback relating to candidate performance. Some centres have local SFA refereeing representatives available to offer feedback to candidates following practical observations.

### **Good practice**

- ◆ The centre is ably supported by the informal partnerships of two external referees who support in the delivery, and in some instances the assessment of the award by sharing their knowledge and expertise with the staff and candidates. This creates a more realistic feel, and helps to support the delivery of the whole award.
- ◆ A tracking Excel sheet was uploaded as evidence of learner tracking which contained all relevant information related to the learner journey. This provided a holistic 'helicopter' view of learner progress where issues could be identified by the course team and actioned accordingly in a timely fashion.

### **Recommendation**

- ◆ Evidence of these ongoing discussions and reviews should be recorded and stored by means of minuted meetings following perhaps a simple template of evidence gathering. This would ensure good practice, as well as actions are recorded and not just implemented straight into the proceedings.

## Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

### Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.

Most centres were compliant with this criterion. Procedures being followed were as outlined in the centre's policy documents. Sampling strategies within the internal verification documents was followed, and there was evidence of support from the local SFA refereeing representative in verifying the practical elements of the course.

Completed documentation presented for qualification verification showed that there was standardisation of assessment procedures. In most centres internal verification documentation included a three-stage (pre-during-post-) verification process.

#### Good practice

- ◆ The work submitted by the candidates has been clearly internally verified, and the sampling undertaken on the day also concurs the work meets SCQF level 7 standard. It was encouraging to see feedback identifying the difference between an NQ response, and an HN response that clearly indicates an appreciation and understanding by the assessor of the required response throughout.
- ◆ There is a 'soft' and developing partnership for networking with a neighbouring centre that is in the process of being further developed and enhanced.
- ◆ Evidence presented prior to the visit clearly showed a very robust and effective internal verification policy and procedures with course outlines, and evidence logs, showing great depth and clarity.
- ◆ There is a 'soft' and developing partnership for networking with a number of centres that are part of an MS Teams discussion group sharing ideas and materials. This works as a standardisation process and a discussion platform for arising concerns and issues. The use of minuted meeting notes for quality assessment on the collation sheet was a particularly useful tool, and clearly indicated who took part in discussions that took place.

#### Recommendations

- ◆ It is recommended that the centre applies a further level of joint marking to ascertain what a pass or fail piece of work looks like by marking a script together to arrive at a consensus. There is no record contained in the standardisation meetings that reflects collaboration and a joined up, joint approach. The provided standardisation meeting template that was shared would be a very good methodology to record this for future reference and evidence gathering.
- ◆ While it is noted the IV process strongly underpins the candidate evidence following assessment, it is recommended that the assessment paperwork prior to sharing with the candidate should also undergo this process. While it was noted in this instance the centre was using pre-devised material (ASPs) from the SFA/SQA, it would still be beneficial for these to undergo internal checks and indication of this for additional security and assurance.

Further 'formal' trails of standardisation minutes and meetings were not evident on the day, but the discussions were clearly evident to having taken part as due course of a working day. However, it would be considered stronger evidence to record these in some

way for the key, more important elements, generating a written path of knowledge and decision making.

- ◆ The centre may wish to consider annotation of date and initials of IV on documents wherever possible to indicate verification has occurred.
- ◆ Delivery staff should consider using an internal verification pre-ongoing-post-delivery document to record assessor feedback and feed forward to standardisation meetings.
- ◆ Insert a signature/date/actions/feedback block on the internal verification sampling document.
- ◆ The centre should consider using an internal verification sampling record detailing when, who, by whom evidence was sampled and any comment that may inform ongoing future assessment practice.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider annotation and dating of assessment material by the internal verifier. Ongoing internal verification rather than it being end-loaded could also be considered.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider internally verifying assessment decisions on an ongoing basis as opposed to end-loading of verification. Date and staff initials on documents would also be a welcome addition.
- ◆ While there was verbal discussion around the mid-sampling of one unit, this was not documented within the internal verification paperwork and was not consistent. It is recommended that mid-sampling is scheduled and if undertaken clearly sign-posted within the internal verification paperwork. Undertaking quality assurance in an ongoing fashion will allow any issues to be addressed in a timely manner and support any standardisation activity with partners. Standardisation across partners is highly recommended. It was highlighted through examining the internal verification paperwork that the queries raised through internal verification sampling could have been explored and/or resolved through discussion within the centre's course teams.

### **Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.**

Almost all centres were compliant with this criterion. The majority of centres are using SQA assessment instruments. There was evidence of pre-delivery checks being carried out.

#### **Good practice**

- ◆ Standardisation has taken place with another partner school (informal basis) to ensure the same approaches and methodologies are being used.
- ◆ Involvement of an external SFA advisor (former senior professional referee) was considered greatly beneficial to the process of ensuring industry levels being applied, and guidance/support offered. This also included the provision of misconduct sheets that are up to date and industry recognised. The triangulation of marking and opinion between assessor, external assessor, and second marker is healthy and strong.
- ◆ Involvement of an external SFA advisor and supporting staff was considered beneficial to the process of ensuring industry levels being applied, and guidance/support offered. Good use of external networks and contacts developed.

## **Recommendations**

- ◆ The centre should consider adding the unit title and number on the front cover of the assessment.
- ◆ While it is noted the internal verification process strongly underpins the candidate evidence, it is recommended that the assessment paperwork prior to sharing with the candidate, should also undergo this process. While it was noted in this instance the centre was using pre-devised material (ASPs) from the SFA/SQA, it would still be beneficial for these to undergo internal checks and indication of this for additional security and peace of mind.
- ◆ A marking guideline for all assessment material is strongly recommended at this time. There was discussion on what merited a pass or fail for a candidate piece of work, that at this time is grey and vague, with a lot of onus put on professional discretion of the assessor. To assist this process and make it more transparent what is required by the candidate, a clear transcript of required evidence should be compiled using the unit specification and evidence requirements as the basis of this. This will help reduce the spectrum of what can be considered a pass, and make it clearer to the candidate, assessor, IV and external agencies.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider closer alignment to assessment templates found within the SQA assessment support pack as these provide greater opportunity to generate learner feedback.

## **Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.**

All centres were compliant with this criterion and submitted appropriate evidence to show that the work being submitted was that of the candidate shown and that assessments were being completed under appropriate, supervised requirements (where applicable).

## **Recommendations**

- ◆ It is recommended a learner authenticity of work statement is added to the front cover of the learner evidence records.
- ◆ It is recommended a learner authenticity of work statement is added to the front cover of the learner evidence records for FF2X 34 Practical Refereeing or a whole class sign-off sheet.
- ◆ Include an authenticity of work statement and signature block on the assessment cover sheet for practical assessments.

## **Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.**

Almost all centres were compliant with this criterion. It was clear from the review of qualification verification reports that the evidence sampled by external verifiers found assessor judgements to be consistent and accurate, and met the requirements of the performance criteria and knowledge and understanding to be covered in the units being sampled during qualification verification activity this session. There was evidence of cross-marking and blind-marking.

## Recommendation

- ◆ Discussion clearly established evidence of the appropriate grade, and award to each candidate, but further evidence of the discussion that has taken place between the internal verifier and assessor to clearly establish what is a pass (weighting, evidence of correct jargon/terminology etc) needs to be recorded. While there was strong oral evidence presented on the day as to this being the case, there is no record of it having been undertaken or presented. This would be a healthy addition to record keeping and a further robust approach to internal verification and standardisation.
- ◆ The centre should consider dual-marking an assignment together, prior to any further candidate marking, to ascertain an agreement on what is a pass, remediation or second attempt at SCQF level 7 for the subjective questions and outcomes. This would help to ensure standardisation is robustly applied, and reduce the need for future discussion post marking.
- ◆ To ensure consistency of standards, and to help prevent against a spectrum of acceptable answers from the assessor or centre, the concept of a marking guideline to clearly define what is a pass or fail was further discussed for this element of external verification. With the lack of recorded or clarified standards at this time, there is the potential for variable passing standards. Defined marking guideline as to what is deemed an acceptable response or performance (or repetitions of when considering the training diary) should be applied to ensure a consistent approach.
- ◆ The centre should consider a dated assessor feedback and signature area on Outcome 2 misconduct reports, and Outcome 3 fitness log.
- ◆ The centre should consider an individualised approach to the physical fitness logbook with greater personal reflective detail within. Additionally, a consolidated assessment result sheet for video assessment would clarify assessment resulting.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider a detailed pre-delivery approach having completed one assessment cycle. Internal, and external, verification comment and actions should feedback into pre-delivery standardisation meetings for the next session.

## Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.

All centres were compliant with this criterion. The evidence presented showed that centre staff were aware of SQA requirements and put in place appropriate ways of storing and disposing of candidate evidence.

A majority of centres kept evidence for longer that required under SQA's guidelines.

## Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

All centres were compliant with this criterion. It is clear that feedback from qualification verification reports is disseminated to various parties within centres in different ways (e-mail/shared space). The content of these reports is then discussed at standardisation meetings. Minutes from these meetings record action points and include any recommendations made and good practice identified.

## Recommendation

- ◆ Again, while it is accepted that the team in this instance work closely and positively in this delivery, discussion revolved around the good practice, actions, and adaptations applied routinely throughout the delivery of a unit, that are left unrecorded and not shared in writing. Should a member of staff leave the centre, the good practice, experience and knowledge would leave with them, requiring the school to start from the beginning in knowledge development. A standardisation minutes template would again resolve this in recording your findings, both positive and constructive to ensure actions are carried out, and by whom/when.

## Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ Each candidate issued with their own 'referee pack' giving a feeling of ownership and pride to the course. Logbook, whistle flags etc. Helped the learner to engage, and a good motivational tool.
- ◆ Each candidate is provided with whistles and misconduct cards, with provision also from the SFA of a resource pack to each learner of flags etc.
- ◆ The centre has a one candidate one device policy, with each candidate having personal access to a Chromebook for work.
- ◆ While not perhaps available to all centres due to timetabling pressures and electives, it was noted that the centre sought to only offer this award to 6th year learners. This appeared advantageous through a general improvement in maturity, and the ability to have previously gained Higher English and PE which helps to underpin the group award. Conversations are carried out with every candidate who applies to ensure suitability, and a football background is softly encouraged.
- ◆ The Sports Department presented a positive relationship with the school's additional support needs (ASN) department in creating a support pathway for any learner who has been identified with an ASN and has selected this group award as one of their electives. Discussions regularly take place between departments, and appropriate support put in place and implemented.
- ◆ There is an opportunity for applicants to undergo summer activity within workshops which may target academic writing for instance.
- ◆ The centre is ably supported by the informal partnerships of two external referees who support in the delivery, and in some instances the assessment of the award by sharing their knowledge and expertise with the staff and candidates. This creates a more realistic feel, and helps to support the delivery of the whole award.
- ◆ A tracking Excel sheet was uploaded as evidence of learner tracking which contained all relevant information related to the learner journey. This provided a holistic 'helicopter' view of learner progress where issues could be identified by the course team and actioned accordingly in a timely fashion.
- ◆ The work submitted by the candidates has been clearly internally verified, and the sampling undertaken on the day also concurs the work meets SCQF level 7 standard. It was encouraging to see feedback identifying the difference between an NQ response,

and an HN response that clearly indicates an appreciation and understanding by the assessor of the required response throughout.

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- ◆ Standardisation has taken place with another partner school (informal basis) to ensure the same approaches and methodologies are being used.
- ◆ Involvement of an external SFA advisor (former senior professional referee) was considered greatly beneficial to the process of ensuring industry levels being applied, and guidance/support offered. This also included the provision of misconduct sheets that are up to date and industry recognised. The triangulation of marking and opinion between assessor, external assessor, and second marker is healthy and strong.
- ◆ Involvement of an external SFA advisor and supporting staff was considered beneficial to the process of ensuring industry levels being applied, and guidance/support offered. Good use of external networks and contacts developed.

## **Specific areas for development**

The following areas for development was reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ The centre may wish to consider including details of course documentation such as unit specification version numbers and dates on pre-delivery checklists.
- ◆ The centre may wish to note version number and date of unit specifications for both units as part of their pre-delivery IV documentation.
- ◆ In addition to the SQA documents accessed relating to the qualification the centre should access unit specifications for both units as part of their pre-delivery routine and note version number/date of document on pre-delivery documents.
- ◆ The centre may wish to consider using a standardisation meeting log to record details of meetings and informal conversations relating to the qualification.
- ◆ Consider a stand-alone standardisation document for the qualification or attach greater relevance to pre-delivery requirements for the qualification within departmental standardisation meetings.
- ◆ Evidence of these ongoing discussions and reviews should be recorded and stored by means of minuted meetings following perhaps a simple template of evidence gathering. This would ensure good practice, as well as actions are recorded and not just implemented straight into the proceedings.
- ◆ It is recommended that the centre applies a further level of joint marking to ascertain what is a pass or fail piece of work looks like by marking a script together to arrive at a consensus. There is no record contained in the standardisation meetings that reflects

collaboration and a joined up, joint approach. The provided standardisation meeting template that was shared would be a very good methodology to record this for future reference and evidence gathering.

- ◆ While it is noted the IV process strongly underpins the candidate evidence following assessment, it is recommended that the assessment paperwork prior to sharing with the candidate should also undergo this process. While it was noted in this instance the centre was using pre-devised material (ASPs) from the SFA/SQA, it would still be beneficial for these to undergo internal checks and indication of this for additional security and assurance.

Further 'formal' trails of standardisation minutes and meetings were not evident on the day, but the discussions were clearly evident to having taken part as due course of a working day. However, it would be considered stronger evidence to record these in some way for the key, more important elements, generating a written path of knowledge and decision making.

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- ◆ The centre should consider adding the unit title and number on the front cover of the assessment.
- ◆ While it is noted the internal verification process strongly underpins the candidate evidence, it is recommended that the assessment paperwork prior to sharing with the candidate, should also undergo this process. While it was noted in this instance the centre was using pre-devised material (ASPs) from the SFA/SQA, it would still be beneficial for these to undergo internal checks and indication of this for additional security and peace of mind.

- ◆ A marking guideline for all assessment material is strongly recommended at this time. There was discussion on what merited a pass or fail for a candidate piece of work, that at this time is grey and vague, with a lot of onus put on professional discretion of the assessor. To assist this process and make it more transparent what is required by the candidate, a clear transcript of required evidence should be compiled using the unit specification and evidence requirements as the basis of this. This will help reduce the spectrum of what can be considered a pass, and make it clearer to the candidate, assessor, IV and external agencies.
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- ◆ Include an authenticity of work statement and signature block on the assessment cover sheet for practical assessments.
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- ◆ Again, while it is accepted that the team in this instance work closely and positively in this delivery, discussion revolved around the good practice, actions, and adaptations

applied routinely throughout the delivery of a unit, that are left unrecorded and not shared in writing. Should a member of staff leave the centre, the good practice, experience and knowledge would leave with them, requiring the school to start from the beginning in knowledge development. A standardisation minutes template would again resolve this in recording your findings, both positive and constructive to ensure actions are carried out, and by whom/when.