Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022

Business and Administration

Verification group number: 397

Introduction

The following qualifications were verified in 2022–23:

GK6X 22   SVQ Business and Administration
GK6Y 23   SVQ Business and Administration
GR50 46   Foundation Apprenticeship

Category 2: Resources

Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.

Staff in all centres have appropriate assessment and verification qualifications.

In all centres any staff who were working towards assessment and verification qualifications were very well supported by an experienced colleague who had already gained the qualification.

All assessors and verifiers named in the sample covered by the external verifier team had completed appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) in order to maintain their currency and further develop their assessment/verification skills. In almost all centres CPD included not only the CPD covered but also the impact of the CPD on the assessment/verification process.

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

All centres had procedures in place to ensure that the assessment environment and learning and reference resources available were appropriate to support and deliver these awards.

All centres used a site selection checklist or equivalent to ensure the appropriateness of workplaces in relation to accommodation, equipment, learning and reference materials to support these awards.

All centres reviewed this criterion on an ongoing basis throughout the delivery of the award. In all centres policies are reviewed regularly to ensure best practice

Ongoing reviews of this criterion take place during assessment planning, while reviewing evidence submitted, and during online or face-to-face observations.

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 carried out excellent induction processes. Good induction laid the foundations for the production of excellent candidate portfolios. Induction included:

♦ Introduction to SQA

♦ Introduction to SVQ

♦ Introduction to e-portfolio platform — if appropriate

♦ Selection of appropriate units — based on job role

♦ Plagiarism and malpractice

All centres also check any prior achievements and identify any additional support needs or special assessment needs that need to be taken into account to support the delivery of the award.

If additional assessment development needs or barriers are identified the assessor works with the candidate and employer to put a plan in place to address these.

A comprehensive initial assessment of each candidate is conducted during the induction process.

Candidate job roles are all reviewed and aligned with the requirements of the SVQ. This allows the most suitable units to be identified for the qualification, taking into account the candidate job role and their existing skills and qualifications.

The time taken at this stage ensures that the correct level of award is chosen, and that the units chosen match the work role.

Development needs and special assessment needs are identified at this time or within the first couple of weeks. These are taken into account when planning assessment in terms of timing and assessment methods.

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

In all centres candidates had scheduled contact with their assessors. The contact was a mixture of online and face to face.

Between the scheduled contact, all centres encouraged candidates who were seeking help or advice to contact their assessor at any time by email, telephone or the facility within their e-portfolio platform.

In all centres during scheduled contact, candidate evidence was assessed and assessment plans were then revised — providing good support and feedback to candidates.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

In all centres there was a good system of internal verification in place — providing good feedback to both assessor and candidate.

In almost all centres, internal verification was carried out throughout the life of the award rather than on completion of the award. This is seen as best practice.

In all centres there was good documentation to record the internal verification process.

In all centres with a new assessor, internal verification was 100%.

In all centres where the delivery of the award was for the first time, internal verification was 100%.

In all other centres, internal verification was carried out using a sampling process.

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

In all centres there was a good variety of evidence within the candidate portfolios. In all centres, portfolios were well presented and well assessed. In all centres, candidates received excellent support from their assessor.

In all centres, the assessment methods used by the assessor were appropriate to the work being carried out by the candidates. There was good use of both performance evidence and supporting evidence.

In almost all centres, evidence was well referenced to the standards and used across various units showing a holistic approach and good triangulation of evidence.

In all centres there was a good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence.

Performance evidence included observation and work product.

Observations were carried out online and, in some cases, if COVID-19 restrictions permitted, face to face. All centres had worked hard, in trying circumstances due to COVID-19 restrictions, to include observations in the candidate portfolio.

In almost all centres, candidates used reflective accounts/storyboards/personal statements to display work product.

These reflective accounts/storyboards/personal statements contained candidate narrative (annotation) which placed the evidence in context with the work product embedded at the appropriate point. Alternatively, a 'See Evidence 1' approach was used with the work product being displayed later in the portfolio. Both of these approaches work well.

In almost all centres the above display of evidence (using either method) included excellent signposting to appropriate performance indicators and knowledge and understanding. Evidence was signposted not only to the unit being addressed but also cross-referenced into other units and cross-referenced from the optional units into the mandatory units.

In almost all centres this cross-referencing was used well. Over the years there has been improvement in this area that has resulted in a reduction in the evidence required to show competence.

In almost all centres, professional discussion, questions and witness testimony were used as excellent supporting evidence.

This good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence provided good triangulation of evidence.

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

In all centres plagiarism and malpractice were covered during induction — the consequences of such were made obvious to the candidates.

In almost all centres e-portfolios were being used. These e-portfolio platforms required individual usernames and passwords to access them. This helped to ensure that the work was the candidate's own.

In almost all centres, candidates signed disclaimer statements to confirm that all work produced for their portfolio was their own work.

In all centres, assessors and internal verifiers get to know the capabilities of their candidates through their regular contact and ongoing observations and feel they would quickly spot evidence submitted by a candidate that was not their own work. Any evidence not fitting into the pattern would be easily identified and investigated.

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

In almost all centres, candidate portfolios contained a good range of evidence that was appropriately referenced to the relevant standards. This referencing (signposting) within the evidence showed where the standards had been met and was referenced across various units.

All centres make very good use of their regular standardisation meetings to disseminate information to the team.

In all centres, standardisation meetings take place on a regular basis to ensure that decisions are consistent across all assessors. In all centres there were opportunities for both formal and informal standardisation.

In all centres, standardisation minutes were available and recorded details of the discussions that had taken place.

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

All centres were aware of the retention requirements of SQA:

Centres are required to retain candidate portfolios for three weeks after completion unless selected for, and notified of, an external verification visit — in which case they are to be retained until the completion of the visit.

Candidate portfolios held within an e-portfolio platform are available in perpetuity.

All centres had their own retention periods — these were longer than the retention period outlined by SQA.

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

All centres have a procedure in place to disseminate feedback from the visit to appropriate staff. All relevant staff are given access to the EV report when it is received. It is discussed at a staff meeting and checked to ensure that there are no outstanding issues. Any actions that were agreed are monitored to ensure that they are completed by the agreed date.

In all centres, staff discuss EV feedback after the visit and use the feedback to discuss any areas for improvement.

Foundation Apprenticeship

Only a few centres were sampled in relation to the Foundation Apprenticeship.

There was a mixture of one and two year delivery of the award.

Centres, candidates and assessor/verifier teams had an extremely difficult time during lockdown and the period after lockdown.

Some centres made use of the Customised Units that were put in place to support the delivery of the award.

Centres were extremely inventive and creative in covering the SVQ/Customised Units.

Centres used the centrally produced assessment material to gather evidence for the NPA units — this evidence was well presented and well assessed.

Schools and workplaces are now on a more settled footing and centres are looking forward to re-establishing their original model — although many centres have said that they will incorporate more online interaction (Teams) as this worked well during the past two years.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

♦ Increased use of e-portfolio platforms — over 90% of centres doing these awards are using e-portfolios
♦ Good candidate induction — the time taken at this stage ensures that the correct level of award is chosen and the units chosen match the work role
♦ Very good evidence of assessment planning
♦ The use of reflective accounts/storyboards/personal statements to place evidence in context and the embedding of work product at appropriate points within the narrative
♦ Good signposting of evidence against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding
♦ Good cross-referencing of evidence from optional units into other optional units and from optional units into mandatory units (core units)
♦ Consistency across assessor/verifier teams evident through good formal and informal standardisation
♦ Best practice in internal verification occurred when it was carried out throughout the award rather than at the end

Specific areas for development

No specific areas for development were identified by the EV team or by centres during session 2021–22.