



Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017

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Care 82

Introduction

Below are the units that were verified:

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 9 (GH61 24)

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7 (GH60 23)

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 (GH5Y 22)

SVQ 4 Care Services Leadership and Management at SCQF level 10 (GJ9V 24)

SVQ 4 in Leadership and Management for Care Services at SCQF level 10 (G8W8 24)

SVQ 2 Health and Social Care (G7LN 22)

SVQ 3 Health and Social Care (Adults) (G7LP 23)

SVQ 3 Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) (G7LV 23)

SVQ 4 Health and Social Care (Adults) (G7LR 24)

SVQ 4 Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) (G7LT24)

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 at almost all centres were compliant for this criterion. Almost all staff are appropriately professionally competent and qualified to deliver the awards. Almost all also hold the relevant assessor/verifier qualifications. Staff information and evidence of competence and qualifications was available for External Verifiers (EVs) to review. CPD records were also available showing recent and relevant activity. CPD records are in the main good, and examples within reports have been highlighted as good practice. One example of good practice is as follows: "The IV observes the assessor and there is reference to L&D9DI standards, this shows that assessors are currently operating within the current standards for assessment (L&D9DI)".

In more than a few centres, there have been issues with unqualified assessors signing off units without this being countersigned by a qualified assessor. This can be difficult in small centres where there is only one assessor and one internal verifier. This will be explored further and discussed at the Scottish Awarding Body Forum in November 2017 to look for a solution in order that centres can be supported to meet the assessment strategy requirements.

It may be useful for assessors and verifiers to complete the CPD toolkit, showing how they are working to and understand the current national standards of assessment/verification (L&D9DI/L&D 11).

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 are compliant with this criterion. In the reports reviewed this year, there is clear evidence that assessment environments, equipment, and reference and learning materials are reviewed regularly. Centres vary in their timescales regarding their review cycle, with some being annual and others being longer. EVs are required to ensure that, before giving feedback to the centre with regards to non-compliance, they are aware of the timescales the centre has decided to adopt.

Centres appear to be using the SQA preferred three-stage model of verification. However, there is some variation in its implementation, and this will be explored in a workshop at the SVQ updates in November 2018

An example of compliance with this criterion: “There is evidence of policies being reviewed via the use of a footer, e.g. The Verification Strategy has the footer version number and date of review.”

Category 3: Candidate support

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

From the review of reports, it is clear that almost all centres deliver an induction process for candidates that explains what they need to do to complete their award. It is clear from EV feedback that the candidate induction process within centres covers areas such as Quality Assurance, the SCQF Framework, levels of the awards being assessed, and the roles and responsibilities of each person in the assessment process. There is also evidence in reports of a detailed candidate induction checklist being completed by candidates.

An example of RPL contained in a report stated the following: “through my (EV) conversation with assessors it was clear that this (RPL) is used where necessary and relevant. There is a form contained in the assessor/verifier induction handbook that discusses prior achievements, where and what it can be used for.”

Another example is: “During their first interview with the Assessor it is noted if any special arrangements are necessary to aid the completion of their award. The assessor and candidate complete an assessment plan, and during induction the assessor talks them through what a VQ is and how it can be achieved. They also use this time to look at prior learning and achievements, and how these can be used to complete their award. This is all recorded in the learning agreement and signed by the Candidate and the Assessor.”

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

All centres comply with this criterion. Where a centre uses an electronic system, eg “Proof Positive”, there is a section which clearly shows contact between assessor and candidate on a scheduled and regular basis.

In paper portfolios, assessment plans and records of contact contained within candidates’ portfolios clearly showed scheduled and regular contact between the assessor and candidate. This contributed to the assessment of candidates by giving clear expectations of what to complete for the next meeting between the assessor and candidate.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

From the reports sampled this session it is clear centres are using the assessment strategy well and in conjunction with the ‘Guidance to Assessment’ document. Candidates’ evidence is of a good standard in almost all centres verified. The SCQF Level of awards has changed the standard of written work produced by candidates, and one of the most frequent quotes from EVs has been that “the work sampled meets the SCQF level of the award”.

Internal verification clearly happens in centres and they all have their own sampling strategy. As stated in 2.4: Centres appear to be using the SQA preferred three-stage model of verification. However, there is some variation in its implementation, and this will be explored in a workshop at the SVQ updates in November 2017.

As noted above, it may be useful for centres to review CPD for assessors and internal verifiers to ensure that they are working in line with current national standards for assessment and verification (L&D9DI and L&D 11).

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

All centres use a range of evidence-gathering methods that are appropriate and adhere to the assessment strategy. Candidates have produced highly detailed reflective accounts and products of practice.

In one centre, there is a learner's appendix to the candidate handbook which contains information about the principles of assessment, ie Valid, Authentic, Reliable, Current, Sufficient (V.A.R.C.S), giving clear guidance to candidates and assessors.

Where candidates required additional support, the use of professional discussion and questioning, and observation have been used more extensively to support candidate requirements.

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

Almost all centres complied with this criterion. In reports reviewed, candidates sign declaration forms, and the centres have clear plagiarism and malpractice policies.

EVs noted in their reports that the assessment methods of observation, witness testimony, and expert witness have all been used to authenticate that the work is the candidates' own work. This criterion is part of our next standardisation meeting for EVs, to make clear that, if candidates are not using an academic referencing system within their reflective accounts, centres cannot find the centre non-compliant for this criterion.

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

Reports from EVs noted that they had sampled candidates' evidence across almost all units within all awards being delivered by centres. It is confirmed by EVs that in almost all centres the evidence presented from candidates was clearly at the required SCQF level of the awards being assessed, and that the evidence sampled met the standards being assessed on a consistent basis.

The assessment cycle is being followed within centres, with evidence of planning, giving feedback and making judgements/decisions.

Some of the comments from EV reports are as follows: "A minute of standardisation was sampled and this showed evidence of the Assessment Strategy being a standing item on the agenda."

Another stated: "Assessors make consistent judgements and decisions across units and this was confirmed through the verification sampling strategy being implemented within the centre."

A result of a workshop presentation at a recent customer support event where holistic planning was a workshop topic. Evidence of holistic approach to assessment planning has been seen to have been implemented by centres through different mediums eg mind-mapping.

In almost all centres standardisation meetings are being held and the minutes document that candidates' evidence is being discussed, and agreements are reached as to the standards being met. This clearly demonstrates that standardisation is adding to the quality of assessment delivery, and consistent and accurate judgements and decisions are being reached within these centres.

In a very few centres standardisation still requires some development work in relation to candidates' evidence being discussed. Standardisation will also be explored in a workshop at the SVQ updates in November 2018.

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

All centres comply with this criterion, although they do not all have the same policy. Some centres retain the candidates' evidence for longer than SQA requirements, due to other circumstances such as funding issues or other organisational reasons.

It could be suggested that centres include in their "data cleansing" or "record and retention" policies a section regarding SQA requirements for retention. This would ensure standardisation for this criterion across centres.

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

All centres comply with this criterion. Evidence from reports reviewed showed that centres disseminate these reports to assessors and verifiers. Some centres also send reports to directors or chief executives to inform them of candidates' achievements.

Some assessors and verifiers have included these reports within their CPD records, and through discussions with EVs, assessors and IVs confirmed that they received and discussed the EV reports.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2016–17:

- ◆ Some examples of CPD activity, such as observation of assessor by the IV and feedback being linked to L&D9DI standards.
- ◆ Assessors and verifiers have a strong commitment to supporting candidates.
- ◆ The standard of candidates' written work has improved and this is clearly linked to the inclusion of the SCQF level of the award.
- ◆ Feedback from candidates clearly states that assessors go above and beyond their role of assessing. They mentor/coach/teach/counsel candidates and this has been expressed by a large number of candidates who have been interviewed as part of the verification visits.

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2016–17:

- ◆ Implementation of SQA's preferred model of verification known as the three-stage model.
- ◆ Standardisation.
- ◆ CPD toolkit for assessors and verifiers who do not hold the current standards for assessment and verification (L&D9Di/L&D11).