



# **National Units**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017**

# **Communities**

## Introduction

This year the undernoted units were externally verified within centres from the voluntary and further education sectors. While most centres continue to offer the full Volunteering Skills Award there has been a marked increase in the number of colleges now offering individual units from the award as an integral part of other courses, such as Care in the Community and Sport and Fitness:

Volunteering Skills Awards	GD1N 43, GD1P 44
Preparing to Volunteer	FR26 09, FR26 10, FR26 11
Volunteering Experience	FR27 09, FR27 10
Volunteering Investigative Project	FR28 10

## **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**

External verifiers viewed the minutes of Standardisation Meetings, which documented that all centres are carrying out effective ongoing reviews of their assessment environments, assessment procedures, equipment, learning resources and assessment materials in line with SQA requirements. One specific extract referred to the modification of a document to accommodate candidates whose first language was other than English.

## **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 able to demonstrate the reliable procedures they have put in place to identify candidates' prior achievements and development needs in order to match them to the qualification being undertaken. These procedures included the staging of pre-entry individual interviews to ensure that candidates would be placed at the correct level on courses, and the completion of development needs checklists during induction to identify any additional support needs. Regular ongoing review meetings also formed part of this process.

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

Individual assessment plans produced by all centres showed that regular scheduled contact with candidates was taking place throughout the course. These indicated that candidate progress was being monitored regularly and assessment support was responding to individual needs.

## **Category 4: Internal assessment and verification**

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

Assessors and internal verifiers in all centres are applying assessment and verification procedures effectively. A particular example of this was noted in one centre where an internal verifier had picked up on the fact that level 3 assessments had been used to assess at level 4, and had taken appropriate steps to ensure that this was rectified.

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

All centres visited are using the appropriate SQA Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) to ensure the effective selection and use of assessment methods/instruments in terms of validity, equitability and fairness in assessment. As an additional measure of compliance, some centres have produced pre-assessment validity checklists which assessors are required to complete.

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

In all centres visited, external verifiers saw evidence of appropriate processes and procedures to ensure that work submitted is the candidate's own. Some centres require candidates to sign an assessment submission sheet each time they hand in a piece of work. Others cover this criterion during induction as part of a candidate learning agreement.

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

All centres demonstrated that they make accurate and consistent assessment judgements, and all are using assessor performance criteria checklists extracted from relevant unit specifications. In addition, candidate portfolios displayed evidence of the consistent use of performance criteria checklists extracted from assessment support packs. Minutes of standardisation meetings also reflected accurate cross checking of candidate evidence.

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

All centres have effective procedures in place for retaining candidate assessment evidence for defined periods of time for the purposes of internal and external verification.

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

All centres visited ensure verifiers' findings are fed back to staff. This usually involves a nominated person from within the centre, usually the SQA coordinator, disseminating external verification reports to staff involved in the delivery of the award. Standardisation meetings are then used as a platform for discussing the contents and highlighting good practice, actions required and assessment recommendations.

## **Areas of good practice report by qualification verifiers**

The following examples of good practice were reported during session 2016–17:

- ◆ Encouragement of self-directed learning
- ◆ A learner-centred approach to meeting candidates' development needs
- ◆ Evidence within candidate portfolios of well-structured group work sessions being used both as a platform for gathering evidence and for developing candidate confidence
- ◆ A particularly thorough internal verification report, which identified inaccuracies in assessor marking and formed the basis of a supportive approach to assessor feedback

## **Specific areas for development**

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

- ◆ Formal recording of professional discussions as items in candidate evidence logs
- ◆ Centre documents to bear titles which reflect their purpose more accurately.
- ◆ Outcomes from SQA training events in centres to be noted as additional evidence of standardisation
- ◆ Formal recording of standardisation decisions and sharing of good practice.
- ◆ Clearer recording of internal verification responsibilities