Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017
Playwork

Introduction

G8WE 22   SVQ 2 Playwork at SCQF level 6
GD1V 23   SVQ 3 Playwork at SCQF level 7
GD1T 24   SVQ 4 Playwork at SCQF level 9

Over this academic session, external verification has taken place for all centres delivering the SVQs in Playwork. External verifiers sampled across the levels of SVQ being delivered, for all units and across all assessors and internal verifiers.

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.

In all centres, external verifiers found that staff have relevant professional qualifications, and are occupationally competent and compliant with requirements for assessment and verification of SVQs in Playwork.

Centres had paperwork which demonstrated that assessors and internal verifiers have the necessary occupational competence and assessor verifier awards, in line with the qualification requirements, or which identified areas for development.

In most centres, staff who have older versions of assessing and verifying awards completed the SQA CPD Toolkit to ensure they are up to date with current requirements.

Assessors and internal verifiers have been recording their professional development for playwork practice and knowledge in line with requirements to 'have actively and consistently participated in a process of current and relevant continuous professional development to keep up to date with best playwork practice'.

Many centres have experienced teams who have been delivering the SVQ in Playwork awards for some time. Continuing professional development (CPD) records demonstrate that assessors and internal verifiers have a commitment to ensuring currency of their knowledge and practice in the playwork sector.

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

External verifiers found that centres undertook regular reviews of their playwork reference, learning and assessment materials and most had clear processes in place for reviewing their assessment procedures and their learning material. This has ensured that materials and assessment practice is current, ie contains current legislation, policy frameworks, playwork theory, etc.

Within standardisation meetings, centres review candidates' work and assessors' judgements on the evidence required to meet the national occupational standards for playwork.

Centres are using SQA's Site Selection Checklist to ensure that the assessment environment has the Playwork Principles embedded in the operation of the candidate's workplace to ensure that fair assessment is possible.

This is evidenced in the paperwork linked to quality assurance procedures and in the minutes of 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.

External verifiers have found that all centres have policies and procedures for supporting learners to identify prior achievements and support any development needs: learning inclusion; recognition of prior learning and experience policy; equal opportunities policy; monitoring policy, etc.

Many centres have clear guidelines on identifying candidate development needs and finding solutions, such as detailed learner support plans, alternative assessment arrangements, etc. These give clear guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the assessor and candidate, and the support available to them within the centre.

Most centres offer accreditation/recognition of prior learning. This provides clear guidance and documentation to identify prior achievements and how they can be used towards the SVQ awards.

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

In the majority of centres, external verifiers found that there were clear records of regular contact with the assessor in the form of records of meetings, including outcomes for assessment, amendments to planned work and feedback on achievements. Assessment plans are included in candidate portfolios (including e-portfolios) to demonstrate that assessors have regular contact with their candidates.

In the majority of centres, candidates are given regular support which is designed to encourage them to keep working steadily throughout the qualification process, with action being planned for the next step to support their individualised assessment journey.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

The majority of centres have policies for assessment practice and internal verification procedures which provide a framework for practice and define roles and responsibilities. These

usually detail sampling requirements and provide guidance to the internal verifiers on ensuring standardisation is effective. Regular team standardisation meetings strengthen this process. Records of internal verification and standardisation meetings between assessors and internal verifiers include constructive feedback and comments on the assessment process.

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

The implementation of assessment practice is seen in individual assessment plans, which are focused, detailed and related to the SVQ in Playwork standards and the competency of the candidate. External verifiers found that, in the portfolios they sampled, there are sufficient planned holistic observations of the candidates to comply with assessment strategy for consistent practice. Assessors' judgements of the candidates' evidence was valid and reliable.

Assessment instruments used by all centres are mainly direct observation and reflective accounts which cover the majority of the evidence, which is based on the assessment strategy for the qualification. The knowledge requirement, if not included in the reflective accounts, is usually evidenced through the use of professional discussion, case studies and assignments.

In all centres, assessors and candidates develop assessment plans prior to the assessment, which ensures access to fair assessment, as the plans relate to the playwork national occupational standards (NOS). Reflective accounts are based on the practice observed by the assessor, which ensures validity and reliability.

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

Within all centres, candidates complete the SQA disclaimer at induction, and this is included in their portfolio. The majority of centres have clear guidance on malpractice and plagiarism.

All SVQ in Playwork candidates are observed by their assessor within their workplace, which ensures the authenticity of their playwork practice, and witness testimony is used to authenticate practice evidence that has not been observed by the assessor.

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

External verifiers found that evidence sampled in candidate portfolios had been judged by the assessors based on the NOS and the requirements of Skills Active (sector skills council) assessment strategy.

Assessors' judgement and feedback in relation to the work of the candidates is accurate according to the evidence requirements of the awards. External verifiers found this to be accurate and consistent across the candidates and the qualifications.

The majority of centres were following SQA guidance and the assessment strategy for the SVQ in Playwork awards. They provided clear guidance on the assessment and internal verification

process to ensure accurate and consistent assessment decisions. In most cases, evidence in the candidate portfolios show detailed observations and candidate reflective accounts mapped to the playwork standards.

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

External Verifiers found that all centres had clear guidance on the retention of evidence in line with SQA requirements and that this was being adhered to. Centres were presenting appropriately retained evidence for external verification.

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

External verifiers found that all centres were disseminating information after qualification verification visits and also on how they were following up any action points. Some centres had formalised processes for external verification analysis or for sharing previous external verification reports within shared drives. There was also evidence of feedback being discussed and used to inform team practice.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

♦ Professional development was highlighted as good practice in a number of centres. Many assessors and internal verifiers have undertaken practical playwork practice and reflected on this, linking to the Playwork Principles. This is recorded in CPD records. Many staff teams have shared staff discussion areas (some online), where information on qualifications, legislation and interesting articles is shared with all staff.

♦ Some centres have clear guidelines on roles and responsibilities within the assessment and verification processes. This ensures a shared understanding of responsibilities within the team.

♦ Some centres have a clear timeline document for candidates that gives a good overview of the timescale for their award and a clear indication of expected dates for completion of work.

♦ Some centres were praised for their inclusion of candidates in the course evaluation and review. For example, 'what you said/what we did', where candidates' suggestions for improvements were responded to, and feedback was given on how the centre planned to make or had made improvements.

Specific areas for development

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

♦ Some centres need to ensure that their assessors and internal verifiers are complying with the current learning and development standards. They are encouraged to complete the Learning and Development Toolkits to ensure assessors and verifiers are up to date, and to undertake peer observations of assessment practice to develop and ensure consistency of approach.

♦ Some centres were also encouraged to enhance their recording processes to ensure that assessment and verification activity is consistently and accurately recorded to capture the quality of verbal feedback and discussion. For example: include additional detail in the records of standardisation activities to provide evidence of discussions of evidence requirements and assessment practice; ensure feedback is consistently recorded across candidate work to enable them to review progress; continue to work on the action plan to ensure consistent written feedback for candidates — this is much improved but requires monitoring to ensure all assessors are following the guidance; review the use of witness statements to confirm any candidate accounts not observed by an assessor.