Arrangements for:

Advanced Diploma in Quality Improvement

Group Award Code: G861 18

Validation date: November 2005

Date of original publication: March 2007

Version: 01

Acknowledgement

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below.

Version number	Description	Date	Authorised by

Contents

1 Introduction

This is the Arrangements Document for the *revised Advanced Diploma in Quality Improvement at SCQF level 9 which was validated in November 2005*. This document includes: background information on the development of the Group Award, its aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structure, and guidance on delivery.

The post-compulsory education sector (Scottish Colleges, Community Learning and Development (CLD), private training providers) in Scotland is required to undergo external audit by a range of partner organisations.

These include audit by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and other awarding bodies in order to meet requirements to offer qualifications. Many organisations also undergo external audit by Scottish Quality Management System (SQMS) in order to meet requirements to provide and deliver education and training for Local Enterprise Companies.

In addition, Scotland's colleges are required to carry out self-evaluation and to be reviewed externally by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) against the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC)/HMIE Quality Framework.

Local authorities evaluate the effectiveness of community learning and development using the HMIE quality framework 'How good is our community learning and development' and are also subject to external inspection by HMIE.

2 Rationale for the revision of the Group Award

This revised award is based on the existing award *Advanced Diploma in Quality Auditing, Self-Evaluation and Review in Further Education (Group Award code G6V6 18)* — an award intended for HMIE Associate Assessors in reviews of Scottish colleges. The development of the latter award was initiated by the SFC's Learning and Teaching Committee, designed by HMIE and validated by SQA in 2002. It consists of three units comprising a total of 5.5 credits. Although validated in 2002, there was poor uptake of the award.

In August 2005, discussions between the Further and Adult Education Division (FAED) of the Department of Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning (ETLLD), SQA and HMIE resulted in the proposal for this award. The award was constructed around the skills and knowledge required for practitioners and managers to carry out effective self-evaluation and quality improvement activities within their organisations. The skills and underpinning knowledge required were viewed as generic skills that were not sector-specific, but rather skills that had to be interpreted within the context of the appropriate sectors. There was merit in a single award that acknowledged the close working of Scottish colleges and CLD and was focused on skills to evaluate the quality of the learner experience with the learner at the centre of the process.

The *Advanced Diploma in Quality Improvement at SCQF level 9* is based on two HN Units (4 credits) and is designed for the continuing professional development of practitioners and managers in Scottish colleges and CLD, who are responsible for and carry out internal auditing, self-evaluation and quality improvement activities within their organisations.

The rationale for this revised award is to ensure that staff in Scottish colleges and CLD have the skills, knowledge and understanding to plan, conduct, record and give feedback on internal and external quality audit, evaluation and quality improvement activities, through a structured training programme. It is accessible to a much wider target audience than the previous award, in particular to practitioners who have responsibility for quality improvement activities within their organisations in the post-compulsory education sector, not only HMIE Associate Assessors in Scottish colleges. This has been achieved by promoting a range of generic skills that can be used within specific educational contexts and by removing the Unit in the previous award that was intended specifically for Associate Assessors.

3   Aims of the Group Award

3.1   General aims of the Group Award

The general aims of the award are:

♦ to provide internal and external quality auditors and staff carrying out self-evaluations, who are employed in the post-compulsory education sector, with a structured programme of training, which develops common principles and practices in an integrated way and addresses issues that are specific to different quality frameworks and roles

♦ to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to plan, conduct, record and give feedback on internal and external quality audit, self-evaluation and quality reviews in Scottish colleges and CLD

♦ to develop skills in using the outcomes of audit, review and self-evaluation to plan for quality improvement

3.2   Specific aims of the Group Award

The specific aims of the award will enable candidates to:

1   Work with a broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of the scope, main areas and boundaries of quality audits, self-evaluation and review.
2   Demonstrate and work with a detailed knowledge of quality frameworks such as SFC/HMIE, SQA and SQMS.
3   Use the principal skills and techniques required to carry out internal audit, self-evaluation and review.
4   Apply these skills in the context of quality review of Scottish colleges and CLD activities, which include a degree of unpredictability.
5   Undertake critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information and issues.
6   Draw on a range of sources in making judgments.
7   Use advanced communication skills.
8   Communicate with professional level peers, senior colleagues and specialists.
9   Use a range of ICT applications and interpret qualitative and quantitative data.
10   Exercise autonomy, initiative and accountability whilst working with other professionals.
11   Take significant responsibility for the work of others.
12   Work with others to bring about development and improvement.
13   Work in ways that are reflective, self-critical and based on evidence.

3.3 Target groups

The target groups for this award are practitioners within the post-compulsory education sector (ie Scottish Colleges, Community Learning and Development and private training providers) who have responsibility for quality improvement activities within their organisations.

To achieve both units in the Group Award, candidates should have responsibility for carrying out quality audits and/or self-evaluation and for planning and managing quality improvement, audits and self-evaluation.

3.4 Employment opportunities

The award provides an opportunity for the continuing professional development of staff employed in the post-compulsory education sector. The award is a relevant qualification for those who wish to become Associate Assessors (AA). Associate Assessors join HMIE inspection teams in the sector relevant to their professional experience[1].

4 Access to Group Award

Normally entry qualifications to the units that comprise the award will be as follows:

Unit 1: *Principles and Practice of Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit*

Candidates should have responsibility for carrying out quality audits and/or self-evaluation. This would usually be staff that are, or aspire to be, first line managers such as programme or team leaders, project managers and other staff with skills, experience and responsibility for quality improvement.

Unit 2: *Managing Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit*

Candidates will usually have completed the Unit *Principles and Practice of Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit* before undertaking this Unit. Candidates should have responsibility for planning and managing quality improvement, audits and self-evaluation. This would usually be staff that are, or aspire to be, quality managers, heads of department, centre managers and senior managers.

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[1] http://www.hmie.gov.uk/NR/exeres/3E4AAD52-7211-458E-AC76-8DA3136F1A6E,frameless.htm (accessed on 25.03.08)

5   Group Award structure

The award comprises two Higher National Units at SCQF level 9, each with a SQA credit value of 2 credits, making a total of 4 SQA credits.

5.1   Framework

Unit title	Code	SCQF credit points	SCQF level	SQA credit value
Principles and Practice of Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit	DV5A 36	16	9	2
Managing Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit	DV5C 36	16	9	2

5.2   Mapping information

The Units map to the specific aims of the award as follows:

Aim	Unit/Outcome
1	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 1, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 1
2	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 1, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
3	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 4
4	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — O4
5	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — O4 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 3
6	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 4 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
7	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 4 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
8	Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2
9	Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 3
10	Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2
11	Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2
12	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 4 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 4
13	Principles and Practice of S-E and IQA — Outcome 4 Managing S-E and IQA — Outcome 2

6   Approaches to delivery and assessment

The mode of delivery will be flexible with a focus on experiential learning and assessment based on performance evidence from the workplace. A varied range of delivery modes could be used, including blended learning, distance learning and action-based learning. Candidates will usually have completed Unit DV5A 36, *Principles and Practice of Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit*, before undertaking Unit DV5C 36, *Managing Self-Evaluation and Internal Quality Audit*.

For those candidates with significant experience in this area, accelerated assessment may be appropriate. This will enable candidates to achieve the award in a variety of timescales and different units could be achieved at different centres.

The Scottish Funding Council has funded the development of open learning materials, including assessment instruments, to support the delivery of the award. The copyright for the materials lies with the East of Scotland Staff Development Collaborative Group. Organisations outside the college sector that wish to access the materials should to seek the permission of the group.

7   General information for centres

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

8   General information for candidates

This award is relevant to you if you have responsibility within a Scottish college, Community Learning and Development centre or within a private training provider for quality improvement.

You may already be responsible for carrying out quality audits and/or self-evaluation, and you may be or aspire to be, a first line manager (such as programme or team leader, project manager or other member of staff with skills, experience and responsibility for quality improvement.) You should also have responsibility for planning and managing quality improvement, audits and self-evaluation, so you may already be or aspire to be, a quality manager, head of department, centre manager or senior manager.

The two Units within the award will provide you with the knowledge and skills to:

♦   work with a broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of the scope, main areas and boundaries of quality audits, self-evaluation and review
♦   demonstrate and work with a detailed knowledge of Quality Frameworks such as SFC/HMIE, SQA and SQMS
♦   use the principal skills and techniques required to carry out internal audit, self-evaluation and review
♦   apply these skills in the context of quality review of FE and CLD activities, which include a degree of unpredictability
♦   undertake critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information and issues
♦   draw on a range of sources in making judgments
♦   use advanced communication skills
♦   communicate with professional level peers, senior colleagues and specialists
♦   use a range of ICT applications and interpret qualitative and quantitative data
♦   exercise autonomy, initiative and accountability whilst working with other professionals
♦   take significant responsibility for the work of others
♦   work with others to bring about development and improvement
♦   work in ways that are reflective, self-critical and based on evidence

9   Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at **www.scqf.org.uk**

SCQF credit points: One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Graded Unit: Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Dedicated Core Skill Unit: This is a Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills, eg HN Units in Information Technology or Communications.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/D from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.