



Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2015

Oral Healthcare: Dental Nursing

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

Higher National Units

General comments

It is apparent that centres have a very clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the HN Units for Dental Nursing. The PDA in Dental Nursing, which is a requirement for registration by the General Dental Council is now well understood. The Units assessed by centres were valid, reliable and equitable.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Centres are well versed in the Unit requirements and have devised assessment papers and mock papers to prepare their candidates. There was good evidence of well organised master teaching packs, which contained Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and learning and teaching schedules.

It is important that centres are aware that they can submit their own assessment instruments for prior verification by SQA.

SQA has exemplification materials available for use by centres for the G9C 47 award. As centres become more confident in their approach and understanding they are starting to prepare their own material.

Evidence Requirements

It was evident from all verification reports that centres have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements.

Administration of assessments

There is variation in the administration of assessments. Some centres prefer to assess each of the four Units individually while other centres produce holistic assessments. Both were found to be sound, reliable and prepared the candidates well for the external Dental Nursing Assessment (F6C7 34). Internal verification processes were adhered to.

General feedback

It is good to see that centres are enforcing stringent plagiarism criteria. Staff in centres are also becoming more confident in administering and assessing the Units. Security regarding the storage and protection of papers/question banks has also improved. It is essential that exemplars, completed papers, or question banks are not released to candidates.

Candidates who were interviewed were complimentary of the preparation they received for the external assessment and reported that they got good feedback from their assessors/tutors.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Assessments reviewed annually following completion of the programme and any ambiguous or repetitive questions altered
- ◆ Three sets of assessments rotated annually and repeated every third year
- ◆ Assessment evidence scanned and stored in a password-protected drive — hard copies are destroyed after scanning
- ◆ Pre-verification of assessment materials by SQA
- ◆ Robust mapping of assessment questions to Evidence Requirements
- ◆ Double-marking of assessments to ensure standardisation of assessment decisions
- ◆ One centre had asked a few candidates from a previous cohort (who had failed the external assessment) to talk to the new cohort about the importance of study and revision over a summer break

Specific areas for improvement

There were no areas noted for improvement.

Higher National Graded Units

Titles/levels of HN Graded Units verified:

FN3M 34 Oral Healthcare: Dental Nursing Graded Unit 1

FN3N 35 Oral Healthcare: Dental Nursing Graded Unit 2

General comments

Only a small number of candidates was visited for verification this session.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Good comprehensive documentation was produced. All staff are professionally qualified and are familiar with the Unit specification.

Evidence Requirements

Assessments randomly sampled met the Evidence Requirements of the Units. Work is accurately and consistently assessed to Evidence Requirements.

Administration of assessments

The internal verification sampling was seen to be valid reliable and robust and met all verification requirements of the Units. A master pack for the Units containing Unit specifications, Unit assessments and marking guides was available and, as above, was seen to be valid and reliable.

General feedback

Candidates who were interviewed reported that they were enjoying their learning experience and felt well supported.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Small group of tutors/assessor who work well together
- ◆ Good liaison between staff members

Specific areas for improvement

None reported.

SVQ awards

General comments

The majority of centres delivering the SVQ 3 in Dental Nursing are now well established and have occupationally qualified staff. The staff groups are small and this allows for 'tight' assessment decisions. Candidate feedback via interviews by verifiers was that they are enjoying the learning experience and feel well supported.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors are becoming very familiar with the Unit specifications and instruments of assessment. The number of assessors/verifiers still to complete Assessor/Verifier awards is now very small and as such they are becoming more confident in their approach to assessment/verification. All assessors/verifiers are subject specialists and occupationally competent, as specified in the Assessment Strategy. They are also registered by the General Dental Council and as such have mandatory CPD requirements.

Evidence Requirements

As the staff in centres become more experienced, their understanding of the Unit requirements increases. There was no evidence that assessment decisions were not in line with SQA standards and all centres had assessments that were valid, reliable, equitable and fair.

Administration of assessments

One centre was inadvertently using the G8VG 23 Unit standards rather than the current GH0H 23 standards. This was a genuine error on behalf of the centre and was quickly rectified. The centre mapped the evidence that was already generated against GH0H 23 and the candidates produced any extra evidence required. A sample of this extra evidence was sent to the verifier well before the agreed date and she was happy that the current Unit standards were being met and candidates had not been disadvantaged. In general, centres had provided good evidence of administration. The centre assessment and internal verification strategies were available and adhered to.

General feedback

There was evidence of good supportive feedback given to candidates. Candidates interviewed at verification visits reported they had good communication with the centre tutors and assessors.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Candidate handbook detailing dates of attendance and subject covered
- ◆ A mandatory annual study day programme to support staff, some who are operating in remote locations for updating SQA CPD toolkit, reviewing resources, professional dialogues, etc
- ◆ A standardised workplace observation record
- ◆ The use of second assessors for observation of workplace practice
- ◆ Tutor/assessors who currently work part-time in a dental practice and have current occupational competence
- ◆ Master packs of teaching/assessment material for all Units
- ◆ Candidate evidence is kept secure

Specific areas for improvement

It is important for centres to have regular standardisation meetings and to keep a record of decisions made. Centres should also ensure that they are using the current Unit specifications for all qualifications.