



Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2016

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

All centres achieved overall outcome ratings of 'significant strengths'. This is a great achievement and shows that the 12 centres verified this session are working to a very good standard and have a clear and accurate understanding of the Higher National units they deliver.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

At all centres verification reports show that staff are familiar with the unit specifications, assessment strategy, National Occupational Standards and the arrangements documentation. The instruments of assessment used, and the assessment decisions made, showed a clear understanding of the assessment needs and evidence requirements.

Evidence requirements

Verification reports showed that centres had a clear understanding of the evidence requirements of the units assessed. This was evidenced through standardisation meetings, formal and informal, annual reviews and feedback from internal verifiers.

Administration of assessments

Tracking documents were seen to be effective and assessment tools appropriate. Internal verification carried out in centres as double marking and group marking with calibration was seen as very effective. Centres have good processes in place.

General feedback

The variety and availability of HN units have greatly increased and centres are becoming more confident in offering these as Professional Development Awards.

Candidates who were interviewed were positive, motivated and enthusiastic about their course and assessments. Candidates who were preparing for the final external Dental Nursing PDA assessment spoke about feeling well prepared. Candidates who were participating in the HND said they felt well supported and had learned some very useful skills through the optional units that have been developed into PDAs. This will prepare them well for their careers in dental nursing.

The PDA in Dental and Medical Reception Skills has been well received by medical practices and candidates reported that this integration has been beneficial and creates good sharing of practice. In particular, they reported that the Health and Safety Unit information had been used to make improvements to health and safety in their practices.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Tracking documents show comprehensive checklists and planning details
- ◆ Student records held electronically where detailed notes and information are held along with any evidence relating to this, actions required and dates when completed
- ◆ Deadlines for candidate submissions
- ◆ Scheduled dates for 'group' marking of assessments
- ◆ Calibrated marking where marking guides have been produced, but a calibrated scheme for marking is carried out and any anomalies in the marking guide are discussed and agreed. Marking guides are then updated
- ◆ Resource lists
- ◆ Resource lists showing regular reviews of equipment and learning resources for delivery
- ◆ Scheduled meetings with each candidate to address progress reviews
- ◆ The PDA revision questions workbooks were seen to be an effective tool with a staged approach to the candidate learning experience and progress review
- ◆ Comprehensive vetting and pre-delivery checking process for all units
- ◆ The use of 'blind marking' in assessments was seen to be valid and reliable — it also ensured standardisation of assessment decisions

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ Internal verification should be continual and not be end-loaded
- ◆ Assessment papers should be mapped to knowledge requirements
- ◆ Centres should ensure that they have more than one assessment paper available for any re-sits

Higher National graded units

Titles/levels of HN graded units verified:

HA02 34 Dental Nursing Graded Unit 1

HA02 35 Dental Nursing Grade Unit 2

General comments

One centre was verified for these units.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All staff are familiar with the unit specifications, arrangements document etc. Marking guides are regularly updated and minutes of meetings and discussions with staff during the visit provided evidence that the centre is meeting SQA requirements regarding judgements made.

Evidence requirements

There is a clear understanding of the evidence requirements. Excellent pieces of work have been produced by candidates for both units. It is evident how much more experienced the Graded Unit 2 candidates have become in their breadth and depth of knowledge and in the presentation of their work by the time of their final submission.

Administration of assessments

Feedback and support to the candidates is clear within the units and the assessors have good standardisation processes in the production of their marking and solution guides. This ensures standardisation of assessment decisions.

General feedback

Comprehensive marking guides and solution documents were available for both units in the master folder.

Areas of good practice

Candidates are encouraged to choose topics of interest and relevance.

Specific areas for improvement

None identified.

SVQ awards

General comments

External verification was carried out across 12 centres. Visits took place at colleges, health boards and training centres. All centres visited this session achieved overall outcome ratings of 'significant strengths'. This is a great achievement and shows that there is a good understanding and assessment of the SVQ being delivered.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Reports showed that assessors and verifiers are very familiar with the unit specifications, assessment strategy and arrangements documentation. Standardisation was evident in assessment decisions.

Evidence requirements

In all centres the evidence sampled was accepted, as it met the standards and evidence requirements for the units. Evidence produced in portfolios varied through observations, projects, workbooks, personal statements, case studies, reflective accounts and photographs with explanations. In general, it was found that portfolios were well organised and clear information had been given to the candidates on their production. Although not all units allow for individuality, verifiers praised centres that allowed for scope of individuality by candidates and this is to be encouraged. One centre presented electronic portfolios and the comprehensive documentation held within this secure electronic system was extremely easy to navigate and allowed the verification process to be conducted with ease.

Administration of assessments

Candidates gave greater detail in assessment plans and are using different creative approaches to planning and providing evidence to reflect their individual needs. This level of detail ensures the assessment plan is a meaningful tool in the assessment process for both assessor and candidate.

Evidence presented for external verification included pre-delivery verification, records of internal verification (including any actions to be carried out), internal assessment strategies, systems and schedules, records of feedback to assessors, standardisation meetings and yearly reviews of learning and teaching, CPD and staff qualification documentation (paper-based and electronic). Access was given to centre policies on equal access and equality and diversity.

The newly developed SQA SOLAR assessments for the underpinning knowledge component of the SVQ was a topic of discussion with centres and, although not mandatory, centres are interested and willing to utilise this method.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates in all centres was very good, giving supportive comments and advice from assessors. Feedback was shown through comments, feedback and feed-forward sheets in candidate portfolios and one-to-one candidate course reviews.

In one centre, candidate representatives were involved in feeding back the views of the students (on resources and class activities) to the curriculum leader. This information is then fed back to staff team meetings and course programme reviews.

Candidates who were interviewed and observed were enthusiastic and felt they were well supported by assessors. Interviews were carried out with a number of candidates over all types of delivery: full time, part time and across colleges, health boards and training centres. Feedback was positive and they all seemed aware of the needs of assessment and portfolio building.

Access to assessment was well planned and where further support was required this was implemented to suit individual candidate needs. No barriers to assessment were identified.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ Scope for individuality by candidates
- ◆ Excellent examples of dialogue between candidates and staff in the contact diary
- ◆ Clear evidence of any changes required in the Dental Nurse Training Internal Quality Assurance Document
- ◆ Class representative feeding-back to curriculum manager on resources and class activities
- ◆ Feed-forward sheets giving guidance on what is still required to be completed
- ◆ A knowledge point achievement record that was produced to identify where a candidate may have gaps in knowledge — this is likely to occur with the new SOLAR assessment and will streamline the process
- ◆ Each individual unit completed had a signed candidate disclaimer

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ The assessor/IV plan needs to represent continual ongoing internal verification to avoid end-loading of internal verification.
- ◆ A standing item on the agenda of staff meetings regarding assessment review