



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2012
Beauty Therapy**

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

SVQ awards

General comments

Centres delivering the SVQ awards have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. All the centres have delivered SVQ Beauty qualifications for several years and receive an annual external verification visit, therefore they are very familiar with what the assessment strategy and awarding body require.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

This year the centres gave feedback that they were more familiar with the Unit specifications and instruments of assessments, as this was their second year of delivering the new National Occupational Standards.

Staff had taken time to look at the Units they had delivered the first year and streamlined their instruments of assessment to enhance the delivery of the Units and assessments.

The previous year, centres had provided feedback on questions and issues to Solar and SQA regarding the online assessments. The feedback this year from centres was that their issues had been resolved and there were limited concerns with some answers to questions this year.

Evidence Requirements

Centres have a clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements and their candidates were providing sufficient evidence to meet the requirements. The use of SQA portfolios guides them clearly to the necessary Evidence Requirements and suggested types of evidence. Some centres provide additional guidance to candidates to allow them the opportunity to monitor their own Evidence Requirements.

Administration of assessments

Centres have acquired administration rights within the Beauty department in order to generate SQA Solar assessments when they require them. This can reduce the potential wait when going through the college administration system. This provides a very user-friendly but secure system for centre staff and candidates. Remediation is being carried out by assessors to ensure the candidate achieves 100% as required by the assessment strategy.

Centres have adopted the procedure where a new Unit assessor would go through a Unit induction with an experienced assessor for that Unit to ensure they had a clear understanding of Evidence Requirements.

Assessors continue to be innovative by cross-referencing the candidate evidence where they can, which helps reduce over-assessment for the candidate.

Assessors mapped across all Units to discover the similar EKU(Essential Knowledge and Understanding) within each Unit and developed either an integrated written workbook/assignment or a bank of oral questions, along with suggested responses to cover these EKU. If this type of oral question was asked, the assessor was not required to record the candidate's response.

Centres' internal verification procedures and documentation were being used appropriately. This included pre-delivery internal verification of instruments of assessment and samples of candidate evidence being internally verified throughout the year. In some centres, the element of practical assessment was sampled by an Internal Verifier to ensure standardisation and consistency across all assessors.

General feedback

Generally there was evidence during external verification of assessor feedback noted to candidates for practical observations and written assignment/workbook activities. This could vary from assessor to assessor and centre to centre. Some assessors commented that they had large groups completing practical assessments and therefore the time taken to complete marking up candidates' portfolios limits the time available for candidate feedback.

The candidates interviewed seemed to really enjoy the practical aspects of these awards and, in particular, the additional enrichment activities often provided for them throughout their time at the centre. Providing additional industry/commercial enrichment activities seems to be a growing trend within centres. This also allows the assessors to access CPD opportunities.

The candidates commented that they liked the Solar online assessments, especially the instant marking which gives them their result.

There was some concern from a group of SVQ Level 3 candidates moving from this type of qualification onto HNC Beauty. The centre where the group attends has made some arrangements for them to attend HN preparation classes.

Many centres are continuing to provide teaching/learning materials on their VLE. This allows an alternative resource and easier access for candidates. Also, with contact hours being reduced in some centres, enabling candidates to access the underpinning knowledge from the VLE allows staff to concentrate on practical skills when candidates are in class,

New assessors are well supported by experienced assessors and Internal Verifiers and the majority of centres have a support mechanism in place for new assessors.

Areas of good practice

A centre's involvement with its local community, where candidates carry out beauty services, has the benefits of helping to build candidates' self-confidence, and providing a service to the local community.

A centre's links with a local NHS hospital, where candidates carry out treatments for staff as part of the NHS' Healthy Working Lives programme. The centre hopes this link continues to grow to allow Level 3 candidates the offer of work experience in the future.

Participation in local and national competitions, which can allow candidates the opportunity to be successful learners, display their vocational skills and build their self-confidence.

The use of a centre's VLE to produce a 'virtual classroom' where candidates can access a video of their tutor discussing/displaying the topic/skill and can also access the relevant teaching and learning materials.

Additional occupationally-relevant enrichment activities are offered to candidates to help increase their opportunity of securing employment.

Completion of the Level 3 Self Tanning Unit early in the course to capture client demand for Christmas and as an incentive for candidates' motivation to have one Unit completed.

Student personal development plans which encompass Curriculum for Excellence capacities are completed by centre staff at course induction and are reviewed twice during the year. This is to encourage candidates to take responsibility and be independent learners.

Level 1 candidates complete a weekly reflective diary using words and symbols to describe how their learning is progressing each week. They will then be able to see the distance travelled by the end of their course.

A centre asks its candidate to use a blog to record their activities when working towards the G22 Unit; this provides assessment evidence.

Specific areas for improvement

Continue to look at candidate evidence generated throughout their coursework. This could be used as evidence for different Performance Criteria/ranges/EKU within Units in order to reduce the assessment burden.

Ensure that assessors are marking up Performance Criteria within candidate portfolios at the time of assessment, and providing candidates with timeous feedback.