Scottish Vocational Qualifications 2012 Internal Assessment Report

Road Haulage

Rail Transport

Road Passenger Transport

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

SVQ awards

Road Haulage SVQs verified:

G6V9 23 Driving Goods Vehicles (Level 3)
G6VA 22 Driving Goods Vehicles (Level 2)
G7HK 22 Traffic Office (Level 2)
GA05 22 Driving Goods Vehicles: Van (Level 2)
GA04 22 SVQ 2 Driving Goods Vehicles: Rigid Vehicle
GA03 22 SVQ 2 Driving Goods Vehicles: Articulated or Draw Bar Vehicle
GE6A 23 SVQ 3 Driving Goods Vehicles

(Based on five EV reports: all successful)

General comments

All centres and their delivery staff have a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The majority of assessors and verifiers are recruited from fully work-qualified personnel and have the required training qualifications. They have good communication and people skills and meet the requirement of the national standards.

In all centres, job descriptions and responsibilities were available and related to both the centre and qualification requirements. Most centres run comprehensive staff induction and follow-up procedures; in one centre the internal verifiers (IVs) conduct all assessor inductions. Staff records were available for viewing at all centres and showed that CPD records were current and up to date.

At one centre, all the assessors and IVs have individual CPD records. The latest addition to these records is the Driver CPC (Department of Transport requirement for all commercial HGV, PCV and LGV drivers).

At another centre, the IV carries out direct observation of assessors during assessment of a candidate.

Meetings take place at regular intervals in most centres with assessors and IVs attending and providing input to standardisation. Minutes of team meetings are open for viewing. One centre holds a central record of all significant events for each assessor and IV. Another centre has involved all staff in writing the assessment materials in relation to the new DGV Pathways.

Most centres have sufficient assessors and IVs to easily deliver their programmes and all the required resources are in place.

Generally, the consistency of decisions across assessors and IVs is sufficient, valid, reliable and appropriate for the all the elements within the Unit specifications.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In all centres the required procedures of the national occupational standards (NOS) are fully satisfied. In general, centre internal quality assurance teams have a good understanding of their roles and are in constant contact with candidates and other team members.

Assessment schedules are agreed in all centres with candidates receiving a written record of their planned assessment programme. This is usually agreed during the induction process when candidates are fully inducted into the qualification. In one centre, candidates are given a skills scan to identify their suitability for the qualification.

Centre records indicate that assessors give prompt, positive and constructive feedback to the candidates. This may be in a face-to-face situation or recorded in a candidate's portfolio.

In all cases, assessment is carried out in the candidate's own work place during their normal work activities with free unrestricted use of equipment.

Generally, assessment decisions were consistent and portfolios were verified in accordance with the individual centre's policy. These policies ensure that all the Units within the qualification are covered.

Often these assessment procedures are directly derived from standardisation meetings which usually also highlight shortfalls which require to be addressed.

One centre is undergoing verification changes to transfer over to a DGV Pathways certificate; another is spending time on the implementation of electronic portfolios and a relevant level/method of recording.

In all centres any assessment which is not meeting the standards is recorded and the candidate is re-assessed at a later date.

Evidence Requirements

Centres are aware of the Evidence Requirements of the qualifications and the evidence produced by candidates is directly linked to the NOS.

The types of evidence used include: direct observation, witness statements, Q&A, checklists, photographic, audio and video capture.

Some centres are looking at alternative methods of gathering evidence that can support the assessment procedures, such as commercially available DVD assessments.

In all centres, materials are work related. No centres use simulation as a tool in assessment; assessment is carried out 'on the job'.

DGV Pathways award/certification will require centres to clearly identify the areas/elements that are being assessed and the methods of recording evidence.

Administration of assessments

In all centres, assessment administration is operating within the current up to date SQA and NOS requirements for the qualification. SQA assessment and retention procedures were usually built into centre policy. Most assessment is conducted within the candidate's workplace and complies with workplace health and safety requirements.

All required documentation was in place and included assessment schedules and minutes of meetings. In all centres, records were accurate, up to date and signed-off.

In all cases the qualification and process were fully supported by the centre management.

Some centres were either using, or moving towards, electronic portfolios and records. Usually registration with SQA is electronic. All centres hold a portfolio of communications between centre and SQA.

All records were kept in locked secure facilities in all centres.

Centres have approval letters giving access to information.

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were identified in various centres:

♦ Well laid out portfolios, giving a good audit trail, with effective audio recordings used.
♦ A good quality centre version of an electronic portfolio that made assessing, verification and external verification a simpler but more effective procedure.
♦ Opportunities for additional remedial work by the candidate are freely available to all candidates.
♦ Good use of video capture, supporting decisions made by the direct observation of the assessor.
♦ Well laid out portfolios with constructive feedback to the candidates.

Specific areas for improvement

No areas for improvement have been identified.

SVQ awards

Rail Transport Unit verified:

G9Y2 22 Rail Services: Driving Level 2
(Based on one EV report: successful)

General comments

This report is based on a centre visit registered and working to the new Rail Standard that was approved in November 2010.

All staff work on a one assessor, one candidate basis. Assessors are based at different depots.

Assessors are inducted by the IV using the new SQA Assessors' Guidelines for the qualification.

All staff are fully work-qualified and hold appropriate qualifications.

Staff have a good knowledge of the requirements of the national standards.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Meetings do take place to consider, amongst other areas, course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplar materials. However, the nature of the industry, its widespread geographical nature and 24-hour operation results in these meetings being somewhat infrequent.

Standardisation does take place, again on a somewhat unreliable schedule.

Candidate numbers are low and resources are adequate for this level of qualification uptake, but if numbers increase resources will need to increase.

Good internal verification procedures and policies are in place and records are comprehensive and clear.

Assessment policies and procedures are in place. All staff are occupationally competent and the assessments are carried out in a real on-the-job environment.

Evidence Requirements

Centre portfolios are kept for each candidate. This includes the candidate's assessment plan which gives their requirements for each Unit of the qualification.

Methods of assessment include direct observation, witness statements and checklists.

The widespread nature of the industry and the high level health and safety requirements present a challenge to assessors and candidates, particularly with regard to devising and delivering a variety of methods of assessment to meet the Evidence Requirements of the qualification.

Administration of assessments

The centre uses an Excel-based tracking system to monitor, record and plan assessment and verification.

The assessment administration system is adequate and the centre keeps a good record of the status of candidates.

There is consistency of assessment decisions between assessors.

Portfolios are retained centrally.

Feedback is given by the IV to assessors through both formal meetings and on a day-to-day basis.

Areas of good practice

The following area of good practice was identified in one centre.

♦ Comprehensive policies and procedures manuals available for all awards that are registered with SQA.
♦ Good first version of a new candidate portfolio of evidence.

Specific areas for improvement

As indicated earlier, the nature of this industry, its geographical spread, its 24 hour operation, its high level health and safety requirements and the fact that staff often operate alone in isolated situations, presents a challenge to assessors, verifiers and administrators.

In addition, it is an industry within which there are relatively few employers and these tend to be large conglomerates.

Nevertheless, the qualification has basic requirements which must be met, in order that the SQA requirements, NOS, Unit specifications and Evidence Requirements are met.

These include:

♦ regular standardisation meetings where all staff involved in qualification delivery should be present
♦ clear organisational charts showing the staff involved in the delivery of the qualification and their roles and responsibilities
♦ staff files which show CPD on a continuing basis

- candidate evidence that is initialled, dated and cross-referenced in the candidate portfolio
- candidate induction as a separate activity and not part of other meetings

These requirements are being met, but the quality and reliability of their delivery is variable. Some of the requirements are basic housekeeping and will help to negate some of the challenges mentioned above.

SVQ awards

Road Passenger Transport Unit verified:

G8DG 22 SVQ 2 Passenger Carrying Vehicle Driving (Bus and Coach)
(Based on three EV Reports: all successful)

General comments

All staff involved in delivering the qualification in the centres visited were fully work-qualified, held the required certification and met NOS requirements.

All the centres have organisational charts that show the roles and responsibilities of the personnel. These are also evidenced in job specifications.

Staff are inducted using locally devised and centre-devised checklists. Induction records are retained.

All centres retain a log of correspondence from SQA.

Staff development programmes are in place with, individual staff CPD records.

Centres operate a variety of meetings, all of which are minuted. These include development meetings, course reviews, additional training workshops and standardisation meetings.

Generally, there are sufficient numbers of assessors for candidates, and portfolios are verified to SQA standards.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessment and verification policies are in place for all centres and comply with the qualification assessment requirements.

Most centres operate assessment schedules of candidates allocated to each assessor which give clear targets and dates.

Assessment agreements are in place at most centres.

Assessments are well recorded in candidate portfolios along with assessor feedback and guidance reports.

Opportunities for re-assessment were available in all centres.

One centre operates a skill scan process with the results pointing to opportunities to develop where there are skill shortfalls.

There is no evidence of unfair treatment or of any candidates being disadvantaged.

All centres have the required resources in place.

In most cases, assessment is carried out on the job in the work place with little simulation taking place. However, one centre also offered some training within a dedicated training centre.

Evidence Requirements

All centres had a good understanding of the Evidence Requirements of the qualification.

A variety of assessment methods were in use including: direct observation, Q&A video capture, formative and summative reports, checklists, and witness statements.

All the Evidence Requirements are based on the NOS and involve well laid out portfolios giving clear evidence trails, supported by various materials, assessor and IV feedback.

Most assessment materials are work related.

Administration of assessments

All centres have well established assessment and IV policies and retention of records procedures.

In most cases, records were accurate and the centre delivery teams were fully committed to the candidate's achievement of the qualification.

In some cases, there are assessor/candidate agreements in place.

In most cases, there were clear assessor schedules and lists indicating how learners were allocated to individual assessors.

In all centres, portfolios are standardised and accurate, dated, signed by candidates and the assessor, and then sampled by the IV.

Access statements and procedures, such as access agreement letters giving access to information, were in place.

All centres have assessment and record retention policies with records kept in a secure environment.

In one centre, candidates were registered through the SQA 'red' system. In another, assessment information was tracked using an Excel spreadsheet.

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were identified in various centres.

Good use of video/audio to help the candidate and which, particularly for the candidate whose first language is not English, gives the opportunity to identify shortfalls and insert corrective measures to help.

The staff in one centre were identified as 'a good knowledgeable team that know the standards and the requirements of the quality procedures and the requirements of the competency levels, and who work hard to give a quality service to the candidate'.

There was good use of DVD capture as supportive evidence for some elements within the Units, thus confirming the assessor's decision.

Specific areas for improvement

No areas for improvement have been identified.