Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014

Construction & Civil Engineering Services: Construction Operations

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

SVQ awards

General comments

The outcome of external verification activity for academic year 2013–14 confirmed that all centres continue to have a clear and accurate understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Construction and Civil Engineering: Construction Operations qualifications and the Units which comprise these SVQ qualifications. This applies to both new-entrant delivery and experienced-worker delivery methods. However, recommendations were reported by External Verifiers in relation to the currency of Unit titles and code numbers at one centre.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessors at almost all centres had a clear understanding of the requirements of Unit specifications and their assessment instruments. The evidence from External Verifier reports supports the view that this aspect of the SVQ assessment process is being addressed effectively in almost all centres. However, one report highlighted issues at one centre in relation to stated performance levels on knowledge question papers.

Evidence Requirements

Almost all centres continue to meet the Evidence Requirements of all Units within the SVQs being assessed. Candidate practical evidence was noted as being of a high standard in some centres and there was sufficient evidence available for each Unit being assessed. Candidate written evidence was also of a good standard at most centres.

However, staff at one centre were given an action for improvement to develop an appropriate practical operational checklist containing stated standards and tolerances. This would ensure that all assessors had a consistent understanding of the Evidence Requirements.

Administration of assessments

External Verifier reports confirmed that almost all centres were administering the assessment process effectively and that internal verification was effective at confirming assessors' assessment decisions and in supporting assessors. In the main, assessment records and materials, candidate documentation and portfolios were well organised and consistent in all centres. All dates and signatures were recorded for all candidates, ensuring an effective internal and external quality assurance focus.

However, areas for improvement were noted at a few centres in relation to:

♦ internal verification sampling and signing and dating internal verification records

♦ standardisation activity focusing on the assessment process

- operational checklists for practical activities — setting acceptable and performance levels to ensure consistency of assessment decisions

Effective administration arrangements were in place in all centres and these arrangements supported staff well during delivery of the qualification.

General feedback

External Verifiers reported that almost all centres had well equipped specialist workshop facilities or agreed access arrangements for on-site assessment, with ample materials to ensure that all specialist aspects of the qualification, Units and candidate numbers were catered for. Candidate discussions confirmed that access to assessment opportunities and assessor feedback was very effective and was valued in relation to their progression and development.

Candidates interviewed at all centres visited were satisfied with their programme of study, the support they received from assessors, and the pace of assessments.

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice reported during the 2013–14 session:

- use of challenge questions in observation reports linked to the Unit Performance Criteria — ensuring that assessors had a focus on gathering valid evidence
- identifying and addressing candidate development needs to support their achievement and progression
- CPD records with reflective logs — enabling staff to consider the impact of the development activity on their role

Specific areas for improvement

The following areas for improvement were noted:

- focus and frequency of standardisation activities to promote improvements in the assessment process
- internal verification sampling and signing and dating internal verification records
- operational checklists for practical activities — setting acceptable and performance levels to ensure consistency of assessment decisions