



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2014  
Customer Service**

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

# SVQ awards

## General comments

This internal assessment report covers the following qualifications:

SVQ 2 Customer Service SCQF level 5 GA39 22

SVQ 3 Customer Service SCQF level 6 GA52 23

This has been another successful session. All of the visits were successful, with all centres being rated as having Significant Strengths. The EV team has been very positive in their external verification reports, and all reports have highlighted good practice. The qualifications are highly rated by both assessors and candidates because they can help employers improve their customer service as well as helping the candidate develop themselves and gain a qualification.

All assessors and internal verifiers are familiar with, and meet the needs of, the Assessment Strategy.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The current awards are very familiar to assessors and internal verifiers — even where centres are newly approved, most assessors and internal verifiers have had some experience with the Customer Service awards. Internal verifiers have a good understanding of their roles and are in constant contact with assessors.

Portfolios were well presented and well assessed. A wide range of evidence was presented and the quality was high. Evidence was well matched to the standards and easy to track. Assessment was holistic in most cases, with good use being made of the evidence. The stages of planning, assessment, review and feedback are evident in portfolios.

Centres use a variety of processes during candidate induction to ensure that candidates are able to complete the qualification and achieve credit for prior learning.

Centres use assessment planning which is agreed through discussion between the candidate, assessor, and in many cases the line manager, to choose the Units to be covered and plan the ongoing assessment. This plan is then regularly reviewed and can be modified if required. Training plans are included in the candidate portfolios.

Assessment strategies in centres are in line with the SQA requirements. The evidence sampled shows that candidates in all centres have fair access to assessment. The assessments were valid, reliable, equitable and fair and followed agreed training plans.

Many centres use a communication log which records all communication between the assessor and candidate with candidates having open access to their assessor via face-to-face meetings, e-mail and telephone contact.

Centres used either e-portfolios or traditional paper portfolios, and in all cases the evidence was signed and dated by the candidate and the assessor.

All centres gave assessment feedback to candidates that was timely and usually comprehensive.

### **Evidence requirements**

All centres are aware of the Evidence Requirements of the qualifications, and the evidence produced by candidates is directly linked to the chosen Units.

A good range of assessment evidence was observed, with a good balance of both performance evidence and supporting evidence. Performance evidence included observation and work products; supporting evidence included personal statements, professional discussion, witness testimony, and knowledge and understanding questions. All evidence was produced in the workplace.

### **Administration of assessments**

Assessments are administered within the current up-to-date SQA requirements for the qualifications.

SQA assessment and retention procedures are built into centre policies. Larger centres have dedicated administrative staff.

All centres have robust assessment and internal verification systems which are regularly reviewed and updated. Standardisation meetings are held to ensure a consistent approach across the Units, assessors and workplaces.

Internal verifiers follow pre-planned sampling strategies; they produce reports which include constructive feedback to assessors.

### **General feedback**

There is a high standard of work from the candidates. Portfolios sampled included a planning, assessment, review, and feedback process. Feedback, in most cases, was developmental and worthwhile.

Many external verification visits included the interview of one or more candidates. In all cases the candidates were positive about their experience. All felt well supported and had open access to their assessor. Some candidates stated that completing a qualification had led to a permanent job or to promotion.

## Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were identified from the EV visits and subsequent reports:

- ◆ A comprehensive internal verification system is in place, which includes up to date reporting on the e-portfolio. I-Learner is being used by the centre.
- ◆ The centre uses a 'quality notes' record for informal ongoing discussions. This is a system in an e-portfolio where the assessor and candidate can have an online discussion about the evidence, assessment plans etc.
- ◆ The assessors keep their occupational competence up-to-date by working in other departments within the organisation.
- ◆ The monthly CPD discussion adds information that might have been overlooked.
- ◆ A traffic light performance monitoring system is used to grade the performance of the assessors and to identify any training and support needs they might have.
- ◆ The CPD recording system used in the centre is excellent, with an individual development plan in place for each member of staff to further develop their skills and knowledge for the awards they deliver, assess and verify.
- ◆ Candidates attend college one day per month to receive classroom instruction on each Unit knowledge requirement for the award. This also allows for face-to-face contact between assessors and candidates, where feedback and assistance can be provided to the candidate.
- ◆ The centre induction is extremely rigorous and provides candidates with a thorough grounding to undertake the award.
- ◆ The centre provides a document to all candidates titled 'note to candidates' which includes information relating to all of the centre's policies and procedures which affect them.
- ◆ The centre uses a learning contract which clarifies and agrees service level agreement and roles and responsibilities. Feedback sheets contain excellent detail and information to candidates. Knowledge is covered by effective use of questions. Candidates complete logs which relate to specific customer service experiences they have.

## Specific areas for improvement

The following recommendations were made by External Verifiers:

- ◆ Observation reports are good, but the assessors should consider taking a more holistic approach to assess the task rather than the Unit alone.
- ◆ Some evidence would benefit from additional annotation or explanation.
- ◆ Although the centre carries out standardisation meetings, these are recorded mainly by listing the topics discussed, and not a report on individual discussions relating to awards. It is advisable that standardisation meetings consider areas such as issues arising from assessments, internal and external verification, review of candidate evidence for discussion with other assessors etc. This approach assists the less experienced assessor, who gains valuable insight from more experienced assessors, whilst ensuring there is a consistency in the assessment process.
- ◆ It would be beneficial to assessors and verifiers of the Customer Service awards to review these awards during their standardisation meetings, which could then be used to form part of their CPD. Staff developing and designing materials etc, together with other meetings relevant to Customer Service, should also form part of CPD.