



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2014**

**Hospitality and Professional
Cookery**

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

SVQ awards

General comments

Qualification verifiers carried out visits to 62 centres:

- ◆ 22 training providers
- ◆ 16 employers
- ◆ 24 colleges — an increasing proportion of which assess SVQs in both realistic work environments and the workplace

In most cases, feedback from reports has again been positive this year.

Most centres are now being measured against the new Quality Assurance Management Criteria, and reporting has become more detailed and confident as understanding of the system by both centres and verifiers has increased. As a result, any actions required have been agreed and carried out to mutually acceptable time-frames, and have been clearly understood.

Candidates have commented that the national standard is generally well matched to their work practices; this not only demonstrates that assessors generally have a good knowledge of current industry trends, but also that qualification structures are appropriate and flexible.

The standards are clearly reflected in SQA recording materials and in some online systems, and these provide an accurate template on which to base assessments.

It has, however, been noted that difficulties have sometimes been identified when candidates wish to progress to a higher level, particularly when the demonstration of supervisory skills is required. It is probably worth mentioning that the new SVQ 4 in Hospitality Management Skills will provide further progression routes.

Assessors and internal verifiers are required by the SSC to have relevant occupational expertise and knowledge at the appropriate level of the occupational area(s) they are assessing and verifying, which has been gained through 'hands on' experience in the industry. While this reinforces understanding of the criteria being assessed, and generally provides a robust platform for programme delivery, there are still occasions where an additional need for CPD activities in order to update knowledge of current industry practice has been identified.

Work practices in realistic work environments are well matched to the standards, using customised menus and restaurant facilities which replicate relevant work situations. Some candidates have benefited from an increased flexibility, which allows them to experience both college and industry, with day-release

opportunities for industry-based candidates, and industrial placements for college students.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Assessments have been recorded using either SQA materials (78%), centre-devised materials (1%), or e-portfolios (21%); which shows a 7% increase in the use of e-portfolios since last year.

E-portfolios have all been matched to the standards, and while they have been interpreted correctly in most cases, weaknesses have occasionally been found in the need to:

- ◆ provide additional evidence to meet **all** performance requirements, once the minimum have been assessed using observation
- ◆ observe candidates carrying out work activities — there can be a tendency to rely on unsubstantiated discussions and products at work, especially at supervisory level

Evidence Requirements

Assessors will be relieved to note that providing evidence of behaviours is no longer required in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership Units.

The SQA assessment records will still include these as an option, but they are no longer mandatory.

In general, a good understanding of Evidence Requirements has been indicated by:

- ◆ The assessment of performance at an appropriate level, such as:
 - matching of qualifications to candidate job roles
 - matching of customised menus to the national standards
- ◆ Providing sufficient and consistent evidence
- ◆ The questioning of topics which are not covered sufficiently by performance
- ◆ Developing support materials such as worksheets, exemplar documents, projects and information packages
- ◆ An increased use of indexed evidence, which can be cross-referenced to more than one Unit
- ◆ A holistic approach to assessment including detailed reports of observations, which can provide a strong source of evidence. This is usually a result of careful planning
- ◆ A wide variety of types of evidence collected by the candidates, which illustrates an emphasis on their workplace environment — event planning sheets, menus, photographs, recipes, delivery notes, hygiene records, etc

Administration of assessments

There is always a strong correlation between detailed assessment planning and levels of candidate achievement and understanding. This can vary from matching tasks in a realistic work environment to planning observations in the workplace to maximise opportunities to collect evidence. Careful planning can also help to integrate assessments, and map evidence across several Units within a qualification, which in turn means that more than the minimum requirements are observed. This has also been found to reduce the amount of supplementary evidence, and the number of assessments required.

Detailed assessment planning has been noticeable in centres where strong standardisation activities are carried out; and it can also provide good support to inexperienced assessors.

Additional assessment tools have been developed by teams and used effectively; such as use of video, audio feedback and authenticated photographs. Candidates in remote locations have been supported using Skype and online portfolios, which can be accessed by everyone involved in the assessment process at any time. Not only does this provide frequent support and feedback, but candidates have commented that they like being able to access online material from home, and are happy to complete work towards their understanding of the Units in their own time.

The use of good planning for internal verification activities also relates to their effectiveness. Robust systems have included:

- ◆ The use of a matrix to target sampling across all Units and all assessors
- ◆ Increasing sampling where Units have been difficult to assess and/or record
- ◆ Routine observations of assessors, with recorded and monitored feedback
- ◆ Documented and monitored feedback to assessors following sampling activities, which is confirmed by signature when required actions have been met
- ◆ Internal verification meetings, which are an opportunity to reach agreement, and also provide the basis for standardisation
- ◆ The use of a decision record, which is available as guidance to assessors
- ◆ Interim internal verification, to provide feedback and confirm success, or to identify any remedial action required at an early stage

While the electronic testing of knowledge using TestVQ is still being used by 6% of centres; most are now using the SQA Question Bank, which can also be accessed from the secure area of SQA's website.

Candidate support is strengthened when initial assessments are carried out, and personal learning plans are developed which meet individual needs.

These have included the use of:

- ◆ scribes
- ◆ coloured paper
- ◆ specific fonts
- ◆ electronic systems, which can be accessed at times which fit in with shift patterns
- ◆ mobile phones and Facebook for contact with assessors

General feedback

It is worth noting that while some centres have been coping with significant changes during the last year, staff felt that generally they were on the right track and were confident that systems would become more fully standardised over the next year.

Feedback from both assessors and candidates has reinforced previous comments made about planning and support. Personal development plans can identify support needs for assessors, and can contribute to planning for CPD. They can also ensure that candidates are provided with any additional support they need to prove competence against the standards.

The use of mentors for new assessors has provided support and helped to build up team relationships and contribute to standardisation.

Candidates have commented that they appreciate feedback at the end of assessment that is relevant and motivational in tone.

Examples of instances where access to assessment has been made more flexible are:

- ◆ The use IT as a communication tool and to provide e-portfolios and information
- ◆ Space in the RWE at college being made available if requested by candidates
- ◆ Altering the structure of assessments to allow for students who are on placement

Areas of good practice

In addition to areas of general good practice which have been highlighted throughout this and previous reports, comments from External Verifiers have identified that:

- ◆ The use of IT has led to increased flexibility in assessment
- ◆ Agreeing assessment plans with employers has helped candidates to progress more quickly
- ◆ Work experience is being arranged to provide depth of experience and knowledge

- ◆ Candidates' background, experience and qualifications are considered when directing them to the most appropriate award for them to complete
- ◆ Candidate views are sought by questionnaire to confirm issues of validity, reliability and fairness
- ◆ Written guidance for new and experienced assessors has been issued with an induction booklet
- ◆ Continuous professional development is being planned in line with team and personal objectives
- ◆ Centres appreciate that updating staff skills ensures they can provide the ultimate experience for their candidates
- ◆ Assessors, who work in or with the industry, are completely aware of the needs and trends in the sector
- ◆ Networking groups have been set up for assessors to enable them to look at each other's types of evidence
- ◆ The carrying out of one-to-one peer reviews increases standardisation and confidence among teams
- ◆ Personal statements completed by candidates at the end of each Unit and on completion of their qualification are an effective tool for review purposes

Specific areas for improvement

To summarise, standards are generally reported to be high, with an increasing number of examples of innovative practice and increasing use of information technology. However, the detail required in records is sometimes lacking, and potential for improvement has been highlighted in the following areas:

- ◆ The use of an index to locate portfolio evidence
- ◆ Ensure that the candidate's name appears on each assessment record sheet
- ◆ Plagiarism policies and procedures should be reiterated at induction, and candidates should be made aware of possible sanctions
- ◆ Effective use of observations of performance on Hospitality Supervision Units
- ◆ The use of internal verification feedback sheets that allow for remedial work to be recorded and signed off
- ◆ Ensuring that sufficient examples of the storing and/or holding of food are recorded
- ◆ Effective recording of cross-referencing between Units
- ◆ Detailed referencing of observation records to the standards
- ◆ Demonstrating consistency over time
- ◆ Taking a holistic approach to assessment
- ◆ Ongoing internal verification
- ◆ Circulating minutes of regular standardisation meetings
- ◆ Ensuring that products of work are attributable to candidates
- ◆ Authentication of photographic evidence
- ◆ Specific referencing of audio tapes to the standards

- ◆ Records of CPD to match the SSC Assessment Strategy requirements must be available for EV visits
- ◆ The level of detail required when recording observed performance
- ◆ A holistic approach to assessment, using cross-referencing between Units
- ◆ The appropriate use of products of work, which should be working documents, and be authenticated
- ◆ The use of personal statements/reflective accounts need to be backed-up by further evidence to ensure their validity
- ◆ The detailed recording of witness testimony, professional discussion and supplementary questioning