



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications  
Internal Assessment Report 2016  
Hospitality and Professional  
Cookery**

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

# SVQs

## General comments

In the majority of cases, feedback from verification reports has again been positive this year.

All centres had been measured against the new Quality Assurance 2015–18 management criteria. Evidence provided by the centres demonstrated a clear understanding of the new criteria. Previous recommendations had been mutually agreed and sanctions actioned within a mutually acceptable timeframe.

It is encouraging that centres had adopted the new quality assurance criteria and made available some very comprehensive internal quality policies and procedures to reflect this. The majority of centres had provided this information in clearly located portfolios or online systems that assisted verifiers to find the required information during verification visits.

## Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

All centres are required to comply with the Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism Sector Assessment Strategy which states that assessors and internal verifiers must have relevant occupational expertise, hold a relevant assessor and/or verifier qualification and update their occupational expertise and knowledge through planned continual professional development (CPD). While most assessors and verifiers had appropriate occupational expertise and qualifications, in some instances there was insufficient evidence of CPD activities being carried out and recorded.

All centres were aware of the National Occupational Standards for Hospitality and knew how to access candidate recording forms and underpinning knowledge assessments.

Centres operate a mixture of paper-based portfolios and online portfolios, utilising different package systems. The online e-portfolios had been matched to the National Occupational Standards.

It was apparent that centres use assessor observation as the first and foremost assessment method, and use questioning, product evidence, professional discussion, reflective accounts and witness testimony appropriately to supplement performance evidence.

## Evidence requirements

It was highlighted again this year that some centres were unaware that the requirement to formally assess behaviours within Hospitality Supervision and Leadership units was removed in 2014. While centres may wish to continue to assess behaviours, it should be noted that this is no longer mandatory.

Centres are encouraged to reflect on the updates provided by SQA and in particular the SVQ Hospitality subject page on the SQA website since all updates are posted there in addition to being disseminated via e-mail to centre co-ordinators for distribution amongst their own staff.

In general, a good understanding of evidence requirements had been indicated this session by:

- ◆ Assessments being undertaken by appropriately qualified assessors who matched candidates to the appropriate qualification and level
- ◆ The range of evidence being gathered
- ◆ Centres developing additional support material to help candidates develop their knowledge and understanding
- ◆ A holistic approach to assessment
- ◆ A variety of evidence including reflective accounts, professional discussion, photographs, audio recording, recipes/menus, hygiene records, staff training records

### **Administration of assessments**

It was evident that assessment planning takes place in different formats, some more detailed than others. What was apparent is that candidate progress reviews reflect current progress and suggest agreed plans for future assessment. Candidate discussions reflected that they feel supported and prepared for planned assessment and have an understanding of the assessment process.

Additional assessment tools have been developed by teams and used effectively. This includes the 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.

Internal verification activity is strategically planned by the majority of centres which have robust systems in place, including:

- ◆ Sampling plans to ensure that all units and assessors are verified over time
- ◆ Increased verification activity to support new assessors or those whose standards require review
- ◆ Double-banking activity and observations of assessment practice by internal verifiers
- ◆ Comprehensive feedback to assessors following verification activity

While online testing of knowledge using TestVQ is still done by some centres, most are now using the SQA-devised questions which are accessible through the SQA Secure website. A limited number of centres have devised their own

questions in favour of short-answer questions instead of multiple-choice. These have been carefully matched to the underpinning knowledge statements.

There is evidence that centres continue to provide individual learning plans for candidates and these have helped identify additional support needs including:

- ◆ scribes
- ◆ coloured paper
- ◆ specific fonts
- ◆ audio

### **General feedback**

Some centres had demonstrated an update of knowledge and understanding of Assessor/Verifier awards by completing the CPD toolkit to ensure that all assessors and verifiers were working to the current standards of L&D9 and L&D11. This was actively promoted by verifiers to ensure that all staff qualified to D or A/V units understood and reflected the L&D units in practice.

Candidates within centres fed back to visiting verifiers that some of the Core Skills were felt to be irrelevant to their qualification since they were assessed separately to the SVQ. It is encouraged to embed Core Skills where possible into holistic assessment of naturally occurring performance.

It was identified that colleges in general had very good realistic work environments and often used their links with industry to provide work-placement opportunities.

Video conference delivery of knowledge-based learning was identified in one centre as a supportive mechanism to candidates located in remote locations. This was supplemented by regular assessor visits.

Some centres were proactively supporting progression pathways by encouraging the candidates to progress to HN qualifications.

It was encouraging to read that centres operating online portfolios actively encouraged visiting verifiers to view candidate evidence prior to visiting. This enabled the verifier to navigate the system and review evidence in a controlled environment then to compile a list of questions prior to the visit, ensuring that the visit could be as productive as possible.

### **Areas of good practice**

It was identified on several occasions that centres are actively developing their approach to SVQ delivery and assessment and taking into consideration the feedback from candidates and staff.

Areas of good practice observed by visiting verifiers included:

- ◆ Use of cyclical menus which are updated to reflect industry changes
- ◆ Continuing professional development — a good mix of legislative and occupational updating in some centres
- ◆ Constructive and detailed feedback to candidates
- ◆ Questions clearly covering all knowledge statements
- ◆ Extra college curriculum Hospitality events calendar, eg cookery demo, canteen duties, special events
- ◆ Personal learning plans to guide candidates with progression
- ◆ College links with industry constantly evolving; including artisan bakery and butchery skills
- ◆ Candidate involvement in assessment planning and process
- ◆ Internal verification taking place at planned times throughout the year rather than being end-loaded — this helps with internal quality assurance and ensures candidate support and assessment quality
- ◆ Resource material varied and appropriate for level
- ◆ Field trips to restaurants, hotels, fish-processing plant and butchers
- ◆ Practical inductions to assess candidates' prior achievement/knowledge
- ◆ Candidate logbooks and self-evaluation records to help the candidate keep a record of their own progress
- ◆ Comprehensive support procedures for new assessors
- ◆ Use of internal verification matrix demonstrating sampling of all units over time
- ◆ Assessor grading system to monitor experience and qualifications ensuring that they maintain a consistent approach

### **Specific areas for improvement**

In addition to good practice, it was noted that some areas could be improved in some centres, these included:

- ◆ To increase the number of internal verifiers to help with the ratio of candidates to assessors
- ◆ To ensure that signatures are in place to prove authenticity — this includes candidates and assessors and is relevant for unit records and evidence being produced
- ◆ While there is no strict requirement on how supplementary evidence should be recorded, using an 'S' instead of a tick can help to highlight that supplementary evidence was gathered outwith normal performance/ knowledge questioning
- ◆ Assessors should confirm that answers to written questions undertaken by candidates have been reviewed and assessed and accepted as accurate and complete
- ◆ Evidence of continuing professional development to confirm currency of industry knowledge, eg records of reading trade journals, industry experience.

- ◆ Clearer cross-referencing of supplementary evidence as it is not always evident what the supplementary evidence is referenced to within the unit/award
- ◆ Include copies of CV and CPD for staff involved in assessor/verifier activity as detailed in the visit plan
- ◆ Records of standardisation meetings must be provided for visiting verification activity
- ◆ Candidates using an e-portfolio should sign a candidate declaration statement to say that the e-portfolio is their own work. This declaration is commonly found in paper-based portfolios and should be kept in a candidate file to demonstrate that they are complying with the centre's plagiarism policy
- ◆ Witness testimony should detail who the witness is and their relationship to the candidate, including background information on their experience and knowledge of the award being reviewed
- ◆ A qualification unit completion overview sheet would help candidates to see their overall progress and should be included in the front of all paper-based portfolios
- ◆ While centres operate according to their own internal verification policy, it is important to review the policy to reflect changes in the degree of assessor experience/proficiency, for example higher sampling rate for new or less experienced assessors
- ◆ It is recommended that centres include plagiarism information in the candidate handbook