Scottish Vocational Qualifications Internal Assessment Report 2015
Retail

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

General comments

We have had a full programme of visits during 2014–15. The visits were all successful with significant strengths given for all visits.

SVQs in Retail are well established. Most centres produce well organised portfolios which are of a good standard and are easy to match against the standards.

The verification visit reports show that assessors are very familiar with the award and confident in using the Unit specifications to assess candidates. The methods of assessments are robust and fit for purpose. The judgement of the assessors is consistent and candidate performance demonstrates sound knowledge of the requirements of the SVQ.

The portfolios were well presented with good evidence used holistically and referenced to the standards. Observation is a very important method for retail and the observation reports were good, containing detailed and relevant content, referenced in the appropriate place.

Many centres are now using electronic assessment systems. They help to record and keep track of candidate progress, as well as providing a portfolio structure. Digital voice recording is being used but video recording is less desirable in a retail context.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The External Verifier (EV) visit reports suggest that assessors are very familiar with the SVQs and confident in assessing against the standards. The assessment methods used are varied and fit for purpose. Consistent judgement of candidate performance by assessors also demonstrates sound knowledge of the requirements of the awards.

All assessors and internal verifiers are subject specialists and occupationally competent, as specified in the Assessment Strategy.

Evidence Requirements

The Evidence Requirements are clear to assessors and are being met by the centres.

All centres comply with the Assessment Strategy.

Administration of assessments

All assessors and internal verifiers have worked in retail or are workplace assessors, still working in the retail sector.

The quality of candidate portfolios and the quality of evidence meets the expected standards. A range of assessment methods are used with observation being the most important method for SVQ 2 (SCQF level 5). A wider range of assessment methods are typically used for SVQ 3 (SCQF level 6).

Standardisation and internal verification is working well in the centres. Centres record standardisation properly with clear minutes and these formal meetings are often supplemented by ongoing discussions between assessors and between assessors and internal verifiers. This helps to address any inconsistency between assessors which may arise.

Internal verification is planned with feedback from internal verifiers being recorded and any actions or recommendations acted on, with the actions being agreed and recorded.

General feedback

Feedback from candidates to the EVs is very positive regarding the opportunity to obtain a qualification, the support from assessors, and the support from the employers. Feedback between assessor and candidate is also positive and can be seen in the portfolios.

The EV reports show evidence of fair access to assessment. This was achieved through assessment being planned with the assessor, the candidate and the employer. Where necessary, assessors are willing to work outside normal hours to meet the needs of the candidates.

While CPD activities carried out by assessors and internal verifiers are adequate, it is important that the nature and record of the CPD activities should be accurate and up to date. Also, where appropriate, the CPD activities should be varied and extended to reflect the learning and development needs of the assessors and internal verifiers.

Areas of good practice

The following examples were highlighted by EVs:

♦ Separate records were kept for each individual assessor — kept in a binder file, and kept up to date.
♦ Good clear format to follow. 'Learning Assistant' was used effectively in some cases.
♦ Providing opportunities for assessors to progress to become internal verifiers.
♦ Open communication between assessors and verifiers. New learning technology added.
♦ Rotation of sites to gather full range of evidence for course.
♦ Latest guides to assessment and editions all clearly labelled.
♦ Assessor showed retail knowledge was up to date by shadowing store manager on visit.

- Candidate input into the Unit choice.
- Good support structures for SVQ 1 (SCQF level 4) candidates.

Specific areas for improvement

The following points summarise the development points given to centres:

- The inclusion of company policies — these are not produced by the candidate and do not normally demonstrate the competence of the candidate.
- Where performance evidence is not included in the portfolio, it should be clearly signposted.
- Professional discussion should be planned and fully recorded; digital voice recording is a useful tool.
- Blank documents do not usually prove competence. Documents should be completed and annotated.