**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2015**

Supply Chain Management

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

SVQ awards

Supply Chain Management Units verified:

G882 23, G883 24, G884 25, G885 25

General comments

Seven centres were verified in 2014–15. All were found to have Significant Strengths with all SQA requirements in place and to a high standard.

The centres continue to operate established and well-designed policies on selection and induction for all staff, and all staff in centres are fully qualified and have suitable competence and experience levels.

Staff have a good and comprehensive knowledge of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the Units specifications they are delivering. Many of them are members of organisations such as CIPS, CILT and MIFL. In addition, qualification delivery staff all have some form of appropriate experience usually in commerce or industry and in areas such as delivery, warehousing, purchasing and supply. All are experienced in terms of assessment and verification.

Standardisation meetings continue to take place regularly at all centres. The minutes from these meetings are used to inform the development of qualification delivery.

CPD records in various forms are retained by all centres.

Good-practice staff development programmes are well administered and attended at most centres, with most centres having compact teams enabling good communication.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

There were no major issues regarding centres' compliance with the standards.

Centre internal quality assurance teams have a good understanding of their roles and are in constant contact with candidates and other delivery team members.

Centres use a number of different processes during candidate induction to ensure that candidates are competent to follow the qualification and to accredit prior learning.

These include:

♦ Core Skills profiling of students prior to commencement

- lengthy telephone interviews to establish the candidate's current role and known competences and experience prior to starting the qualification
- induction and guidance on learning systems
- an induction process timetable that shows a clearly defined approach covering all aspects of the qualification
- various forms of training-needs analysis and carefully planned and structured training plans

Assessment is an integral part of course structure in all centres and is regularly reviewed.

In most cases an assessment schedule/training plan relating to the Units to be covered is drawn up through discussion between the candidate and assessor. The plan is then regularly monitored and can be redrawn if required. The schedule/training plan is included in the candidates' portfolios.

Assessment strategies in all centres are carried out in accordance with SQA Unit guidance.

The evidence sampled shows that candidates at all centres have fair access to assessment and that assessments are valid, reliable, equitable, fair and consistently judged.

In all centres, candidates have access to quality assessment and support materials, although in some centres these are now becoming dated and will require updating in the medium term.

Centres operate very efficient systems of up-front support and mentoring for candidates.

Most centres retain a communication log which records all communication between the assessor and candidate. This can include face-to-face meetings, SMS, e-mail, telephone and written contact.

Centres used the candidate portfolio process and in all cases the evidence included was duly signed-off by the appropriate signatories either from the candidate's workplace or the centre. Signatures were usually dated.

In all centres, feedback to candidates from assessors and internal verifiers, and to assessors from internal verifiers, was timeous and usually comprehensive. In all cases it followed the individual centre's policies.

Evidence Requirements

All centres are aware of the Evidence Requirements of the qualification and the evidence produced by candidates is directly linked to NOS.

The evidence examined continued to be of a high standard and matched the candidate's requirements by being centred on their work situation.

Most of the evidence examined, particularly copies of reports written by candidates for their employers, showed maturity and understanding and demonstrated competence and ability.

There was no evidence of impropriety.

Centres continue to use a variety of assessment methods, mainly product evidence, but also including witness statements, observation, professional discussion and e-questioning.

The majority of evidence is product evidence related to the candidate's own work situation.

Evidence also comes from both the employer and other parties who are providing the witness testimonies.

The evidence sampled was generally of a high standard and relevant to the particular Outcomes of the Units being delivered.

Administration of assessments

In all centres, assessment administration continues to operate within the current up to date SQA and NOS requirements for the qualification.

SQA assessment and retention procedures are built in to all centre policies.

Centres have allocated dedicated administrative staff, in some cases at manager level.

As in previous sessions, no discrepancies between numbers were found during verification.

Centres were operating various forms of qualification administration and support and these included:

♦ online systems to record assessment and verification
♦ a sophisticated learning system at one centre which is the hub of the centre and enables the centre and its candidates to communicate easily
♦ online systems using the Learning Assistant software
♦ various online portfolios including in one centre the extensive use of the OneFile system

Two centres have ISO 9001 accreditation, which in itself dictates that there will be no conflicts of interest in respect of roles and responsibilities within their administrative systems.

General feedback

All centres continue to deliver this qualification very well. There is a high standard of work from the candidates, quality assessment and internal verification, and sound system administration.

Candidates are highly motivated and continue to see the qualification both as an integral part of, and relevant to, their career development.

Centres are also successfully trying out various original methods of delivery for parts of the qualification. An example is the online software being operated by some centres. Other examples include the use of an e-learning 'toolbox' and a holistic approach based on an extended, detailed and in-depth work-based case study.

External Verifiers were very impressed with the work they saw, the high standard of delivery, the commitment of the delivery staff, and the enthusiasm of the candidates.

On all visits the External Verifiers were able to contact candidates and in all cases they spoke highly of their centre and the support being offered. In some cases this was in spite of there being a large distance between themselves and the centre.

All candidates were satisfied with the whole qualification experience.

It was clear in the External Verifiers' contact with candidates that they are pleased with the feedback they get on completing their Units and how their queries were promptly dealt with (by all centres).

Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were identified in various centres:

♦ At one centre the quality of the mapping of prior achievements against qualification requirements was of a very high quality.
♦ One centre uses a candidate report within the induction process called 'A day in my life'. The aim of which is to make centre staff aware of the candidate's situation and how this could affect their qualification progress.
♦ One centre uses high quality IT systems and retains candidate evidence electronically with double back-up off-site.
♦ The 'toolbox' learning materials, devised by one centre consist of various exemplars of evidence types and quality. This is well used by the candidates and is of a high quality.
♦ One centre uses an induction pack which is very comprehensive and includes a competence profiling Q&A tool which gives evidence of prior learning, both formal and informal.

- The distance and on-site password access to the OneFile management system used by one centre allows access by appropriate External Verifiers to all candidate evidence and centre systems.
- The use by a centre of the OneFile training management system which ensures that candidate evidence is retained electronically and backed-up every 15 minutes to cloud servers.
- The employer links developed by one of the centres, which are UK-wide and include some very prestigious blue-chip companies, resulting in exemplary learning materials and opportunities through employer visits, and also day seminars addressed by employers. There is employer input to the delivery of the award at most stages.
- The good practice of one centre where the assessors do not just discuss Units but carry out an exercise(s) independently and then discuss the various approaches by the different assessors.
- The use made at one centre of a completed training-needs analysis which is used to discuss with each candidate the optional Units available and what would be most suitable to their job.

Specific areas for improvement

Evidence which does not include an attribution within it to the candidate should have a note attached to indicate that it is either the candidate's own work or a cross-reference to show how it supports a particular evidence requirement. On some occasions this is present within an associated narrative, but an additional clarifying note would still be helpful.