**Scottish Vocational Qualifications and National Qualifications**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017**
# Construction and Civil Engineering Services

# Introduction

There was extensive qualification verification activity throughout 2016-2017 for qualifications within the Construction and Civil Engineering Services (CCES) verification group. A steady increase in demand for these qualifications in recent years has resulted in the need for quality assurance qualification verification.

Almost all qualification verification reports were positive and there was clear evidence that the assessment process is being delivered effectively at most centres. However, overall there has been a marked rise in identified recommendations across all qualification for Criterion 2.1 in relation to appropriate vocational continuing professional development (CPD) and for Criterion 2.4 with respect to ongoing reviews of assessment environments, equipment and reference, learning and assessment materials.

Qualifications verified within this group include

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| **GF1M 22** | SVQ in Construction Operations and Civil Engineering Services: Construction Operations (SCQF level 5) |
| **H71C 04** | Health and Safety in a Construction Environment (SCQF level 4) |
| **GF62 22** | SVQ in Innovative Modern Methods of Construction (Construction): Cold Formed Steel Frame (SCQF level 5) |
| **GF7T 22** | SVQ in Steelfixing Occupations (Construction) (SCQF level 5) |
| **GF66 22** | SVQ in Specialist Installation Occupations (Construction): Joint Sealant Application (SCQF Level 5) |
| **GF5K 22** | SVQ in Specialist Concrete Occupations (Construction): Concrete Drilling and Sawing (SCQF Level 5) |
| **GM3R 45** | NPA in Construction Operations (SCQF Level 5) |

# Category 2: Resources

**Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.**

Qualification verification reports for Construction and Civil Engineering qualifications confirmed that assessors and internal verifiers at all centres were competent, well qualified — both vocationally and professionally — and all had extensive industry experience. Staff at most centres undertook and recorded appropriate CPD activity to ensure they maintained occupational currency and complied fully with the requirements of the assessment strategy.

At more than a few centres, verifiers reported examples of good practice for comprehensive portfolio referencing matrices, which were an excellent resource for candidates and centre staff. However, at some centres qualification verifiers identified insufficient evidence of recorded vocational CPD activity to ensure compliance with assessment strategy requirements, and noted this as an area for development.

**Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.**

Most centres visited demonstrated effective ongoing processes and procedures for reviewing accommodation, assessment procedures, equipment, learning resources and assessment materials. These processes and procedures were being implemented effectively at most centres and visiting verifiers saw clear evidence of improvements and enhancements evolving from these reviews.

At one centre the qualification verifier commended the analysis undertaken by the assessor for the unit H71C 04: Health and Safety in a Construction Environment. Verifiers were able to glean a lot about learning and teaching approaches, and learning materials from their analysis of candidate responses to knowledge questions.

At another centre the assessor and internal verifier utilise a 'Safety Advisor' application to receive daily health and safety updates to their mobile phones from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), which they use to ensure learning materials are always current.

At some centres, however, qualification verifiers identified that ongoing reviews failed to cover all items highlighted within Criterion 2.4. More than a few reports highlighted that centres did not provide evidence of agreed access to construction sites through 'Site Selection Checklists'.

# Category 3: Candidate support

**Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.**

Verifiers noted that all centres have effective processes and procedures in place to allow candidates' development needs to be identified, and appropriate support provided.

In addition, in all centres each candidate's prior learning, experience, certification and knowledge is reviewed against unit and qualification requirements, and used to developed bespoke candidate assessment plans to reflect individual needs.

**Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.**

Candidates at almost all centres receive well-planned and effective feedback from their assessor on their course achievement and future assessment plans. Verifiers noted very effective feedback on completed assessments at all centres, with assessors confirming what has been achieved and, where necessary, identifying areas for future development or on-site observation. However, at some centres delivering Health and Safety in a Construction Environment, verifiers reported that there was limited feedback to candidates from knowledge assessments.

At one centre, the assessor provided one-to-one visit support for candidates from outlying areas who were preparing for the Health and Safety in a Construction Environment knowledge assessments.

## Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

**Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.**

In almost all centres, verifiers saw evidence of well-established assessment and verification processes and procedures. Qualification verifiers reported that assessors and internal verifiers at almost all centres implemented centre assessment and verification procedures effectively. Nevertheless, at one centre the qualification verifier noted that internal verification activity did not cover all three stages of internal verification. Qualification verification reports at more than few centres reported that live observation of assessments should be reinstated as part of internal verification activity. At a few centres, recommendations highlighted that there should be more focused feedback to assessors from internal verification activity.

**Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.**

Almost all centres continue to use SQA-devised assessment materials or centred-devised assessments effectively to carry out assessments for SVQ and NQ Construction and Civil Engineering Services qualifications. However, at a few centres verifiers recommended that practical checklists be improved so that they cover the full range outlined in the unit specification.

At one centre, the qualification verification report noted that performance levels were not always clearly stated on knowledge assessment papers, and that improving this would ensure that candidates know what they are required to do to achieve.

At some centres delivering the Health and Safety in a Construction Environment qualification, verifiers highlighted the need for coloured copies of knowledge question papers to be provided by centres, as some questions related to coloured on-site signage. One recommendation highlighted the need for an alternate question paper for the Health and Safety in a Construction Environment qualification.

**Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under SQA's required conditions.**

At almost all centres visited, verifiers established that assessment evidence and assessment records are signed and dated by the candidate, the assessor and — where appropriate — the internal verifier. Completed practical checklists, observation reports and photographic evidence further authenticates evidence from the workplace.

For the Health and Safety in a Construction Environment qualification, candidates provide evidence of their identity at most centres prior to undertaking online assessments. However, at

a few centres there were reports of missing signatures, names and dates on candidate assessment evidence and records; recommendations were made.

### Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.

Verifiers commended the accurate and consistent assessor judgements at all centres delivering Construction and Civil Engineering Services SVQs and NQs. Sampled candidate evidence, observation reports and knowledge evidence confirmed that candidates were meeting the requirements of units and were achieving national standards.

### Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.

Qualification verifiers reported that all centres continue to retain candidate evidence and assessment records in line with SQA requirements. In most cases centres' retention policies exceed SQA requirements.

All centres comply fully with Qualification Verification Visit Plan requirements in relation to qualification verification visit evidence sampling.

### Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

Almost all centres have clear policies and procedures in place for the dissemination of information from qualification verifiers to assessors and internal verifiers. Staff implement centre procedures effectively and there was good evidence of improvements and enhancements being taken to develop assessment practice. However, at a few centres, verifiers highlighted the need for a formalised approach to the dissemination of information from verifiers.

## Areas of good practice report by qualification verifiers

The following examples of good practice were reported during session 2016–17:

♦ comprehensive portfolio referencing
♦ analysis of candidate responses to knowledge questions to inform review
♦ use of a 'Safety Advisor' mobile app
♦ visiting one-to-one support for candidates from outlying areas

## Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2016–17. Discussion specifically highlighted the need to:

♦ improve the amount of evidence of recorded vocational CPD activity
♦ improve access arrangements through Site Selection Checklists

- ensure that ongoing reviews cover all items within the criterion
- provide feedback to candidates from knowledge assessments
- ensure internal verification activity covers all three stages of internal verification
- reinstate live observation of assessments by internal verifiers
- provide more focused feedback to assessors from internal verification activity
- ensure that practical checklists cover the full range of the unit specification
- clearly state performance levels on knowledge assessment papers
- provide coloured copies of knowledge question papers
- provide alternate question paper
- monitor the provision of signatures, names and dates on candidate assessment evidence and records to ensure authenticity
- adopt a formalised approach to the dissemination of information