SVQ

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2017
Supply Chain Management

Introduction

The following units from the SVQs in Supply Chain Management at SCQF levels 5–11 were subject to external verification.

DX59 04	Develop Operational Relationships within the Supply Chain
DX72 04	Schedule the Flow of Supplies in the Supply Chain
DX4V 04	Administer Contracts
DX4Y 04	Analyse the Performance of Suppliers
DX7E 04	Verify the Capability of Suppliers to Meet Supply Specifications
DX4W 04	Analyse Information on the Procurement of Supplies in the Supply Chain
DX6L 04	Place Orders with Suppliers
DX63 04	Monitor the Achievement of Project Tasks
DX61 04	Monitor and Progress the Delivery of Orders
DX56 04	Control Supplies at Storage Locations and Facilities
FE02 04	Communicate in a Business Environment
H8GY 04	Provide Leadership in Your Area of Responsibility
H8H4 04	Develop Understanding of Your Markets and Customers

All centres visited have run the qualification for a number of years — in one case over twelve years. At one centre the qualification is part of a Modern Apprenticeship.

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.

At all centres, external verifiers saw evidence to demonstrate that assessors and internal verifiers are occupationally competent and appropriately qualified, as are back-up assessors. The external verifiers viewed all centres' assessment and verification policies during the visits, and noted that all state the minimum qualifications required for both assessors and internal verifiers. In addition, assessors and internal verifiers' CVs — retained in various forms (electronic and hard copy) and regularly updated — were made available to view.

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

External verifiers saw various assessment and evidence gathering and storing systems, including Learning Assistant and One File, the latter now more user friendly following a recent upgrade. At all centres, the qualification delivery relies heavily on evidence obtained in the candidate's workplace — work which is then reviewed for assessment purposes. Those centres using Learning Assistant make excellent use of both the Evidence Gathering Form and the Contact Diary within the system. At all centres the allocated rooms are very well equipped, including up-to-date hardware and software. At one centre the candidates have the advantage of a brand new facility, including the 'My City' Virtual Learning Environment. In all centres learning materials are easily accessed and fully available to all candidates. The review frequency of accommodation, learning materials and equipment in centres varies between once per session and annually. A recent qualification review in one centre led to the development of a new assessment plan for Unit H8H4 04 Develop Understanding of your Markets and Customers. At all centres issues are dealt with through established procedures.

Category 3: Candidate support

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

All Centres include an induction process. At one centre this the form of an visit by the assessor to the candidate's place of employment, where their qualifications and previous experience are confirmed and their strengths and weaknesses identified by means of a competency-based questionnaire. Where particular weaknesses are identified candidates are guided towards appropriate materials on the centre's online Student Resource Centre. Any perceived weaknesses are also highlighted on the candidate's assessment plan. At another centre, candidates go through a skills assessment and an interview prior to starting the qualification, to help establish at what level the candidate should be studying. Prior achievements are taken into consideration and are used to determine the learning materials required by the candidate, and subsequent assessments are subject to review. At all centres throughout the course there is ongoing discussion with regard to a candidate's learning objectives.

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

All centres were clear in their main aim of ensuring that candidates' progress is in line with their assessment plans, and to this end assessors maintain regular contact with candidates. Contact can be via the telephone, e-mail, SmS or through the online portfolio systems, and all centres keep records of contact between assessor and candidates. The frequency of assessor visits varies from every four weeks at one centre, monthly face-to-face sessions dropping to once every two months when the candidate is settled in the course at another, to a higher frequency at other centres. Usually at each visit the assessor reviews the work produced by the candidate, discusses any discrepancies and then reviews the assessment plan with actions being agreed for review at the next visit. At the centre where the part of the qualification is delivered over a number of concurrent sessions, candidates can request to speak to the assessor after a delivery session. This is in addition to planned discussion time.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

At all centres, all information on candidate assessment and verification is contained within the e-portfolio system used and managed in line with each centre's assessment and verification policies. External verifiers confirmed that these were adhered to in all centres, and that standardisation is achieved through regular standardisation meetings. In addition, any issues are dealt with informally as required. At one of the centres, towards the end of the qualification, the Senior Programme Manager, in their quality assurance role, will speak informally to the candidates to seek their views on the delivery of the qualification. Thereafter the Senior Programme Manager meets with qualification delivery staff to review the programme and resolve any issues.

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

All centres use assessment instruments that mainly comprise product evidence, observation, personal reports, reflective accounts, and observation where appropriate. At all the centres the assessment instruments and methods used vary; however, external verifiers confirmed that all were valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair. This is evidenced at one centre as follows:

- evidence is obtained from the candidates' workplace and is therefore current (valid)
- the candidate's line manager has a monitoring role in line with the organisation's policies and procedures (reliable)
- evidence is work based (practicable)
- there are no barriers to any candidate obtaining the necessary evidence and the company is encouraged to provide access to any areas not covered in the candidate's normal job role (equitable)
- assessment plans are agreed with candidates in advance (fair)

…and at another centre as follows:

- the assessment methods used are professional discussions, product evidence, demonstration of competency (which is a combination of observation and a description of the process being carried out), witness testimony, and a reflective account (valid)
- all assessment is based on the National Occupational Standards and the decisions are based on these standards (reliable)
- assessments are all based on work carried out by the candidate and an assessment plan that is frequently reviewed and communicated to the candidate's employer (practicable)
- all candidates have the same opportunity to provide appropriate evidence; and all candidates have the same assessor and internal verifier (fair)

At all the centres there are no barriers to any candidate being able to provide appropriate evidence. In addition, assessment instruments and methods are reviewed after each qualification delivery to ensure that they are valid, reliable and practicable.

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

At all centres visited, external verifiers saw procedures in place whereby candidates sign a personal statement prior to starting the qualification indicating that the evidence submitted for assessment will be their own work. As most of the evidence is generated in the candidate's workplace, candidates' line managers sign witness testimonies to confirm that evidence produced is each candidate's own work. It is the usual practice at all the centres for the assessor to question both the line manager and the candidate on a one-on-one basis.

At one centre, where the qualification is delivered over concurrent sessions, the assessor and internal verifier look for any signs of collaboration in the delegate's written evidence, and following the assessment of the candidates' written evidence the assessor then discusses the evidence with the candidate on a one-on-one basis.

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

Visiting external verifiers saw examples of excellent standards of assessment and internal verification, along with samples of appropriate feedback from assessors to candidates, and from the internal verifiers to assessors. In one centre an assessor told a candidate that the evidence they had submitted did not meet the requirements of the assessment criteria, and suggested that this could be overcome were the candidate to provide a SWOT analysis to demonstrate their full understanding of requirements. In the same example the internal verifier suggested that the assessor should have guided the candidate through the process and should perhaps have started the process with a unit that was more appropriate to the candidate's level of experience and understanding. Subsequently, the candidate produced a very good SWOT analysis, which fully met the assessment criteria. In a different centre, an internal verifier had to inform a candidate that, although there was sufficient evidence and feedback to verify their work successfully, they had failed to index the evidence on their reflective account, making it more difficult to compare the evidence with the NOS. That said, the evidence provided was relevant and fairly assessed. At all centres, external verifiers were able to confirm that the assessment and internal verification judgements examined were consistent.

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

All centres retain candidate evidence on their online systems for five years after the qualification is archived. In all cases, the various online systems used retain evidence automatically. At all centres the retention of candidate evidence meets SQA requirements.

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

All centres use different methods to report the findings of any external verification to the appropriate personnel. At one centre the external verification report is circulated to all staff electronically and all reports discussed at the annual review meeting, with any required actions

highlighted to the relevant people. At another the external verifier report is discussed at a standardisation meeting, which is held every two months.

In another centre, the Quality Performance Department receives the external verifier's report, and then disseminates it to the Curriculum Head and Senior Lecturer. The Senior Lecturer then raises the report at a standardisation meeting and any requirements are acted upon. At one of the centres, it is the SQA coordinator who informs staff of the main points of the external verification report. Because the assessor is not based at the centre, this information is sent by e-mail and a conference call is arranged if necessary. The report is discussed more fully at the qualification review meeting.

Areas of good practice report by qualification verifiers

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

• candidates completing a competency-based questionnaire, to ensure the relevance of support offered to candidates provide candidates with appropriate signposts to materials on the online system, and ultimately enhance the candidate's learning and understanding of particular aspects of the qualification.

• the maintenance of comprehensive contact diaries, clearly outlining the overall progress of the candidate in a given unit

• making best use of the Evidence Generating Form within Learning Assistant, which makes it easier for both the assessor and internal verifier to access the evidence and, by including the actual evidence in the form, assist the assessor and internal verifier to relate the evidence the qualification's performance criteria

Specific areas for development

The following area for development was identified during session 2016–17:

• The level and clarity of feedback to candidates to enable them to implement any action plan within their work place.