**Scottish Vocational Qualifications**

# Qualification Verification Summary Report 2018
# Care

# Introduction

GH61 24    Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 9
GH60 23    Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7
GH5Y 22    Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6

GJ9V 24    SVQ 4 Care Services Leadership and Management at SCQF level 10
G8W8 24    SVQ 4 in Leadership and Management for Care Services at SCQF level 10

G7LN 22    SVQ 2 Health and Social Care

G7LP 23    SVQ 3 Health and Social Care (Adults)
G7LV 23    SVQ 3 Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

G7LR 24    SVQ 4 Health and Social Care (Adults)
G7LT 24    SVQ 4 Health and Social Care (Children and Young People)

# 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.

Staff at almost all centres met this criterion. All staff are appropriately professionally competent and qualified to deliver the awards in line with the assessment strategy requirements. Almost all also hold the relevant assessor/verifier qualifications, and where new assessors are working, their judgements and decisions are countersigned by qualified assessors. Evidence of competence and copies of certificates of qualifications were made available for external verifiers (EVs) to review. Some assessors and internal verifiers are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and the General Teaching Council. Continuing professional development (CPD) records were also available showing recent and relevant activity. CPD records are in the main good, and examples within reports have been highlighted as good practice.

Recommendations suggested last session included that when internal verifiers (IVs) are giving assessors written feedback, they could make reference to L&D9DI standards and use this as CPD. An example of this recommendation was seen in evidence. When IVs are observing assessors they are making reference to L&D9DI, which is good evidence that assessors are working within the current standards of assessment.

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

Almost all centres meet this criterion. In the reports reviewed this year, there is clear evidence that assessment environments, equipment, and reference and learning materials are reviewed regularly. This was identified in the majority of centres by the use of a version control system, such as the use of a footer. Almost all centres use a quality manual which is a working document. In many centres this folder is mapped onto the qualification verification criteria.

The policies and procedures are version controlled, and footers indicate when a document was last reviewed and the next review date.

Candidates are given a thorough induction. The material for this is excellent, and it uses the assessment cycle and explains the expectations of candidates and assessors.

An example of a judgement based on this criterion follows: 'The centre's quality manual is an excellent document. This is mapped into the qualification verification criteria and this made the visit straightforward'.

# Category 3: Candidate support

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

From a review of reports, it is clear that almost all centres deliver an induction process for candidates telling them what they need to do to complete their award. As part of a candidate's induction and/or application processes, prior achievement is taken into consideration, and any relevant evidence will be used in the candidate's current award. An example from a report states: 'Before candidates commence their award an initial assessment takes place and at this meeting candidates are encouraged to bring along any evidence from previous qualifications they have done and at this point it is used as recognition of prior learning if the assessor believes that it can contribute to the candidate's current award.' The application process and induction is where candidates' development needs are identified, and if any additional support needs are identified appropriate support is put in place.

An example of this comes from an EV report: 'During their first interview with the assessor it is noted if any special arrangements are necessary to aid the completion of their award. The assessor and candidate complete an assessment plan, and during induction the assessor talks them through what a vocational qualification is and how it can be achieved. They also use this time to look at prior learning and achievements, and how these can be used to complete their award. This is all recorded in the learning agreement and signed by the candidate and the assessor.'

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

All centres comply with this criterion. Where a centre uses an electronic system such as Learning Assistant, ProofPositive or another e-portfolio, there is a contact diary area which shows how much contact there has been between assessors, candidates and also verifiers. This is a good way to show compliance with this criterion.

In paper portfolios, assessment plans and records of contact in candidates' portfolios clearly showed scheduled and regular contact between the assessor and candidate. This contributed to the assessment of candidates, giving clear expectations of what to complete for the next meeting between the assessor and candidate.

Portfolios also include feedback and assessment decisions made by assessors.

Assessment planning is evidenced in various ways, for example mind-mapping assessment plans have been mentioned within EV reports, as have regular written assessment plans.

# Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Last session it was apparent that centres were using the verification system in various ways. A workshop was repeated to update customers about the SQA three stage approach to verification. The aim was to standardise the approach across centres. From qualification verification activity by EVs and subsequent reports, it is clear that centres have taken on board the principles, and it is reported that almost all centres have a clear three stage verification strategy/policy in place. The following is one example of this:

'The verification policy is an excellent document. It is very clear regarding roles and responsibilities of the verifier. The centre uses the SQA three stage approach to verification of pre-delivery, during delivery and post-delivery. It is also written to include VARCS (Valid, Authentic, Reliable, Current, Sufficient) principles, which is really good practice. It has a very clear sampling strategy which focuses on the assessment methods used by assessors.'

From the reports sampled this session, it is clear centres are using the assessment strategy well and in conjunction with the 'Guidance to Assessment' document. Candidates' evidence is of a good standard in almost all centres verified. The inclusion of the SCQF level within awards has changed the standard of written work produced by candidates, and one of the most frequent quotes from EVs has been 'that the work sampled meets the SCQF level of the award being sampled'.

In a very few centres there were some issues where EV sampling identified inaccurate assessment decisions. This may be down to the EV re-assessing and not sampling. This potential issue was discussed at our EV standardisation meeting in October 2018, where sampling was part of our agenda.

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

All centres use a range of evidence gathering methods that are appropriate and adhere to the assessment strategy. Candidates have produced highly detailed reflective accounts of practice, and the written standard continues to improve. It is clear from EV reports that the evidence sampled is valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

An area for continued scrutiny will be compliance with the recent GDPR legislation with regards to candidates' use of product evidence, and this may require discussion with stakeholders and regulatory bodies so we can identify the correct compliance of this assessment method within the GDPR guidelines.

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

Almost all centres met this criterion. In reports reviewed, candidates sign declaration forms and the centres have clear plagiarism and malpractice policies.

EVs noted in their reports that the assessment methods of observation, witness testimony and expert witness have all been used to authenticate that the work is the candidate's own.

The issue from last session of non-compliance with Harvard referencing within portfolios has been addressed. Centres will no longer be found non-compliant if this happens. Good practice will be identified if centres are assisting candidates to use referencing systems.

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

It is clear from sampling EV reports that most centres, assessors and verifiers are making accurate and consistent judgements and decisions in their assessment of candidates. This is confirmed by verification records and standardisation meeting minutes. It is also clear from EV reports that the evidence sampled was at the SCQF level of the awards, and that almost all evidence was to a high standard.

Evidence of a holistic approach to assessment planning continues to be seen by EVs. This is a result of a recent customer support event where holistic planning was a workshop topic, and it is good to see centres putting what they have learned from these workshops into practice.

Almost all centres hold standardisation meetings and EVs see candidate evidence being discussed at them, and decision logs being created. This clearly demonstrates that standardisation adds to the quality of assessment delivery. Consistent and accurate judgements and decisions are being made within these centres.

In a very few centres, EVs identified issues with inaccurate assessment decisions. After some conversation with the centre following the EV visit, this was seen as an issue with sampling and reassessment. This was addressed at our standardisation meeting in October 2018.

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

All centres comply with this criterion although they have the evidence for this in various different policies. Some centres retain the candidate evidence for longer than SQA requirements and this is down to other circumstances, eg funding issues or other organisational reasons.

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

All centres comply with this criterion. Evidence from reports reviewed showed that centres disseminate these reports to assessors and verifiers. Some centres also send reports to directors or chief executives to inform them of candidates' achievements.

From the evidence seen in EV reports it is clear that assessors and verifiers receive copies of the EV reports, and the minutes of standardisation meetings record reports being discussed.

There is also evidence of assessors and verifiers including these reports within their CPD records.

## Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2017–18:

♦ Assessors and verifiers have a clear commitment to supporting candidates in their awards. Team ethos is very clear in centres.

♦ The standard of candidates' written work continues to improve and this is clear in evidence sampled by EVs, who state that the work contained within portfolios is very good.

♦ Feedback from candidates clearly states that assessors go above and beyond their role of assessing. They mentor/coach/teach/counsel candidates, and this has been expressed by a large number of candidates who have been interviewed as part of the verification visits.

## Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2017–18:

♦ EV sampling of evidence within centres.

♦ Continue to monitor all aspects of delivery of assessment and verification within centres in order to provide the necessary support.

♦ Workshops at the next customer events in November 2018 will look at: observation, CPD, and making Care/Childcare an employment opportunity.