



Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2018

Childcare

Introduction

Awards sampled this session were:

- GH5X 24 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 9
- GH5W 23 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7
- GH5V 22 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 6
- G81Y 22 SVQ Children's Care Learning and Development Levels 2
- G81X 23 SVQ Children's Care Learning and Development Levels 3
- G81W 24 SVQ Children's Care Learning and Development Levels 4

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.

Almost all staff in centres are qualified and competent to assess and verify the awards being delivered, in line with the assessment strategy. This evidence is taken from external verification reports from last session that show this criterion is met across almost all centres.

There was evidence of CPD, appropriate to the area in which teams work. CPD records showed effective CPD, and attendance at SQA events was used as evidence for activity. One external verifier (EV) asked whether assessors whose only qualification is NNEB can maintain their assessor role. It was agreed at standardisation that if their CPD was robust enough this would be sufficient until the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) are more specific with regards to assessor occupational qualifications.

One example of good practice which continues from last session is the observation of the assessors by internal verifiers (IVs) referencing feedback to L&D9DI standards. This shows that assessors are currently operating within the current standards for assessment (L&D9DI)

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

Learning materials and resources are developed for all levels of the awards being delivered in centres. These allow candidates to link theory to practice and reflect on their own role and professional development. Policies and procedures continue to be reviewed regularly and almost all centres use a version control system such as the use of footers.

Almost all centres are compliant with this criterion. EV reports reviewed this year show clear evidence that assessment environments and equipment are reviewed continuously, keeping any learning material up to date and relevant to the awards being delivered. Centres have taken on board information from the workshops in November 2017 and are using SQA's preferred three-stage model of verification.

There is a difference between assessment environments in early years and in residential settings, but assessment practice is relevant to the specific setting. Within residential / secure accommodation the limited number of units to choose from has caused some difficulty. However, after a technical review of the awards over the summer months, SSSC agreed that these units will be added into the optional list, which will be beneficial to centres this session.

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 review of reports, it is clear that almost all centres deliver an induction process for candidates that explains what they need to do to complete their award. It is clear from EV feedback that the candidate induction process within centres covers areas such as quality assurance, the SCQF framework, levels of the awards being assessed, and roles and responsibilities of each person in the assessment process.

There is also evidence in reports of a detailed candidate induction checklist being completed by candidates. Where candidates require additional support, the use of professional discussion, questioning and observation has been used more extensively to support candidate requirements. One centre visited has created an excellent approach to supporting candidates with additional support requirements.

One report gave an example of RPL: 'The use of a separate form for claiming prior achievements. This gives candidates credit for recent courses / certificates they have completed'

Another example is: 'The readiness for assessment documentation is mapped to the SCQF level of the award being assessed. The SVQ team work very closely with the training facilitators within the organisation to ensure standardisation of training materials and approach to help identify any courses that the candidates have completed and where relevant can be mapped to their SVQ.'

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, eg Learning Assistant, there is a section called contact diary which clearly shows contact between assessor and candidate on a scheduled and regular basis. Almost all assessors meet regularly with the candidates, and this is recorded on the candidates' contact sheets. Feedback is also provided by assessors at various stages throughout the assessment cycle.

Planning for assessment is effective and is supporting candidates to revise their plans in order to achieve. Some of these plans are mind maps and some are written, and they are based on the individual requirements of the candidates.

Paper portfolios, assessment plans and other relevant records of contact were used to show scheduled and regular contact between the assessor and candidate. This contributed to the assessment of candidates by giving clear expectations of what to complete for the next meeting.

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 assessment and verification procedures are effective and meet SQA and assessment strategy requirements. Standardisation meeting minutes show discussion of units within the awards being delivered to ensure a standardised approach to assessment. Internal verification is robust and feedback to assessors is consistent and supportive.

In almost all centres the reports sampled this session show that centres are using the assessment strategy well, in conjunction with the Guidance to Assessment document. Candidates' evidence is of a good standard in almost all centres verified.

Centres have taken on board information from the workshops in November 2017 and are using the SQA preferred three-stage model of verification, and the implementation of this approach to verification is clearer.

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 assessment methods that are appropriate and adhere to the assessment strategy and to L&D9DI. Almost all centres follow VARCS principles when verifying assessor's / candidate's evidence.

One report states: 'The centre's internal verification has included feedback on assessment evidence being valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient which allows the IV to identify that these are being implemented across all assessors' / candidates' work. Standardisation meeting minutes viewed by EVs support this.'

It is clear from EVs' recording of their conversations with candidates that the candidates benefit from working alongside their assessors, which in turn allows the direct observations to be non-intrusive and more naturalistic.

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

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

From reports by EVs it is clear that candidates are introduced to the plagiarism malpractice and conflict of interest statements at their induction. The assessors and candidates sign and date each page of the evidence.

EVs have 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.

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

In almost all centres it was clear from the evidence sampled during the visit that the judgements by the assessors were consistent and accurate and were sufficient to meet the requirements of the standards. In all centres, standardisation meeting minutes show that all levels of the awards being delivered have a consistent approach to the assessment and verification process.

Statistical research shows that reports from EVs noted that they had sampled almost all units within all awards being delivered by centres.

EVs confirmed that in almost all centres candidate evidence sampled was clearly at the required SCQF level of the awards and met the standards being assessed on a consistent basis.

The assessment cycle is being followed within centres, with evidence of planning, giving feedback and making judgements/decisions. In almost all centres, standardisation meetings are being held and discussion of candidates' evidence is documented in minutes, as are agreements on what the centre expects from candidates and assessors.

Some of the comments from EV reports are as follows: 'There is a decision log maintained from standardisation meetings which are excellent documents in relation to consistency of judgements and decisions by assessors'.

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

All centres comply with this criterion. Most centres retain candidates' evidence for longer than SQA requirements, and this is down to other mitigating circumstances, eg funding issues or other organisational reasons, eg Skills Development Scotland.

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

All centres comply with this criterion. It is clear from EVs' reports that the EV reports are disseminated to various parties within centres. Assessors and verifiers receive these reports, which are discussed at standardisation meetings where the reports are used to inform practice.

Stakeholders such as Skills Development Scotland ask centres to send them copies of EV reports. Most centres send reports to directors or chief executives to inform them of candidates' achievements. This information is used at award ceremonies for candidates, where recognition of candidate's success is celebrated.

Most assessors and verifiers have included these reports within their CPD records.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

- ◆ Candidates' evidence is written to the SCQF level of awards being assessed against.
- ◆ Assessor support to candidates is excellent and this was very clear from interviews with candidates.
- ◆ Verification feedback being linked to VARCS principles has been excellent.

Specific areas for development

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

- ◆ Occupational competence for full-time assessors/verifiers may become an issue with regard to maintaining occupational currency of practice.
- ◆ Observation is being discussed at the next customer events and this will assist assessors and candidates.
- ◆ A new childminding qualification has been mapped into SVQ SSCYP and it will be useful to see what uptake there is of this.