



**Regulated Qualifications**

**Qualification Verification Summary Report 2019**

**Licensed Trade Qualifications**

Verification group: 425

## Introduction

### Regulated qualifications

GG7T 46	Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (SCPLH)
GG7N 46	Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (Refresher) (SCPLH-R)
GG7R 45	Scottish Certificate for the Safe Sale and Service of Alcohol (SCSSSA)

Where practicable, arrangements for verification visits had been organised throughout the year to observe the course delivery, examination and to complete a compliance check. Verification activity confirms that almost all centres involved in verification activity were compliant with visit plan requests for assessment records and documentation.

SQA allocated 41 centres for verification activity and 21 successful visits took place. A few centres informed the verification team that they had no current delivery scheduled or had ceased trading. A few allocations rolled into the next session due to timings of course delivery.

As anticipated, due to the 10-year renewal of personal licences, the main programme delivered this year was SCPLH-R, followed by SCPLH and then SCSSSA.

Group size varied. This was generally between 2 and 12. The training and delivery strategy specifies a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 18 for course delivery.

Compliance with the operational handbook is mandatory and group sizes outwith this range should be by exception and approved by SQA before course delivery.

## 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.**

In almost all centres, the verification activity highlighted that centres employ suitably qualified staff and the majority reflected relevant CPD in a suitable and accessible format.

Guidelines for CPD are included in the operational handbook for the qualification and the training and delivery strategy. Qualification verifiers recommended that staff keep their occupational expertise up-to-date.

The knowledge and enthusiasm of some tutors during course delivery supported candidate understanding.

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

SQA course materials were being used in most centres. Some centres had designed their own material, subject to SQA approval.

Some tutors used a variety of apps and props to enhance the learning experience. These provided positive support during course observation. Delivery methods and associated resources were reviewed through standardisation meetings and discussion with centre staff.

Site selection checklists were made available during some verification visits this session. Each centre delivered the course on premises appropriate to their location and group size. Tutors often travelled to provide the course in locations away from their own centre.

## **Category 3: Candidate support**

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

The qualifications within this verification group support candidates attending a short programme of study. In almost all centres, candidates' development needs and prior achievements were considered as part of the admission process before the course started.

Some candidates highlighted that they had previously attended a course, but had not applied to the Licensing Board for a Personal Licence and their qualification had subsequently expired.

Some centres showed a comprehensive approach to selection and qualification choice. The information provided to candidates varied.

The operational handbook and SQA webpage for licensed trade qualifications provide guidelines on the operation of the courses and centres should frequently review their selection policy to ensure that candidates are enrolled on the programme of study that best meets their needs.

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

The qualifications within this verification group are delivered as a full-day, half-day or online session and the centre is only required to schedule contact in accordance with the requirements set out in the operational handbook for the award.

In almost all centres, there was evidence of the course delivery policy and the procedures to follow if a re-sit is required.

## **Category 4: Internal assessment and verification**

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

#### **Environment**

Almost all centres used their own onsite training rooms and carefully selected venues to host the delivery of training and examinations. Site selection checklists were made available during most verification visits.

Room size and layout for the examination was appropriate during all visits, however, during planning it became apparent that some centres were using inaccessible sites.

All assessment locations must comply with SQA regulations to ensure access for permitted individuals, including qualification verifiers for the purpose of approval and verification activity. Qualification verifiers highlighted the importance of ensuring that site selection checklists are available for all assessment sites to ensure compliance with the operational handbook. These should be reviewed in accordance with centre policy and any changes arising.

#### **Assessment material**

Almost all centres understand and follow the correct procedure for ordering qualification handbooks and ensuring a suitable timeframe for delivery to candidates. Some candidates had not received or gained access to a handbook in sufficient time. The importance of clear communication and instruction to candidates before attending a course was stressed. Some centres confirmed that they held a telephone, email or face-to-face discussion. Verifiers made recommendations to confirm course information and joining instructions when sending out the course handbook. This allows for a consistent approach and clarity for candidates attending a course.

Almost all centres followed the correct procedure for ordering exam papers using the webpage link. Some centres, however, failed to notify SQA of courses being run if they already held a small stock allocation of exam papers. Verifiers again highlighted the importance of ensuring that SQA is notified of all courses and exams using the online notification link:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66476.html>

#### **Exam conduct and instruction**

Centres must notify SQA if tutors will be invigilating the examination. This can be done when centres order their exam papers using the online system.

It is also important to reinforce the role of the invigilator and to ensure that the procedures outlined in the operational handbook are followed. Any misconduct or malpractice should be recorded on the appropriate form and submitted to SQA alongside the marker report.

Before the exam, tutors should give candidates an overview of the course, explain the procedures for the exam, and establish if candidates need any additional support. Establishing that a candidate has difficulty reading or understanding English during the exam can disrupt the

rest of the group and the invigilator. Incidents like these should be handled according to the instructions in the operational handbook and recorded on the marker's report.

Marker reports were completed for the majority of examinations, however, not all marker reports were submitted to SQA or sent in a timely manner.

### **Candidate identity checks**

A variety of methods were used to record the identity of candidates. Recommendations were made to some centres to ensure that the forms of ID provided by candidates comply with those detailed in the operational handbook. The forms of ID provided should be recorded against the candidate's name and the exam paper version they undertake.

### **Examination marking**

It was highlighted this session that some tutor invigilators were marking exam papers while other candidates were still completing the exam. Verifiers highlighted that this distracts the invigilator from their duties. If centres wish to mark papers while candidates are present, they must wait until all exam papers have been handed in as complete so that no candidate is disadvantaged by the presence of other candidates or disruption.

Sufficient time should be allocated to complete marking in a suitable environment without distraction.

### **Internal verification**

It was evident to visiting verifiers that past exam scripts had been cross-marked in almost all centres. Marked scripts were signed and dated in accordance with the operational handbook.

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

#### **Assessment instruments**

SQA-devised examinations are the only possible method of assessment for the awards. Nearly all centres operated the procedures for the paper-based question papers. One centre used the online Solar question papers.

Question papers have, in the majority of instances, been ordered through the correct channels on the SQA licensed trade qualifications webpage. Visiting verifiers highlighted the need to follow the correct procedures for the award to avoid delays in delivery.

Some centres are leaving the course notification and question paper ordering very late, in some instances, not allowing sufficient time for postage of papers to the registered address. Compliance with the procedures for notifying course dates and ordering question papers as detailed in the operational handbook is mandatory.

#### **Methods of delivery**

Programme delivery and assessment is regulated and is part of the visiting verification review. Verifiers confirmed a small number of centres were not structuring the course in an appropriate

manner, and potentially disadvantaging candidates by rushing through the course in a shortened space of time.

As part of verification activity, verifiers check that the course materials are suitable and structured to facilitate learning, are up-to-date with necessary legislative amendments, and meet the requirements of the operational handbook and training and delivery strategy. In most cases, these procedures have been followed. Group size has been raised again. Each group must have a sufficient number of candidates present, but verification activity highlighted that some one-to-one courses had occurred. Permission from SQA must be gained for any special assessment requirements such as one-to-one course delivery.

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

Qualification verifiers did not highlight any malpractice this session. Qualification verifiers will plan to review a sample of exam papers from the previous six months, as this is the retention period for these awards. Marker reports, incident and malpractice records should also be made available during verification visits.

Centres must provide suitable instruction for candidates to bring calculators, or provide them for use during the course and examination. The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited. Any candidate seen using a mobile phone should be reported on the malpractice form, as candidates may have accessed information to help answer questions in the exam.

There was no evidence that the centres verified had used readers or scribes or prompters, although it was apparent through discussion that this should have been available in some circumstances. Effective candidate joining instructions should help centres put appropriate systems in place.

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

SQA marking sheets have been used on almost all occasions. The security of the marking sheet was suitable and transportation between locations was confirmed to be adequate.

Internal verification took place at most centres and this varied according to centre policy. Some centres completed 100% internal verification and others sampled borderline pass/fails or randomly selected a sample for second marking purposes.

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

Almost all centres complied with SQA's requirements for retaining examination papers. It was apparent that some centres kept used exam papers for longer than the prescribed six-month period from the exam date.

Most centres kept copies of their exam paper control document, candidate ID checklists and marker reports. However, a small number of centres failed to present a suitable exam paper

control document to record papers received, used, in stock and destroyed. Centres must follow the instructions in the operational handbook about retention of examination papers and associated documentation.

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

Most of the larger centres provided evidence of standardisation meetings taking place to demonstrate discussion of course delivery, assessment, verification and any actions arising between staff. The minutes of meetings highlighted the key personnel involved and who was responsible for any actions arising.

It was clear that smaller centres might not hold standardisation meetings. Centres must continually reflect and review programme delivery as part of their SQA approval status and to meet the requirements listed in the operational handbook.



## **Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers**

The following good practice was reported during session 2018–19:

- ◆ It is encouraging to see that some tutors play an active role in licensing in their region, either as a forum member or by attending licensing board meetings.
- ◆ Some very good examples of course delivery by proactive and interactive tutors was apparent.
- ◆ The use and selection of industry information and props.
- ◆ Supportive conduct by centres when helping with candidate queries.

## **Specific areas for development**

The following areas for development were reported during session 2018–19:

- ◆ Centre staff are reminded that suitably documented CPD that demonstrates the updating of industry knowledge is required and is part of the operational handbook conditions.
- ◆ Ensuring that all evidence detailed on the visit plan is made available for verifiers during their visit, whether they are attending a course and exam or undertaking a compliance check.
- ◆ The exam paper version should be clearly identifiable against each candidate. This is particularly important to ensure that any future re-sit does not take place on the same version.
- ◆ Marker reports must be sent to SQA in a timely manner following each course delivery or exam.
- ◆ Invigilators should not mark exam papers while the exam is still taking place.
- ◆ Mobile phones must be switched off during the exam.
- ◆ Exam paper inventories should be completed to show current stock (used and unused), orders and destruction.