



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications, National and Higher National Units  
Qualification Verification Summary Report 2019  
Animal Care**

**Verification group: 154**

## **Introduction**

There were seven events carried out in this verification group across SVQ, National Units and Higher National Units (both visiting and graded unit activity).

### **SVQ activity**

GL1P 22 SVQ 2 Animal Care at SCQF level 5  
GL1R 23 SVQ 3 Animal Care at SCQF level 6 (current)  
G9M1 23 SVQ 3 Animal Care at SCQF level 6 (lapsing)

### **National Units sampled**

F6SY 10 Breed Identification  
HY0M 46 Vet Terminology  
HG89 44 Anatomy and Physiology  
F7GC 12 Animal Survival and Behaviour  
F6SJ 11 Animal Care: Small Animal Feeding  
F6T2 11 Animal Care: Safe Working Practices  
F6SL 11 Animal Care: Anatomy and Physiology of Mammals  
F6SM 11 Animal Care: Accommodation and Handling  
FV5K 11 Horse Care: Safe Horse Handling  
FV73 11 Horse Care: Horse Health: An Introduction  
FV9P 11 Horse Care: Horse Fitting  
FV9Y 12 Horse Care: Horse Health  
DV0C 10 Health Care for Small Animals: an Introduction  
DV0D 10 Feeding and Watering Small Animals: an Introduction  
F6SV 11 Animal Care: Farm Livestock

### **Higher National Units sampled**

F3TV 35 Animals in Society  
F3V9 34 Small Animal Breeding  
F3TX 34 Animal Welfare  
DJ0M 34 Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation  
F4CC 34 Animal Care: Graded Unit 1

## **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.**

For all of the qualification verification (QV) activity for SVQ provision carried out over the session 2018–19, it was found that assessors and internal verifiers were qualified and occupationally competent to assess and verify the awards being delivered, in line with the assessment strategy. CPD records were up to date and could demonstrate currency and competency in line with the Lantra assessment strategy for all three group awards.

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

All centres were compliant with this criterion. Reports showed that all centres had an effective review of the assessment environment, as documented at regular team meetings. It was also evident across all qualification blocks that centre staff discuss learner progress, and have appropriate animal care facilities, equipment and assessment materials. This was also confirmed through discussion with staff and by touring the centre's facilities. Where external satellite locations are used, these are visited by centre staff on a regular basis and an initial visit takes place to identify their suitability. Where staff deliver across different campuses there was evidence that opportunities are available for staff to share information on assessment environments, equipment, and resources on shared IT systems. Planned standardisation meetings also facilitate this process.

## **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 were compliant with this criterion. All centres had in place an appropriate recognition of prior learning (RPL) policy. There was no evidence of this being applied in the centres visited during this session. As the G9M1 23 award (SVQ) is part of the authorisation process for inspectors, candidates are required to complete it and RPL rarely applies.

All centres had an educational learning support (ELS) policy in place. There was evidence of candidates being assessed at the beginning of courses, receiving ELS and reasonable adjustments being appropriately implemented by centres for these candidates. This was confirmed through reviewing ELS plans and discussion with candidates.

In some centres candidates had learning plans and a learning support strategy is in place using drop-in sessions to support candidates who have particular development needs.

### **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 compliant with this criterion. In all centres candidates had regular contact with assessor(s) either by face to face meetings, using electronic methods or tutorial support. This was supported by using appropriate recording mechanisms. These methods allow candidates to review progress and assessment plans appropriately. There was evidence that, in most centres, candidates can contact assessors outside the scheduled contact slot.

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

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

Most centres were compliant in this criterion. Most centres had a comprehensive internal verification policy, and the units sampled during external verification activity had been subject to recent internal verification. For the SVQ provision, although the internal verification policy was more aligned to the delivery of 'in centre' qualifications, the internal verifier had adapted the paperwork to create more user-friendly feedback for the assessors in the workplace. In most centres, assessments had been sampled according to the centre's internal verification procedures for onsite candidates, remote candidates' assessors were checked through live observation and periodic second marking of their activity (remote assessors visit the centre's main site for standardisation activity).

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

All centres were compliant with this criterion. All centres had comprehensive assessment material and re-assessment material with appropriate marking schemes. There was evidence that standardised instruments were being used for both onsite and remote assessors which met the evidence requirements of unit specifications.

For the SVQ provision there was evidence of use of a standardised portfolio with banks of knowledge questions which supported standardisation in line with Lantra's assessment strategy. All assessment instruments had been prior verified and were appropriate for workplace delivery. Simulation was not used.

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

All centres were compliant with this criterion. All centres had in place a procedure for ensuring that assessment evidence is the candidate's own work which was put into practice by candidates having to sign a plagiarism statement/authenticity statement for open-book assessments. Turnitin anti-plagiarism software was also being used effectively in some centres for essay work. For closed-book assessments there was evidence of use of cover sheets, which candidates signed to verify their understanding of what constituted malpractice. Assessors and internal verifiers confirmed that assessment conditions required for closed-book assessments were applied appropriately.

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

Most centres were compliant with this criterion. Assessment evidence in most centres had been accurately and consistently judged, in line with marking guidance, and there was evidence of supportive written feedback for candidates who had to re-submit work.

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

All centres were compliant with this criterion. All centres retained candidate evidence in line with SQA's retention of evidence policy, with a number of centres retaining evidence beyond the minimum requirements.

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

All centres were compliant with this criterion. There was evidence in all centres that staff have access to feedback from qualification verifiers. In most centres the report is disseminated by the quality staff and shared electronically across campuses. The content is used to inform standardisation meetings and is discussed at appropriate levels in the centre.

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

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

- ◆ One centre allocated ‘achievement coaches’ for candidates who experience additional barriers to their progress. These coaches help candidates optimise their chances of overcoming such barriers by offering support beyond what is offered by the course tutor.
- ◆ All candidates are given a tracker of their assessments for the academic year at the beginning of the programme, which helps candidates to keep up to date with their own progress.
- ◆ All candidate evidence had been subject to internal verification, and the detailed feedback on each individual unit was of a high standard and very supportive for the assessors.
- ◆ In unit F6SJ 11 there was evidence of comprehensive and appropriate marking guidance in place for assessments for outcomes 1 and 2. This was being followed well by the large number of widely dispersed assessors, which supported consistent standards across the different sites.
- ◆ There was evidence that double marking and recording of discussions for the HN graded unit helped to ensure that a fair and consistent standard was being applied.
- ◆ All assessors and internal verifiers attended the QV visit feedback session as they were keen to engage in improvements to their assessment practice.

## **Specific areas for development**

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

- ◆ Assessors should consider how effective their assessment plan recording works and perhaps revise this to improve candidate updating of the plans. This would encourage better assessment planning by candidates to support their progress.
- ◆ Centres should review their planning of assessment to minimise end-loading for candidates.
- ◆ Adjust or adapt internal verification policy and associated procedures systematically to ensure that they meet the needs of SVQs and their assessment strategies.
- ◆ In practical assessment tasks such as handling of small animals, it would be useful to undertake ‘live observation internal verification’ of assessment. This would enhance standardisation across all assessors.
- ◆ Include work by remote candidates in internal verification samples to ensure that assessment is consistent across all assessors. This is particularly important for written knowledge instruments of assessment.
- ◆ Consider developing marking guidelines/exemplar answers to contribute to standardisation.
- ◆ For F3TV 35, centres should consider whether the use of an open-book assessment might be more appropriate as described/proposed in the unit specification (although not mandated).

- ◆ In the veterinary terminology unit, it is important that questions are aligned to veterinary terminology rather than human medical terminology and use the word 'vet' rather than 'doctor'.
- ◆ Consider the layout of written assessments, as these don't always give candidates enough space (or ask them to write on separate paper). Limiting line space for candidates to answer in may not be fully practicable for some candidates.
- ◆ In marking assessments that require remediation, it is recommended not to use the term 'fail' for SVQs but rather re-sit or re-submit to ensure that confidence of candidates who require remediation is not damaged.