



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2015
Construction Plant & Operations**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

SVQ awards

General comments

This year saw an overall increase in the number of verification visits undertaken by the team. Scottish visits were up on the previous year and there was also an increase in the number of centres in England and Wales. All verification visits resulted in positive outcomes.

In line with the previous year, centres reported that they were remaining positive that the upturn in the construction sector would continue to see an increase in the number of candidates being registered. This is also confirmed by the fact that there was an overall increase in the number of centres visited this year.

As with previous years, the evidence verified and the interviews conducted with centre staff over the reporting period confirmed that centres understand what is required from them with regards to interpretation of the national standards. Centres are ensuring that the quantity and quality of evidence gathered meets the levels required for the awards.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Verification reports are records of the interviews with assessors and verifiers during verification visits. The reports submitted throughout this reporting period clearly indicate that centres and their staff have a good working knowledge of the contents of the Unit specifications across all of the awards within the verification group. This is confirmed by the standard of primary and supporting evidence generated/gathered by the candidates and the assessors.

Centres continue to use a variety of centre-devised assessment instruments and checklists, which comply with the awarding body requirements.

Evidence Requirements

The assessment guidelines give examples of both primary and secondary evidence that is required for the awards. Centres generally follow what is required and this is confirmed in the standard of candidate portfolios presented for verification.

Administration of assessments

Discussions with centre staff during visits continue to reflect that not much has changed in the methodology that centres use to ensure that they programme visits for assessors to realise the best opportunities for the collection of evidence.

Centre administrators and assessors remain active in contacting employers and candidates alike to arrange site visits which correspond with live work activities which the candidates are undertaking. This maximises the evidence-gathering

opportunity and provides assessors with the best scenarios to make judgements on the competency of the candidates against the award specifications.

As in previous years, almost all assessment of candidates continues to be based on live work activity in real-time working environments.

The Experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPAP) route gives centres an alternative assessment route to assess candidates away from live sites. Candidates who for some reason or other do not have access to a live site (unemployment, lack of machinery on site etc) can get their assessments done, so lifting potential barriers to achievement.

Internal verifiers continue, where required, to provide constructive feedback to assessors, and verifiers confirm that assessors act upon the comments given to them.

General feedback

Feedback to candidates — Assessors in the plant mechanics qualifications continue to advise candidates to gather the appropriate supporting workplace evidence, and to get it endorsed by a supervisor or manager to support its authenticity. This procedure positively assists assessors by supporting his or her direct observations, so ensuring that all the evidence requirements for the awards are met in as short a time as possible.

For plant operations, assessors provide feedback to the candidates following the direct observations of their activities carried out in the workplace.

Feedback from candidates — Interviews with candidates conducted during this reporting period confirm that they are happy with the support they receive from all members of centre staff throughout their assessment process.

Access to assessment — As with previous internal assessment reports, no centre or assessor has reported any difficulty in gaining access to candidates who are in employment for the purpose of carrying out live assessments in the workplace.

Areas of good practice

The general areas of good practice commented on in previous reporting years have continued to be the same this year — indicating that centres are consistent in their approach to the assessment and verification process required. These areas are as follows:

- ◆ The use of good, comprehensive additional supporting evidence such as operator logbooks, timesheets, photographs/video of work processes, relevant course certification, site documents, job cards
- ◆ Good descriptive and detailed observation reports
- ◆ Positive candidate feedback records

- ◆ Good, comprehensive internal verification recording procedures

Particular areas of good practice where centres have continued to show forethought are:

- ◆ The continued use of centre-adapted job sheets which have been developed to bridge the gap where candidates do not complete industry-issued logbooks — these job sheets are issued to the candidates and some instances actually have specific tasks detailed on them for the candidates to complete and get countersigned by an approved person from the candidate's employer
- ◆ The use of candidate handbooks detailing the whole assessment process and supplying the candidate with contact details of assessors, verifiers etc so that the assessment process runs very smoothly
- ◆ The use of video evidence to support observation reports

Specific areas for improvement

The following are points where improvements can still be made by centres:

- ◆ Cross-referencing of evidence — Progress continues to be positive, however there is always room for improvement.
- ◆ Individual CPD records — Improvement continues in this area, an SQA-devised template for recording CPD has been offered to centres during visits. This will help improve the recording of the activities carried out.
- ◆ Observation reports — This continues to be an area where improvements can still be made. Centres are reminded that reports need to be prescriptive in the detail of the activities the candidate is being observed carrying out. This ensures the performance criteria are sufficiently covered for which the report is claiming to be evidence for.