



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Internal Assessment Report 2016
Workplace Core Skills: Numeracy**

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

Workplace-assessed units

F429 04 Numeracy SCQF level 3
F42A 04 Numeracy SCQF level 4
F42B 04 Numeracy SCQF level 5
F42C 04 Numeracy SCQF level 6

General comments

There were a total of 23 reports produced by five external verifiers. All reports indicated significant strengths.

It was clear from the reports that all the external verifiers were very experienced, professional and competent in their role. One external verifier was new to the role with SQA, but had extensive and varied experience verifying with other awarding bodies.

Most centres had a master file, either in paper or electronic format, containing information relating to the systems and procedures for the delivery and quality assurance of the award.

All assessors and internal verifiers were familiar with the systems in place to support the verification process.

All the reports suggested that candidates and assessors met on a regular basis to review progress and update training plans.

All centres had regular staff meetings to monitor and review candidate progress and to discuss standardisation.

All assessors and internal verifiers have an appropriate training qualification or, in a few cases, are working towards the qualification.

Internal verifiers were normally involved in the initial induction and training of assessors and in reviewing their progress. Internal verification of new assessors was generally a 100% sample, reducing to 50% or 25% once they had gained experience in assessing the award.

In most centres the quality assurance system was co-ordinated by the SQA centre contact with responsibility for the dissemination of information from SQA, staff induction and training, arranging CPD activities, co-ordination of internal and external verification events, and auditing the SQA processes.

Most centres were using the assessment support packs, but there was evidence of some contextualisation and the use of naturally occurring evidence.

Comprehensive CPD records were maintained for all assessors and internal verifiers.

Documentation was presented in a clear and concise form that assisted the external verification process.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification material

It was clear from the external verification reports that assessors and internal verifiers were familiar with the unit specifications and most were using a checklist to ensure that all the standards were explicitly met.

The assessment support packs were being used extensively to provide information on the method of assessment and the standard required.

The level and amount of evidence required was discussed at standardisation meetings.

Candidates were judged consistently and accurately against the award standards.

As was the case last year, most reports indicated that centre staff should try to include more evidence from naturally occurring activities and/or from evidence generated in vocational subjects to support achievement of the Numeracy units.

Evidence requirements

The unit specifications are quite clear that candidates have to show competence in a range of activities.

There is clear evidence from the reports that assessors discuss the evidence requirement with candidates. This gives candidates the opportunity to identify naturally occurring evidence from their workplace.

However, where no naturally occurring evidence was identified, the assessment support packs or locally developed packs were used to provide the required evidence. Most centres used the ASP material or developed discrete assessments based on the ASP material.

Most centres made use of a checklist to ensure that each aspect of the award was explicitly achieved.

Regular internal verification of the units ensured that the level and amount of evidence was agreed and standardised.

In all centres the assessment decisions of newly appointed assessors were subject to 100% internal verification.

Administration of assessments

Centres made full use of the information provided in the unit specifications and assessment support packs to ensure that assessments were at the correct level.

Regular standardisation meetings ensured that any new assessments are scrutinised by all staff and the level is agreed.

Candidates have individual learning plans, with agreed targets and review dates.

Where naturally occurring evidence was used, the assessor and candidate would identify the source. It would then be subject to internal verification and standardisation.

Methods of assessment were reported to be valid, reliable and practical.

Internal verification procedures were reviewed annually by most centres.

Internal verification procedures were reported as being robust and effective and feedback from internal verifiers was constructive and helpful.

General feedback

In general the feedback to centres was positive in terms of the quality procedures in place, the assessments produced and the decisions made by the assessors and internal verifiers.

In all centres, candidates had regular contact with assessors and were supported in planning their assessments.

The majority of centres used the assessment support packs, or had produced variations based on the packs but contextualised for a vocational area.

The evidence produced was judged accurately against the Core Skills Numeracy standards.

However, as was the case last year, most centres have been advised to make more use of naturally occurring evidence: this could involve cross-referencing the evidence produce in the SVQ vocational subjects with the requirements of the Numeracy unit in an effort to cut down on assessments and to highlight the relevance of numeracy in the vocational area.

Candidates should be encouraged to identify where evidence for the Numeracy units could be obtained.

Areas of good practice

- ◆ All reports commended centres for their effective organisation and on the quality of the documentation presented.

- ◆ All centres had quality master files, either in paper or electronic format, containing details of the quality policies and procedures.
- ◆ Most centres had an SQA master folder containing up-to-date unit specifications, learning and teaching materials or website references, assessments and re-assessments, marking schemes, checklists, candidate registration, internal verification forms and minutes of meetings.
- ◆ Most candidates had an individual learning plan and produced a portfolio of evidence. In many cases e-portfolios were produced.
- ◆ There was strong evidence of effective engagement between the assessors and candidates in planning learning and scheduling assessments.
- ◆ Regular staff meetings took place in all centres to discuss candidate progress, standardisation and CPD requirements and opportunities.
- ◆ In the majority of centres robust internal verification supported the assessment process and ensured that standards were being maintained.

Specific areas for improvement

- ◆ As mentioned in the general feedback section, centre staff should encourage candidates to identify naturally occurring evidence and should also identify activities in the vocational subjects that may be used to support the Core Skills Numeracy assessment.
- ◆ Although this recommendation was also made last year, there is little evidence to suggest that centres are prioritising this source of evidence.