



**National Qualifications 2019
Qualification Verification Summary Report
Skills for Work: Health Sector**

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

Skills for Work Courses

- ◆ Skills for Work: Health Sector at National 4 (C261 74)
- ◆ Skills for Work: Health Sector at National 5 (C261 75)

General comments

Skills for Work: Health Sector remains a popular choice for Scottish Schools looking to provide a defined progression route for candidates seeking employment or progression to higher level studies. Some centres, afforded automatic approval, required additional support and guidance to resolve isolated issues relating to the use of current specifications, SQA-devised assessment materials, evidence recording, and constructive feedback to candidates.

An increased appreciation of the advantages to candidates developing employability skills has contributed to the interest in these awards. Centres have linked with other agencies to augment the learning experiences of groups in developing the necessary skills for work. Together with team working, and peer review, candidates have the opportunity to develop transferable skills for the workplace.

Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

In general, centres demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of the related course documentation and were able to discuss fully the planning and implementation of the Skills for Work: Health Sector programmes. However, some centres required additional support with the implementation of the broad range of learning and teaching approaches that can be utilised. There appears to be a need to emphasise the opportunities for skills development and underpinning knowledge developed by learners and the progression routes available to all learners — registered and non-registered practitioners as well as support services.

Evidence requirements

All centres to date have used the SQA-devised assessments for these courses/units but individual delivery provides for the unique and very different implementation to meet the needs of all candidates, including those with additional support needs. Working within SQA recommendations and systems, centres are able to offer a candidate-centred approach to meet specific learning needs.

The majority of centres have a comprehensive system of recording for internal verification and standardisation meetings. Administration of assessments and evidence requirements, by and large, are appropriate for National 4 and 5 units.

Administration of assessments

For the most part, centres offered evidence of robust assessment procedures and internal verification. Feedback to candidates is generally supportive and positive in both written and oral delivery. Remediation sessions are provided when necessary and adequate preparation is offered to assist learning. The combination of practical, research, pictorial and written, motivates learners to participate.

Areas of good practice

Centres have developed impressive links with the local community including healthcare services and workforce; life sciences organisations; care homes; centres for pre-school children; and fitness centres. A variety of organisations relating to employment, career officers and NHS Recruitment, have contributed to the course, managed the practice preparation and participated in the simulated interview process and reflective practice. A broad range of activities, included in both National 4 and National 5 awards, provides a realistic insight into the various aspects of health sector provision and employment.

A number of centres have attempted to support each other by arranging information visits, for assessors and verifiers new to the qualification, and sharing of resources and innovative practice. Some assessors arranged for a standardisation visit with a local college delivering this award, while candidates met with lecturers and students within the Care department.

The inclusion of 'HeartStart', as part of the unit Physiology of the Cardiovascular System remains a popular add-on and some candidates have completed First Aid at SCQF level 6, to enhance the opportunities for employment and progression in education.

There is an emphasis on team-working activities including fundraising, peer evaluation and support. Candidates also support first year classes as part of the 'buddy' or mentor systems.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and other additional funding has been accessed to provide further support in the classroom for candidates with additional needs. Support material has been adapted, where applicable, to meet the needs of the candidates. The broad range of assessment opportunities allows individual learners to work at their own pace.

A few centres presented well prepared documentation consisting of teaching packs and assessment materials. Through discussion with the staff it was evident they had familiarised themselves with the overall aims of the course and the individual units.

The high quality of learning and teaching tools and materials was obvious in the majority of centres and a considerable amount of skills and effort had been applied to enhance the learning experience of the candidates. Digital resources provided the candidates with their own learning journeys and reviews helped to develop candidates' self-confidence and presentation skills. School science

technicians often provide input on health and safety (eg risk assessment and safe storage of dangerous or hazardous materials). Role play is another learning and teaching strategy employed to simulate health sector experiences and communication. Some classes also participated in the dissection of a heart while others engaged with individuals involved in the sports industry.

Specific areas for improvement

A number of centres still require to formalise the internal verification procedures to generate evidence that a robust system is in place. Master folders are enhanced by the inclusion of a delivery schedule and link into lesson planning for engaging and effective learning. The processes of planning, implementation and evaluation of the programme need to be available to external verifiers, if an accurate account is to be recorded.

Some centres would benefit from suggesting learners use a variety of formats for presentation of their investigations and findings — and then supporting them as necessary — eg PowerPoint presentations, or portfolio building, which will engage candidates and motivate them to learn. The use of media and news articles will also stimulate interest in current health sector issues.

The integration of assessments, where an opportunity presented, is encouraged; however, centres should be aware of the possibility of incomplete units in relation to irregular attendance patterns and Christmas leavers. Procedures for integration must be clear and understandable to all staff involved in the delivery, assessment and internal verification of the courses. Planned standardisation meetings will avoid confusion and ensure quality learning and experiences leading to motivation and achievement.

The internet continues to be the research engine of choice and often results in plagiarism. Centres should encourage candidates to use other forms of research, eg local provision for health sciences such as an optician, or the library. Information should be recorded in the candidate's own words. One-word responses are not acceptable, in either written or oral work, as candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of the topic in their answers to the related questions.

Planning for a visit or guest speaker is vital and should be recorded in the candidates' portfolios. Too often, centres report that participants are unresponsive to speakers or guides. Preparation and understanding of the activity are important and should include the connection of the course to health care provision, appropriate questions and effective communication with others. The inclusion of reflective practice following visits and guest speakers must also be included as reflective practice is essential in all areas of the health sector. A considerable amount of discussion is reported by centres, some candidate portfolios do not fully record the extent.

Once again, centres are advised to check the appropriate materials are downloaded from the relevant SQA website during the planning/standardisation period.