Higher National Qualifications — Professional Development Award

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2021

Dental Nursing

Verification group number: 97

Introduction

The Dental Nursing Professional Development Award consists of five mandatory units:

Dental Nursing: Principles of Infection Prevention and Control in the Dental Environment (H9RA 34)
Dental Nursing: Principles of Oral Health Assessment and Treatment Planning (H9R9 34)
Dental Radiography (H9R8 34)
Dental Nursing: Principles in the Management of Plaque Related Diseases (H9R7 34)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in 2020, no verification was carried out. SQA issued supplementary guidance to assist centres with delivery to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and government restrictions.

Centres were able to continue to deliver the four HN knowledge units which make up the PDA in Dental Nursing using the SQA SOLAR online platform, either by remote invigilation, or in the training centres. One centre had downloaded the PDA papers from the SQA secure site and was able to invigilate candidates in their training centre.

In agreement with the General Dental Council, the Dental Nursing Assessment (F6C7 34) was not required in June or December 2020 and satisfactory completion of the four HN PDA units was sufficient evidence to achieve the PDA. SQA was also able to provide additional SOLAR online papers for the four HN units.

Virtual visits were carried out by the dental verification team, and centres uploaded evidence to the SQA Evidence Hub.

All centres achieved high confidence ratings.

Category 2: Resources

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

The addition of extra additional online SOLAR papers for the PDA was welcomed by centres. The SQA SOLAR papers are pre-verified by SQA, and reports indicated effective reviews for the assessment environments.

Centres had arranged robust online invigilation and produced guidance for the staff and candidates. Some centres had been able to arrange for socially-distanced assessments where candidates were able to attend training premises to have either the SOLAR online assessments or the SQA secure site hard copy papers invigilated in person.

Remote invigilation was carried out via an online meeting appointment with the candidate where the invigilator was able to view the environment to check no resources were available and to observe the candidate during the assessment.

All centres had evidence of signed plagiarism statements for the candidates.

Category 3: Candidate support

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

Centres use a mixture of methods to assess candidate development needs and prior achievements. Individual learning plans are used in centres that deliver the Modern Apprenticeship. Examples were given where candidates were referred to an educational psychologist or had support from specialist units in colleges.

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

Candidates interviewed during virtual verification visits reported that they were very well supported and felt that they had received extra scheduled contact with their assessors during the period of lockdown.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Centres had updated their assessment and internal verification procedures to allow for the COVID-19 changes. There was good evidence of robust assessment and verification, particularly in the marking of the online SOLAR assessments where double marking and additional verification was carried out before the scripts were submitted. This process ensured accurate and consistent judgement.

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

All centres used either the SQA SOLAR (pre-verified) assessments or used the SQA PDA papers from the SQA secure site.

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

All assessments were carried out in invigilated environments, either via remote meetings or in the centres' training premises. Remote invigilation was carried out via an online meeting with the candidate where the invigilator was able to view the environment to check that no resources were available and to observe the candidate during the assessment.

All centres had evidence of signed plagiarism statements for the candidates.

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

There was evidence of first and second marking plus additional internal verification.

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

There was evidence that all centres were aware of SQA retention guidelines, and that they retain candidate evidence in line with SQA requirements. Almost all centres retain evidence beyond SQA guidelines.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2020–21:

♦ All centres had adapted particularly well to the change in learning to a blended approach. Candidates were well supported for online teaching sessions and assessments. They were well prepared for the final assessment — which did not take place, but with minimal notice.
♦ Teams adapted well to online teaching and assessment.

Specific areas for development

No specific areas for development were reported during session 2020–21.