



Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Qualification Verification Summary Report 2021
Business and Administration

Verification group: 397

Introduction

SVQ Business and Administration

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All centres had experienced difficulties during the current pandemic. All centres have adapted well to the challenging lockdown circumstances and have continued to support candidates throughout the past 12 months.

Despite these trying circumstances, all centres have continued to show good practice in the delivery of these awards.

There has been a growing increase in the use of e-portfolio platforms.

Foundation Apprenticeship

We only sampled a very few centres in relation to Foundation Apprenticeship (SVQ Units/Customised Units).

Centres, candidates and assessors had an extremely difficult time with lockdown. A major impact was school closures and the restricted contact with pupils (candidates). Even when schools went back, timetable changes impacted on candidate contact.

Despite all of this, centres and candidates have to be congratulated in the way they came up with inventive projects that allowed candidates to produce evidence for the Customised Units.

Schools and workplaces are now on a more settled footing and centres are looking forward to re-establishing their original delivery model.

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.

In all centres, assessors and internal verifiers had appropriate qualifications or were working towards the awards. Anyone working towards an assessor/verifier qualification was very well supported by a more experienced team member.

In all centres, up-to-date CPD records were being maintained. In almost all centres, CPD records contained not only the course/training undertaken but also the impact of the training on the assessment and verification process.

SQA provided Network Events (webinars) this year and these were welcomed by centres and were very well attended.

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

In all centres policies and procedures were reviewed regularly and updated as and when required. Centres carried out these reviews in different ways. The important point is that the reviews were taking place and evidence of this was available. The time taken at this stage helps to ensure that assessors/internal verifiers become very familiar with the candidate's workplace.

Almost all centres had been using a site selection checklist to ensure that each workplace was appropriate in relation to accommodation, equipment, reference and learning materials. This checklist also addresses all health and safety issues.

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 had an excellent induction process in place. Induction covered the following areas:

A comprehensive initial assessment of each candidate — involving a review of core skills, previous qualifications and the candidate's job role — the candidate's job role is a key factor in determining the units undertaken by the candidate.

Initial support offered by centres included:

- ◆ Introduction to the SVQ
- ◆ Introduction to MS Teams or other appropriate software
- ◆ Introduction to the variety of types of evidence
- ◆ Introduction to the e-portfolio platform (if used by centre)

Any development needs and special assessment needs were discussed at this time, and these are taken into account when planning assessment in terms of assessment methods used.

Induction is always a crucial stage. However, it was a very important stage this year to ensure candidates had a strong foundation and were well supported during these trying times.

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

In all centres there was good evidence of assessment planning.

Assessments were well planned and carried out, and good feedback was given. Assessment planning provides good support and feedback to candidates. Candidates were well prepared prior to assessment.

Lockdown put a strain on regular contact between assessor and candidate, however centres did very well to try and maintain regular contact with candidates. The use of Teams (or equivalent) has been invaluable.

Also the use of e-portfolio platforms helped to keep that contact going.

Face to face contact has taken on a different meaning this year with the use of Teams or equivalent. In addition candidates were encouraged to maintain contact with assessors via email and telephone.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

All centres had comprehensive policies covering assessment and internal verification. In all centres these policies were very well documented.

All centres had robust internal verification procedures. In the main, internal verification was carried out on a sampling basis. However, if there was a new assessor or an assessor working towards their assessor award or a new unit undertaken for the first time, sampling would then be 100%.

In all centres, internal verification was well documented and provided good feedback to both assessor and candidate.

In all centres regular standardisation meetings took place. These were minuted and detailed the discussions that had taken place.

These formal standardisation meetings were normally supported by many opportunities for informal discussions.

Some centres reported that these informal opportunities were limited under lockdown. Others were very inventive in creating opportunities for informal discussions

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

In almost all centres, candidate evidence was of a good quality and the evidence was appropriate to the level being assessed.

In almost all centres there was a good balance of performance evidence and supporting evidence.

Due to restrictions relating to lockdown there was less observation evidence — however some centres managed to collect observation evidence through Teams (or equivalent) or digital recordings.

Almost all centres used reflective accounts (storyboards) to place evidence in context and work product was embedded in the reflective account at appropriate points. Other centres, still using a reflective account, used the 'see evidence 1' approach. This is still very effective,

but this approach shows the work product as separate items rather than being embedded in the reflective account.

In almost all centres the reflective accounts also had the performance indicators and knowledge and understanding tracked. This was good signposting.

In almost all centres, there was good cross-referencing between optional units and between optional and mandatory units.

In almost all centres, questions were used to plug gaps in knowledge and understanding not evidenced by performance.

Only a few centres used professional discussion and witness testimony.

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

Plagiarism and malpractice were fully covered during the induction process.

Good assessment planning and robust internal verification procedures also helped to ensure authenticity.

The increased use of e-portfolios also helped as candidates use unique usernames and passwords. Candidates are made aware of the need to keep their password confidential.

In almost all centres, candidates sign a disclaimer to state that the content of the portfolio is their own work.

Assessors get to know the capabilities of their candidates through their regular contact, and feel they would quickly spot evidence submitted by a candidate that was not their own work. Any evidence not fitting into the pattern would be easily identified and investigated.

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

All centres tried hard to keep formal standardisation meetings in place — through Teams or equivalent software. Most centres reported that they missed the regular informal opportunities for standardisation. Some centres became very inventive in finding ways to keep informal discussions between staff ongoing on a regular basis.

All centres had a robust internal verification system in place. Centres adopted different sampling strategies to support assessors and candidates: 100% internal verification if this was the first time the award was being offered or if new inexperienced assessors were being used; dropping to 20 to 25% as the assessor team gain experience. These systems play a major part in ensuring the accurate and consistent judgement of assessment decisions.

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

In all centres staff were well aware of the retention requirements set by SQA.

Some centres retained candidate evidence in excess of SQA requirements.

The use of e-portfolio platforms supports the retention of evidence.

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

All centres have a procedure in place to disseminate the contents of the qualification verification report to all appropriate staff.

All relevant staff were given access to the QV report when it was received — it is discussed at a staff meeting and checked to ensure that there are no outstanding issues. Any actions that were agreed are monitored to ensure that they are completed by the agreed date.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

- ◆ The use of reflective accounts to place evidence in context plus work product embedded at appropriate points
- ◆ Up-to-date CPD records incorporating the impact of the CPD on the assessment process
- ◆ Very good candidate induction
- ◆ Good use of e-portfolio platforms
- ◆ Very good evidence of assessment planning
- ◆ Good signposting of evidence against performance indicators and knowledge and understanding
- ◆ Good candidate support
- ◆ The choice of units for each candidate reflected their work role, and this made it easier to gather evidence towards their SVQ. Centres are aware that the time taken at this stage will pay dividends later on with quality evidence submitted
- ◆ Consistency across the assessor teams
- ◆ Good use of Teams (or equivalent) to provide ongoing candidate support and provide standardisation opportunities for the assessor/verifier team

Specific areas for development

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