



**Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Qualification Verification Summary Report 2021**

Hairdressing

Verification group number: 62

Introduction

In session 2020–21, only Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Hairdressing and Barbering were sampled for external verification. They reflect the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and have been approved for delivery from 2015–20. Instruments of assessment have been developed by SQA for almost all units within the SVQ awards, providing a standardised approach to evidence recording across all approved centres. E-assessment (mandatory and non-mandatory) is accessed via SQA SOLAR.

The following awards/units were subject to external verification sampling in session 2020–21:

GK73 21 Hairdressing and Barbering (SCQF level 4)

GK74 22 Hairdressing (SCQF level 5)

GK76 23 Hairdressing (SCQF level 6)

GK75 22 Barbering (SCQF level 5)

GK7A 23 Barbering (SCQF level 6)

GK73 21 SVQ in Hairdressing and Barbering (SCQF level 4)

H9AX 04 Prepare for Hair Services and Maintain Work Areas

GK74 22 SVQ in Hairdressing (SCQF level 5)

H9CF 04 Shampoo, Condition and Treat the Hair and Scalp (in both Barbering and Hairdressing)

H9CC 04 Cut Hair using Basic Techniques

H9CA 04 Set and Dress Hair

H9C9 04 Style and Finish Hair

H9CD 04 Colour and Lighten Hair

H9CM 04 Fulfil Salon Reception Duties (in both Barbering and Hairdressing at SCQF level 5)

GK76 23 SVQ in Hairdressing (SCQF level 6)

H9CN 04 Creatively Style and Dress Hair

H9CT 04 Provide Client Consultation Services

H9CR 04 Creatively Colour and Lighten Hair

H9CP 04 Creatively Cut Hair using a Combination of Techniques

H9CW 04 Provide Creative Hair Extension Services

H9DC 04 Develop, Enhance and Evaluate your Creative Hairdressing Skills

H9DD 04 Provide Specialist Hair and Scalp Treatments

H9DA 04 Hair Colour Correction Services

H9CY 04 Contribute to the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Promotional Activities

GK75 22 SVQ in Barbering (SCQF level 5)

H9D3 04 Dry and Finish Men's Hair

H9D1 04 Cut Hair using Basic Barbering Techniques

H9D2 04 Cut Facial Hair to Shape using Basic Techniques

GK7A 23 SVQ in Barbering (SCQF level 6)

H9D9 04 Design and Create Patterns in Hair

H9D7 04 Design and Create a Range of Facial Hair Shapes

H9D8 04 Provide Shaving Services

H9CP 04 Creatively Cut Hair using a Combination of Barbering Techniques

The evidence sampled during virtual verification confirmed centres are maintaining standards, implementing qualifications as set by SQA, and meeting assessment strategy requirements. Where centres had areas identified as requiring improvement, actions were set and were implemented within agreed dates.

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.

Almost all centres delivering SVQs provided continuing professional development (CPD) records. This demonstrated commitment and innovation by staff as traditional 'hands on CPD' proved difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most staff engaged in virtual learning. This not only enabled upskilling but supported delivery to candidates via virtual learning and demonstrated staff were participating in a range of activities that met the requirements of the assessment strategies.

Good practice was identified in centres where staff completed a variety of CPD activities that ensured high quality learning. CPD records were detailed and subject specific.

One centre was recommended to standardise its CPD records to ensure a consistent approach.

Centre staff assessing or internally verifying SVQs must hold the SVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification and the relevant assessor/internal verifier qualifications. Almost all centres delivering SVQs provided evidence of relevant qualifications for staff involved in the assessment cycle.

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

All centres that were visited conducted initial and ongoing reviews in line with their centre policies and SQA requirements. Evidence sampled included reviews of the assessment environment, assessment cycle, assessment practice, and instruments of assessment. In almost all centres, records of reviews and scheduled reviews formed part of ongoing quality assurance. In some centres, there was a need to review technical units to include current creative techniques in line with the unit specifications.

This is consistent with previous years' feedback from candidates who had completed questionnaires to share their feedback on the delivery of the assessment. However, this year, most feedback was centred around virtual learning and the isolation felt by candidates due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

Many of the candidates are salon-based, undertaking their SVQ as Modern Apprentices. Those candidates were also on furlough, and therefore even more isolated, so feedback and support for learning and mental health wellbeing were important to support attainment.

The constructive feedback provided from candidates confirmed that the candidates' input is considered regarding the assessment environment, assessment cycle and verification.

This year, the review of assessment included scrutiny and clarity of mitigation to support candidates to achieve with government guidelines in place for close contact services (which included Hairdressing and Barbering).

Completed internal verification documentation confirmed that quality checks were made on assessment material following centre procedures. Pre-delivery internal verification had been carried out in almost all centres

Category 3: Candidate support

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

In almost all centres, development needs are identified during the induction process. Almost all centres conduct a formal interview and pre-entry assessment.

Ongoing support is identified in candidate assessment planning and, when required, support is given and recorded in personal development plans.

Assessment evidence sampled confirmed that learners receive feedback on their progress on an ongoing basis in the form of, for example, an assessment feedback sheet (written assessment) and client consultation records (observed performance).

Online appears to be the most common method used to maintain communication between learners and college staff, and between learners. Methods noted included Facebook, email, telephone, Blackboard, and Moodle.

In some centres, regular practical support sessions enable candidates to practise their skills in areas that need further development. The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown specifically has significantly impacted candidates who required an extension or deferral of attainment, resulting in a delay to progression because additional time was needed to support competence of skills.

Prior achievement is identified in all centres. Candidates who have completed SVQ 1 can progress to SVQ 2 and from SVQ 2 to SVQ 3.

In some centres, sufficient industry experience is measured against the requirements of the qualification, enabling adult learners with no previous qualifications access to the appropriate level of study.

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

In almost all centres, due to lockdown candidates have regular weekly virtual contact throughout the academic session with their assessor.

Formal reviews are recorded, and assessment plans are updated accordingly. Private training providers and colleges whose candidates are industry-based provided evidence of scheduled contact to support this criterion. Industry-based candidates have scheduled contact with their assessor every two to four weeks. This is specific to the individual candidate and their progress with almost all centres providing a wide range of online activity to support salon-based candidates on furlough to ensure they felt included and part of a wider community as isolation was extensive for those candidates.

Formal reviews are recorded within personal development plans and/or assessment plans, which track candidates' progress and are signed by the assessor, candidates and sometimes the employer, taking account of mitigation in place to support achievement. Some centres confirm that candidates are also able to contact their assessor through closed groups on social media platforms, enabling candidates to develop confidence while working towards their qualification.

In almost all centres, good practice was identified in the use of innovative online activities to support distance learning and assessment. This included the use of 'lives', recorded demonstrations, 'Tik Tok' and interactive learning with support from industry partners.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Internal verification documentation that was viewed confirmed that centre procedures and processes were being implemented.

In almost all centres, pre-delivery assessment checks and internal verification sampling had been carried out on the units identified in qualification verification visit plans. In some centres the electronic internal verification system used increased the efficiency of the quality process; and in some centres, detailed recorded feedback on the evidence sample captured feedback and feed forward.

Where inaccuracies or inconsistencies had been identified during internal verification sampling or cross-marking, these had been actioned or were in the process of being actioned.

At the time of writing, internal verification had not been carried out yet in a small number of centres because there was little or no evidence available due to learning and assessment being on hold as a result of lockdown or candidates on furlough.

Centres that had returned to face-to-face activity were following mitigation criteria to enable candidate attainment.

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

All centres delivering the SVQ awards are using the SQA devised instruments of assessment: candidate e-portfolio, consultation records, SQA SOLAR e-assessment and assessor-marked tasks — facilitating a standardised approach to gathering evidence.

E-assessment is accessed via SQA SOLAR and marked electronically. Assessor-marked assessment and consultation records are accessed via the SQA secure website. Almost all centres use paper consultation records and e-portfolios. E-portfolios are kept in central storage spaces.

In almost all centres, pre-delivery internal verification is supported by ongoing standardisation of the instruments of assessment. Most centres conduct verification across multiple sites and apply internal verification effectively to ensure that instruments of assessment are standardised and comply with the unit specifications. Almost all practical assessments are observed by the assessor in line with awarding body mitigation, which ensures the appropriate assessment methods and instruments of assessment are being applied in line with the unit specification and relevant assessment strategies.

Good practice was identified within a few centres. Their innovative online platforms were interactive and enabled the assessors and internal verifiers access to all candidate evidence across multiple sites, providing transparency and support through standardisation and internal verification.

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

Almost all centres require their candidates to sign the relevant instruments of assessment and candidate disclaimers to confirm that their work is their own and that it has been generated under SQA's required conditions (which included mitigation for session 2020–21).

This was further supported by the effective use of centre plagiarism documentation which gives guidance on what constitutes malpractice and what happens if malpractice is suspected and/or proven.

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

In almost all SVQs that were verified, assessors directly observe the candidates. The SVQ Habia statement on temporary adaptation/mitigation and supplementary guidance was being adhered to by centres. Assessors further validated this through recorded feedback, which is signed by the assessor.

Accurate and consistent assessment decisions against SQA requirements had been made in almost all centres where external verification activity took place. These decisions were supported by internal verification sampling, internal verification reports and standardisation.

Centres that use the SQA SOLAR electronic assessment platform provide candidates with a secure and unique password. Assessments are conducted under closed-book conditions. All practical assessments are monitored by the assessor through direct observations.

In some centres there was limited performance evidence available due to lockdown and little or no face-to-face assessment activity. However, consultation sheet assessment evidence was, in the main, completed well and met evidence requirements.

Internal verification sampling activity will ensure standards are maintained. This ensures candidates consistently meet evidence criteria when assessment commences in full in the coming months as Government restrictions lift and face-to-face delivery returns to normal levels.

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

In all instances the centre assessment retention policy identifies the procedures which should be followed. Information to inform the completion of visit plans was in most instances received timeously by external verifiers. Discussions with centre staff confirmed awareness of SQA retention guidelines which had been extended due to lockdown.

In all centres, evidence is retained beyond SQA requirements. Where centres had been notified that they had been selected for external verification, evidence had been retained in line with SQA evidence retention requirements.

Evidence identified in visits plans was either available prior to external verification visits on Evidence Hub or made available during the visits.

In most virtual visits the main challenges for verifiers and centres were the uploading and format of evidence requested.

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

In most centres, a member of the centre quality team and /or SQA co-ordinator was present during the virtual feedback session at the end of the visit. In all centres, subject assessor(s) and internal verifier(s) attend the feedback session where this is practicable. In all centres the verification report is received by the centre SQA co-ordinator and/or quality department who disseminates it to the appropriate staff. Good practice and recommendations are highlighted and required actions, where applicable, are recorded and actioned by the relevant member of staff within agreed timescales.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

- ◆ Innovative range of CPD activity undertaken by staff meeting assessment strategy requirements (2.1)
- ◆ Positive feedback from candidates supports the virtual assessment environment, assessment cycle and verification (2.4)
- ◆ Regular scheduled contact supports positive relationships between the assessor and the candidates supporting not only learning and assessment but candidate mental wellbeing through innovative virtual learning activities (3.3)
- ◆ Well-established internal verification procedures enable centres to monitor the assessment cycle effectively (4.2)
- ◆ The use of innovative technologies and use of social media to support virtual learning to enable assessors and internal verifiers the opportunity to implement quality assurance within the instruments of assessment across multiple sites (4.3)

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2020–21:

- ◆ Implement standardised CPD records to ensure compliance with the assessment strategy (2.1)
- ◆ Improve format of evidence made available for virtual verification to ensure it is clear and legible (4.3)
- ◆ Conduct detailed internal verification to ensure standardisation across all sites (4.2)