



Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022
Hairdressing

Verification group number: 62

Introduction

In academic session 2021–22, Hairdressing and Barbering qualifications were subject to 23 external verification virtual visits, including:

- ◆ 20 visits for Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)
- ◆ 2 visits for National Progression Award (NPA) in Cosmetology
- ◆ 1 visit for National Group Award (NCGA) in Hairdressing

The Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) in Hairdressing and Barbering reflected the National Occupational Standards (NOS) in session 2021–22 and have been approved for delivery from 2015–20. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the review, development and implementation of the new standards planned for 2021 were delayed until 2023. The assessment strategy and standards were approved in June 2022 by Skills Active and stakeholders for implementation in 2023.

Adaptation, mitigation and support guidance to the 2015–20 assessment strategy and standards was put in place temporarily in 2021 and 2022 until 30 June 2023.

Almost all 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) were accessed via SQA SOLAR.

For the NPA in Cosmetology and the NCGA in Hairdressing, almost all assessments used have been developed by SQA; where centres used centre devised instruments of assessment, they fully met SQA and qualification evidence requirements.

The following awards/units were subject to external verification sampling in session 2021–22:

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)
G8GX 44 Cosmetology (SCQF level 4)
G9K3 46 Hairdressing (SCQF level 6)

Confidence ratings of the 23 visits were as detailed below:

- ◆ 20 visits for SVQ — 17 'high confidence', 3 'reasonable confidence'
- ◆ 2 visits for NPA — 2 'high confidence'
- ◆ 1 visit for NCGA — 1 'high confidence'

Actions were identified in three centres where the overall outcome rating was 'reasonable confidence', relating to SQA quality criteria 2.1, 4.2 and 4.6. The identified actions were completed within agreed timescales: the required evidence was submitted by centres to

SQA for scrutiny. Centres completed evidence reports demonstrating compliance and all centre outcome ratings were updated to 'high confidence' following a review of the evidence.

In almost all centres where qualification verification activity took place in 2021–22 for the verification group Hairdressing, the evidence viewed against SQA quality criteria and confidence ratings indicated that standards were maintained and met assessment strategy requirements. From discussions with centre staff during visits and the comments and recommendations made within SQA quality criteria 4.4 and 4.6, it is evident that there is scope for improvement in implementing robust internal verification procedures; centres should also complete consultation records accurately and fully to demonstrate 'creativity' and give specific relevant aftercare and advice reflective of industry practice. Centres should also encourage learners to use technical terminology to demonstrate knowledge specifically at SCQF level 6 of the SVQ in Hairdressing qualification.

The following awards/units were subject to external verification sampling in academic session 2021–22:

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

G8GX 44 Cosmetology (SCQF level 4)

F0F6 10 Product Awareness

F0F7 10 Barbering Practical Skills

F0F9 10 Prepare and Assist in a Workplace Environment

F0FA 10 Hairdressing Practical Skills

F0F6 10 Product Awareness

F0FD 10 Health and Safety

G9K3 45 Hairdressing (SCQF level 6)

F78P 12 Hair Colouring and Lightening

F78R 12 Colour Correction

F78W 12 Styling for a Total Look

H2MR 12 Artistic Design in Hair Cutting and Styling Techniques

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.

The comments made in this section apply to SVQ only.

In all centres visited, assessors' and internal verifiers' qualifications met the requirements of the current assessment strategy for SVQ qualification.

Almost all centres provided continuing professional development (CPD) records. This demonstrated staff's commitment and innovation as traditional 'hands on' either in practice or virtually. Most staff engaged in a variety of CPD activity meeting the requirements of the assessment strategies.

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

Centre staff assessing or internally verifying SVQ must hold the SVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification and the relevant assessor/internal verifier qualifications. Only one centre delivering SVQ did not meet the requirements 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 conducted initial and ongoing reviews in line with their policies and SQA requirements. Evidence was sampled, which 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 was consistent with the previous year's feedback from candidates on the delivery of the assessment collected from satisfaction questionnaires. However, most feedback still centred around virtual learning undertaken due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, though there was acknowledgement of increasing face-to-face learning and reintroduction of clients.

Centres gathered feedback from candidates consistently and supported improvement to the assessment environment, assessment cycle and verification planning, confirming that they considered the candidates' input.

Government guidelines for close contact services and awarding body assessment mitigations continued to be a challenge for centres in 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. However, in a few centres, a more robust implementation of internal verification procedures is needed to make sure that feedback to assessors on judgements are standard, fair, and consistent, ensuring that candidate evidence produced fully meets qualification criteria.

In all centres, the learning and teaching material was accessible to staff either in paper format or via the centre's virtual learning environment (VLE) or shared drive. Almost all centres used SQA devised instruments of assessment where these were available.

Category 3: Candidate support

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

Almost all centres identified candidates' development needs and prior achievements during the selection, recruitment and induction process. Almost all centres conducted a formal interview and pre-entry assessment.

Centres identified ongoing support in candidate assessment planning and, when required, provided support and recorded it in personal development plans.

Online and face-to-face methods were used to maintain communication between learners and college staff, and between learners. Virtual methods included Facebook, email, telephone, Blackboard, and Moodle.

In some centres, additional practical support sessions enabled candidates to practise their skills in areas that they needed further development, or areas that were impacted significantly by COVID-19 restrictions.

Prior achievement was identified in all centres. Candidates who had completed SVQ 1 could progress to SVQ 2, and those who had completed SVQ 2 could progress to SVQ 3.

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

Additional support for learning, where required, was available via learning support teams. Personal Learning Plans, which detailed support requirements, were produced in almost all centres for learners. Centres made them available to all relevant staff, and reviewed and updated them as required.

Good practice identified included one centre's introduction of the 'Get Ready for College' programme to support and include candidates in learning prior to starting the course.

Some centres offered additional sessions to support practical skills development and build confidence.

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, candidates had regular weekly virtual contact with their assessor due to the COVID-19 lockdown throughout the academic session.

Centres recorded formal reviews and updated assessment plans accordingly. Private training providers and colleges with industry-based SVQ candidates provided evidence of scheduled contact to support this criterion. Industry-based SVQ candidates had scheduled contact with their assessor every two to four weeks, and this was specific to the individual candidate and their progress. Almost all centres set up a wide range of online activity to support salon-based candidates and make them feel included. Some centres confirmed that candidates were also able to contact their assessor through closed groups on social media platforms. This enabled candidates to develop confidence while working towards their qualification.

College-based candidates on NPA and NCGA qualifications had weekly timetabled guidance sessions, including group sessions and one-to-one sessions, throughout the academic year.

Assessment evidence sampled confirmed that learners received 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).

Good practice was identified in almost all centres in terms of using innovative online activities to support distance learning and assessment, including the use of live demonstrations, recorded demonstrations and Tik Tok to enable 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 confirmed that centre procedures and processes were 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 feedforward.

Any inaccuracy or inconsistency during internal verification sampling or cross marking had been actioned or were in the process of being actioned.

Internal verification had been ineffective in a small number of centres visited; two centres failed to identify that the assessment evidence produced did not meet the evidence requirements as detailed in the unit specification. In each of these centres, actions were identified during the external qualification verification activity: learners were re-assessed; assessment judgements were made on the re-assessments; and internal verification sampling was undertaken to confirm that assessors made accurate and consistent assessment decisions before the candidate evidence was submitted to SQA for scrutiny.

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 used 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 was accessed via SQA Solar and marked electronically. Assessor-marked assessment and consultation records were accessed via the SQA secure website. Almost all centres used paper consultation records and e-portfolios. E-portfolios were kept in central storage spaces.

For the NPA in Cosmetology and NCGA in Hairdressing, almost all assessments used were developed by SQA; where centre devised instruments of assessment had been used, they fully met SQA and qualification evidence requirements.

In almost all centres, pre-delivery internal verification was supported by ongoing standardisation of the instruments of assessment. Most centres conducted verification across multiple sites and the internal verification was applied effectively to ensure that instruments of assessment were standardised and complied with the unit specifications. Almost all practical assessments were observed by the assessor in line with SQA requirements, which ensured the application of appropriate assessment methods and

instruments of assessment was in line with the unit specification and relevant assessment strategies.

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

In one centre, candidates presented PowerPoint presentations of inspirational images and formative skills practice. Candidates undertaking the SVQ in Hairdressers and Barbers had their own Instagram page to showcase skills.

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

Almost all centres required candidates to sign the relevant instruments of assessment and candidate disclaimers; this ensured that their work was their own and generated under SQA's required conditions, which included mitigation extended to session 2021–22.

This was further supported by the effective use of centre plagiarism documentation, which gave guidance on what constituted malpractice and what would happen if malpractice was suspected and/or proven.

Almost all centres had a malpractice policy identifying what constituted malpractice and consequences if malpractice was suspected and/or proven.

All centres delivering SVQ awards used SQA Solar e-assessment to evidence essential knowledge and understanding criteria. E-assessment was carried out in closed-book conditions and required secure password issued by SQA for access. Performance practical tasks were carried out in a realistic working environment under direct assessor observation.

All centres gathered assessment evidence for NPA and NCGA awards as specified in the evidence requirements section of each unit specification, that is, open book, closed book, and direct assessor observation.

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

In all qualifications delivered, assessors directly observed the performance evidence in line with SQA requirements. This was recorded within the instruments of assessment. Assessors further validated this through signed recorded feedback.

Almost all centres where external verification activity took place made accurate and consistent assessment decisions against SQA requirements; this was supported by internal verification sampling, internal verification reports and standardisation.

Centres that used the SQA SOLAR e-assessment platform provided candidates with a secure and unique password. Assessments were conducted under closed-book conditions. All practical assessments were monitored by the assessor through direct observations.

Actions were identified in two centres. The assessment evidence produced did not fully meet the evidence requirements as detailed in the standards: consultation records were not completed fully or accurately. The units identified were H9CE 04 Advise and Consult with Clients and H9CF 04 Shampoo, Condition and Treat Hair under group award GK74 22; and H9CR 04 Creatively Colour and Lighten Hair, H9DA 04 Hair Colour Correction Services, H9CN 04 Creatively Style and Dress Hair, and H9CP 04 Creatively Cut Hair using a Combination of Techniques under group award GK76 23. The assessment evidence was not judged or marked in line with evidence requirements. There was insufficient internal verification feedback to assessors to ensure candidates amended evidence to meet qualification requirements.

Across all programmes, the standard of consultation completion varied and needed to be improved. In a few instances, consultation records barely met minimum requirement. Candidates should be encouraged and supported to complete consultation records accurately and fully before undertaking the summative assessment.

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

In all instances, the centre assessment retention policy identified the procedures which should be followed. In most instances, external verifiers received information on the completion of visit plans in time. Discussions with centre staff confirmed awareness of SQA retention guidelines, which had been extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In all centres, evidence was retained in line with or beyond SQA requirements.

Evidence identified in visit plans were either available in advance on the evidence hub or made available during external verification visits.

As in the last session, in most of the virtual visits, the main challenge for verifiers and centres was uploading the evidence requested in the appropriate format.

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/SQA co-ordinator was present during the virtual feedback session at the end of the visit. In all centres, subject assessors and internal verifiers attended the feedback session where practicable. In all centres, the verification report was received by the centre's SQA co-ordinator/quality department, who disseminated it to the appropriate staff. Good practice and recommendations were highlighted and required actions, where applicable, were recorded and actioned by the relevant member of staff within agreed timescales.

Minutes of team meetings confirmed that the outcome of external verification was discussed by all staff in team meetings to inform assessment practice. Staff had access to the centres' shared drives which held external verification reports and minutes of team meetings.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2021–2022:

- ◆ Staff undertook an innovative range of CPD activity, meeting assessment strategy requirements. (2.1)
- ◆ Positive feedback from candidates supported the virtual assessment environment, assessment cycle and verification. (2.4)
- ◆ Regular scheduled contact supported positive relationships between the assessor and the candidates; centres supported not only learning and assessment, but candidate mental wellbeing through innovative virtual learning activities. (3.3)
- ◆ Well-established internal verification procedures enabled centres to monitor the assessment cycle effectively. (4.2)
- ◆ The use of innovative technologies and social media to support virtual learning enabled assessors and internal verifiers to implement quality assurance within the instruments of assessment across multiple sites. (4.3)
- ◆ Centres provided additional practical sessions to support skills development to improve employability.
- ◆ Centres provided specific preparation to courses, such as 'Get Ready for College'.
- ◆ Instagram pages were set up for Hairdressing and Barbering candidates to showcase skills.
- ◆ Industry training was available for all programmes.

Specific areas for development

The following area for development was reported during session 2021–2022:

- ◆ Centres should improve the format of evidence made available for virtual verification to ensure that it is clear and legible. (4.3)
- ◆ Centres should conduct detailed internal verification to ensure standardisation across all sites. (4.2)
- ◆ Centres should complete consultation records fully and accurately against the evidence criteria in the candidate's portfolio. (4.6)