Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2021
Learning and Development

Verification group number: 242

Introduction

There were 20 allocations for the Learning and Development group awards in the 2021 session, with 14 visits completed and 6 visits not carried out for various reasons. The main reason for the remaining visits not being completed was the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of centres to progress through the awards. As a result, centres recorded as not running this session will be reviewed early in the 2022 session. All visits were carried out virtually, with evidence being reviewed by the external verifier via e-portfolio or SQA's Evidence Hub.

SVQ group awards

GA2C 24 SVQ Level 4 Learning and Development (SCQF level 9)
GA29 23 SVQ Level 3 Learning and Development (SCQF level 8)

General comments

There is a requirement for all qualified assessors and internal verifiers to demonstrate, through CPD, that they are working in line with the current national standards for assessment and internal verification and the relevant assessment strategies. In addition, all assessors and internal verifiers working with the SVQs in Learning and Development must show that they continue to meet the standards as set out in L&D10 Reflect On, Develop and Maintain Own Skills and Practice in Learning and Development.

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 were competent to assess and internally verify in line with the assessment strategy and almost all undertook the appropriate continuous professional development (CPD) to maintain current professional and occupational competence. In line with assessment strategy requirements, almost all centres clearly planned and recorded CPD in accordance with the Learning and Development 10 Unit (Reflect On, Develop and Maintain Own Skills and Practice in Learning and Development). In more than a few centres, the L&D 10 Unit had been completed as part of the team's CPD requirements. Although the CPD template (for planning and recording activity for assessors and internal verifiers of the L&D Awards) has been available on the secure website since late 2020, only some centres had adopted this method of planning and recording CPD. External verifiers took the opportunity to signpost this resource on the secure site when visiting centres that were unaware of the document.

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

Almost all centres visited have a process to review centre policy, procedures and learning materials provided to learners, recording all updates using a clear version control system. The systems verification audit, which has taken place in many centres over the last few years and over the last year virtually, has supported this being implemented effectively.

Site selection checklists were being completed as required, successfully monitoring risk and the assessment environments.

All centres delivering the Learning and Development awards, Levels 3 and 4, provided the relevant unit learner support packs, which are available on SQA's secure website.

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 all centres, candidates go through a careful selection process to ensure that they have the relevant skills and experience and that the prospective award is the relevant award and is suited to their working role. All candidates receive induction to their award and all are given the opportunity to discuss any prior achievements that they may have which, if appropriate, could be matched to the award that they are undertaking. Most centres have developed an 'induction checklist', clearly documenting that various key centre policies and procedures have been discussed and received. Initial assessment and/or planning agreements are completed with candidates, providing an opportunity to identify any specific development or additional needs. Assessment planning records are reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the award, enabling any change in circumstances to be considered.

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 there was evidence of clear and frequent candidate–assessor contact recorded, with clearly documented assessment planning, action plans, progress reviews, updated action planning, and clear and constructive feedback provided to candidates. In almost all centres, this was evidenced on e-portfolio via assessment planning documentation and/or contact diary. Alternatively, this was recorded on hard copy or by email exchange.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Almost all centres have a clear, three-stage internal verification procedure and clearly documented procedures for assessment and internal verification. Within these centres, there was evidence of procedures being implemented through completed assessment reports, internal verification (monitoring and sampling) planning, and internal verification reports. There was also evidence of relevant standardisation activities being carried out.

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

Evidence sampled for the awards met the valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair principles as they met all the requirements detailed within the evidence requirements within units and the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy. Assessment methods sampled included personal statement, observation, witness testimony and/or endorsing statements, work products, questioning, and professional discussion. Many centres have adopted the use of Skype or similar packages when working with candidates, and the increase in the online delivery of programmes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has provided greater flexibility in SVQ assessment processes.

Almost all centres had adopted the Evidence Tracker for the award thus ensuring that all performance, knowledge and evidence requirements were being met. Internal quality assurance processes within the centres ensured that quality assurance principles are being met, and standardisation activity ensures that there is accuracy and consistency in decisions made.

A few centres that had not adopted the Evidence Tracker were not clearly documenting the tracking of evidence requirements. A few centres that had adopted the e-portfolio required to review system requirements and 'build in' the evidence requirements in order to clearly track these electronically, alongside performance criteria and knowledge for the units. In a very few centres that were using e-portfolios with candidates, it was identified that they had recorded several methods of assessment under one evidence number. This had to be reviewed to ensure that all methods of assessment are clearly and accurately recorded in their own right, providing accurate tracking of individual pieces of evidence and enabling monitoring and sampling to be conducted effectively and in line with the L&D11 standard.

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

All centres have a documented malpractice policy which includes plagiarism. Centres cover the policy and relevant responsibilities at the point of induction with most centres recording that the information is received via the 'induction checklist'. All centres ensure that the evidence on which an assessment decision is made solely belongs to the candidate and this is by means of a candidate disclaimer being completed within a paper portfolio and an electronic signature where electronic portfolios are being used. Assessor observation and witness testimony is used by centres to ensure authentication of candidate evidence.

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

Almost all centres demonstrated accurate and consistent assessment judgements, ensuring the integrity of the qualifications. Almost all centres adopted the Evidence Trackers ensuring that all performance criteria, knowledge and evidence requirements were being met and clearly recorded. Where these were not being used, they were signposted to the SQA secure website and, where they were not recorded on e-portfolio, it was discussed that the system would be required to record and track evidence requirements, as well as performance and knowledge evidence. All centres provided evidence of internal verification processes being implemented with interim and summative sampling being carried out (in line with the CAMERA principles and the L&D11 standard). Standardisation activity demonstrated the consistent interpretation of standards and consistency and accuracy in making judgements.

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

All centres had guidance on retention of candidate evidence within their centre policies and procedures, reflecting the reviewed guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic. All centres complied with the SQA requirements to retain all evidence in line with reviewed guidance and all centres complied with the requirement to retain all candidate evidence from the point of initial contact by the external verifier until the date of the visit.

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

All centres provided appropriate evidence to demonstrate they had disseminated feedback from the qualification verification report to relevant assessors and internal verifiers. Methods reviewed within centres were via standardisation meetings, CPD events, team development days, learning portals and corporate management systems. All actions and recommendations were actioned and recorded in standardisation meetings and decision logs.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

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

♦ Good planning and recording of CPD activity within most centres, in line with the assessment strategy and L&D10 Unit requirements
♦ Excellent resources available to candidates on e-portfolios within some centres
♦ Evidence gathering form amended to evidence recording of 'evidence requirements' within the various assessment methods being presented by the candidate

Specific areas for development

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

♦ Some centres could more clearly record and plan CPD activity, using the template available in the L&D pages within the secure website
♦ Clarity of record of contact within e-portfolios
♦ Centres to ensure that evidence type is clearly recorded on an e-portfolio with each piece of evidence being noted as a distinct method and not grouped together. This would ensure effective sampling within both internal and external verification processes