



Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022

Workplace Core Skills: ICT

Verification group number: 341

Introduction

This report covers session 2021–22. During this period COVID-19 continued to cause disruption and centres had to use adapted processes and procedures to deliver Core Skills ICT units. We saw the innovative and effective use of technology to support the virtual and hybrid approaches that centres used. Although this has been a challenging and engaging period, this report demonstrates the quality of the delivery in centres as they continue to meet the standards required by SQA. The qualification verification activity in session 2021–22 indicated ‘high confidence’ across almost all qualifications and units sampled.

The units verified during session 2021–22 included:

F42D 04 Core Skills: Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 3)
F42E 04 Core Skills: Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 4)
F42F 04 Core Skills Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 5)
F42G 04 Core Skills Information and Communication Technology (SCQF level 6)

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.

All of the centres had a high confidence rating in this criterion, with all staff being qualified to assess and internally verify the Core Skills units. All staff within the current centres have experience in the use of information technology on a day-to-day basis. The qualification verifiers have commented on good practices within the centres regarding the continuous professional development of staff. The centres’ staff CPD records demonstrate ongoing learning of new technology to support the Core Skills ICT unit.

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

All qualification verifiers reported that all centres provided documented evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of the assessment environments; equipment; reference, learning and assessment materials. A few centres had contextualised their assessment materials for their candidates as part of their standardisation process. Qualification verifiers have indicated that they have viewed evidence supporting a high confidence rating in this criterion.

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 of the centres verified have a process and procedure in place to ensure that candidate needs and achievements are matched against the requirements of the award. All centres have an interview and selection procedure followed by an induction to the centre and the qualification. All qualification verifiers' reports demonstrate that centres are identifying candidates' development needs and prior achievements as well as providing support and guidance.

All centres use a questionnaire, or an initial assessment developed by the centre, to assist the selection process in order to ensure that the candidate is matched to the correct level of award. All centres identify candidates' development needs and prior achievements and match this information against the requirements of the award. A high confidence rating is indicated by the qualification verifiers in this area.

Qualification verifiers commented on an example of good practice in candidate support in terms of identification of needs, mental health awareness, and health and wellbeing.

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

Candidate feedback continues to confirm that the candidates are very positive about the contact with their centre and assessor. All centres demonstrate robust systems and procedures ensuring candidates are appropriately supported, for example: clear assessment scheduling, planning arrangements, regular meetings, blended learning opportunities combining face-to-face and/or virtual learning, email and telephone contact. Most centres have scheduled more frequent contact with their candidates using the virtual environment. Some centres have moved to virtual online learning, providing the opportunity for centres to be able to communicate with candidates on a day-to-day basis and as and when there is an identified need.

However, centres are reminded to schedule an appropriate time for support for candidates. Also, it is recommended that the guided learning hours for this qualification are considered when planning takes place.

Although feedback is positive from the candidates, qualification verifiers' reports have indicated that feedback to the candidates could be more constructive and less generic.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

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

Qualification verifier reports indicate that almost all centres have a robust internal verification system in place. This is demonstrated using documentation such as: sampling plans, minutes of standardisation meetings, and records of feedback to the assessor and the candidates. Most centres are well organised using sampling plans and attendance records for standardisation meetings. While internal verification was robust and fit for purpose in almost all centres, some centres need to be more robust where standardisation is concerned and activities should be more clearly related to the Core Skills units. It is important that all assessors/internal verifiers are involved in the standardisation process and most centres do ensure that this is the case. The qualification verifiers' reports have also indicated good practice in planning assessment and verification procedures.

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

The assessment methods used by almost all centres were valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair. It is important to emphasise that evidence for the Workplace Core Skills units should come for workplace tasks and naturally occurring evidence wherever possible. Where it is not possible to collect all of the evidence in this way, then tasks should be set that are contextualised to the appropriate vocational area, using SQA's assessment support packs for guidance. Qualification verifiers reported several good examples within the delivery of Modern Apprenticeships where assessors had identified naturally occurring opportunities for gathering Workplace Core Skills ICT evidence.

However, in a small number of centres, evidence for tasks 2, 3 and 4 was minimal and insufficient, therefore centres are reminded to be aware of the levelling within Core Skills ICT and the amount of evidence required for each task. Centres should refer to the SQA assessment support packs for guidance on appropriate tasks and evidence at each level.

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

Qualification verifier reports indicate that no evidence of malpractice was identified during virtual verification activities. Staff and candidates in all centres continued to maintain standards and to adhere to the requirements of the qualifications. All centres have in place appropriate malpractice procedures that help to ensure that the work is indeed that of the candidate. The qualification verifiers indicated that all centres have authenticated documentation. Examples include signed and dated induction checklists, disclaimer/statement, and direct observation of the candidates. All centres authenticated candidate evidence in line with SQA's required conditions using candidate disclaimers. The one-to-one relationship between the candidate and the assessor also helps to ensure the authenticity of any evidence provided.

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

High confidence ratings were recorded against almost all qualification verification activity in session 2021–22. Almost all centres accurately and consistently judged candidate work against SQA requirements. All centres have held standardisation meetings, almost all of these on a virtual platform, and provided standardisation minutes of the meetings.

Candidate evidence from a small number of centres did not meet the required standard and therefore had not been accurately and consistently judged against the SQA requirements.

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

Candidate evidence was retained by all centres in line with SQA revised requirements during session 2021–22. Qualification verification activities confirmed all centres were effective, retaining candidate assessment evidence in accordance with current SQA amended requirements and in response to qualification verification activities. All centres were aware of the changes to the retention of evidence by SQA.

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

All centres have managed to disseminate feedback using a variety of methods. Centres have engaged ICT and embraced the use of Zoom, MS Teams, and SharePoint to share qualification verifier reports and general information from SQA. All centres intended to hold team meetings, or standardisation meetings directly after receiving the qualification verifier report from SQA. All centres recorded the outcome of qualification verification activities and noted recommendations and actions where applicable, in order to address these directly.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ Centre support for candidates' health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Good practice in planning, assessment and verification procedures.
- ◆ Centres using an integrated approach to cross-reference naturally occurring evidence into Core Skills units.

Specific areas for development

The following areas for development were reported during session 2021–22:

- ◆ Centres are reminded to schedule an appropriate time for support for their candidates. It is recommended that the guided learning hours for this qualification are considered when planning takes place.
- ◆ Qualification verifiers have indicated that feedback to the candidates could be more constructive and less generic.

- ◆ Centres are encouraged to record the minutes of standardisation meetings with specific information relating to the Core Skills unit.
- ◆ Centres are also encouraged to look at Unit F42F 04 and to hold a standardisation meeting regarding the levelling and the amount of evidence that is required for this unit.