

Chief Verifier Report
Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools (NQF)
Including Support Work in Schools
2011 - 2012
All geographical areas

September 2012

REPORT FOR PUBLICATION

1 The qualifications and standards

- **Structure and content**

Good practice has been demonstrated by a number of centres in the following ways:

- a) In-depth training programmes being provided for candidates with a full range of materials;
- b) Well-designed handbooks to cover the induction process;
- c) Course completion target dates together with assessment planning during the induction process;
- d) Early use of observation and individualised education and action plans;
- e) Professional discussions to aid candidates who find writing written statements difficult, or to plug gaps when candidates have almost completed;
- f) Mentor support for both the candidates and the assessors;
- g) Support given to trainee assessors by their qualified mentors who are responsible for their development while working towards the EQA award.

Assessment Team:	<p>Findings:</p> <p>All the reports are clear and give full information relating to the centre and its assessment and verification team. Recommendations are also clear and relevant.</p>
Resources:	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Centres are generally well resourced both in terms of assessors and internal verifiers.</p> <p>Feedback from assessors to candidates is clearly recorded. All candidates are employed by the schools in which they are assessed. Resources are freely available as required to ensure progression. There is evidence of candidates using the Internet to research information and also for learning activities. Candidates are receiving on average one to two hours per week training over the course of the qualification run either by qualified assessors or internal verifiers.</p> <p>Risk assessments and health and safety inspections are carried out regularly. Ongoing monitoring of health and safety is carried out. Annual Health and Safety checks are carried out, especially with regards to electrical equipment and candidates are encouraged to conduct their own risk analysis of their workplace.</p>
Candidate Support:	<p>Findings:</p> <p>The majority of candidate inductions are detailed programmes which last for at least one to two days. Candidates are provided with extensive handbooks, usually during induction, which detail the course structure, assessment procedures, appeals procedure etc. Completion targets are agreed during induction and assessment planning is rigorous. The use of expert witness statements has proved advantageous especially to those candidates who work in Special Schools. Unit certification has been available to all candidates and a number of centres use their direct claims status to claim units when candidates have reached the halfway point. This is seen as motivational for the candidates to complete their full qualification.</p> <p>Candidates interviewed appear to be fully aware of their rights both in terms of understanding the programme and also their right to appeal against decisions they do not agree with. Initial assessments are used either at the induction stage or very soon after to determine the most appropriate optional units.</p>

<p>Assessment and Verification:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Assessment and internal verification is working well with the majority of centres having well developed assessment and internal verification policies and procedures in place. There is evidence of regular sampling taking place with evidence of feedback to assessors and candidates as required. Reviews are carried out either termly or twice a year to look at the overall assessment and verification practice and are documented.</p> <p>The majority of internal verifiers plan their assessment strategy once the candidates have been registered.</p> <p>The majority of centres use colour coding to show the progress of their candidates and where some electronic portfolios are used, this colour coding is an automatic process. In the main, internal verification is carried out three times per year, at the beginning, mid term and at the end. A wide coverage of assessment methods and assessment locations are used with internal verifiers accompanying assessors to see their candidates. The monitoring of trainee assessors and internal verifiers works well with designated countersignatories from the outset. The agreed timescales for achievement of the assessor and internal verifier qualifications are realistic and give the candidate sufficient time to gather the required evidence. Interviews with the trainees confirm that they are receiving sufficient support. Standardisation meetings are being used not only to standardise individual units, but also to standardise the completion of assessor documentation. Continuing professional development can be tracked, with assessors and verifiers keeping records of courses attended and training undertaken.</p>
<p>Management Systems and Records:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>In general, the assessment and verification team are very clear on the centre's aim and policies. Centre personnel roles are documented and clearly defined in the Centre's policies which are adhered to along with the assessment guidelines.</p> <p>Emphasis continues to be placed on basic skills, with candidates being given the opportunity to update their literacy and numeracy skills. Interviews with internal verifiers suggest that they are aware of their role, particularly in their monitoring of assessor practice. Reports suggest that all team members are given access to external verification reports and are also given the opportunity to discuss the findings of the visit at the next team meeting. Documentation forwarded to external verifiers prior to their visits contain sufficient information to allow the EVs to devise a sampling strategy and agree this with the centre in advance and, once in the centre, EVs are able to follow an audit trail.</p>

Assessment Summary:	Findings: EVs are supportive to their allocated centres answering queries when they occur. No queries relating to the standards have been raised. Recommendations are clear and designed to help the centres to move forward and improve. There have been a number of instances of good practice recorded.
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2 Sector Developments

The current standards are coming to a close and there are currently no active centres for the Support Work in Schools qualification.