



Chief Verifier Report

NVQs in Business and Administration
NQF and QCF Levels 1- 4
Schemes 06607, 05560, 04702-10

2012-2013

1 of 3 Chief Verifiers not geographically specific

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REPORT FOR PUBLICATION

1. The qualifications and standards

Assessment Team:	Findings: The nature of the delivery of these qualifications has changed with the majority delivered as part of the Apprenticeship Framework and not as stand alone qualifications. The assessment teams therefore are more often tutors as well and involved in other aspects of the framework. Due to the funding changes and emphasis numbers in many centres have reduced and the assessors actively assessing reduced in the same way. EQAs report that the numbers of assessors in most centres remains at a suitable level for the number of registrations. The number of assessors that remain on teams but are not currently assessing has increased in centres. It will not be until numbers increase that there will be a need to ensure that if assessors become active again that their CPD had been maintained and competence appropriate. For those active it is reported that CPD activity is good and well documented in most centres. Centres continue to prefer to have staff qualified for their assessing and IQA roles rather than the alternative route which has seen little take up. With continuing merging of centres and restructuring within centres teams can often be fluid and with many changes taking place. EQAs support centres in this area with advice and guidance to help ensure the quality of
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	<p>delivery is not adversely affected and regulations complied with.</p> <p>Few actions and sanctions have been identified by EQAs as necessary in the reporting year which indicates that overall the assessment teams are operating effectively.</p>
<p>Resources:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>EQAs report that centres have adequate resources for the qualifications. Assessment for these qualifications is usually in the workplace so the provision of resources has generally been in the form of assessors and IQAs.</p> <p>More recently the majority of registrations have been as part of the Apprenticeship Framework and there are more instances of centres finding work placements for the learners to provide the opportunities to obtain performance evidence. Whilst these are generally appropriate it is necessary to ensure that the learners have the opportunity both in time and work to demonstrate competence.</p> <p>Real Work Environments (RWE) are also being used and these are checked by EQAs. Whilst there is some increase in their use, the strict requirements in place, does lead most centres to go down the placement route or take on learners with employment.</p> <p>Electronic assessment is still showing signs of steady increase mainly through the use of e portfolios. EQAS report that generally they are used well. With continuing and growing budget restrictions other methods of electronic assessment are also emerging including video recordings and EQAs have provided advice on these. The use of voice recordings does seem to be resisted in some centres and by some staff and the benefits do appear to have been missed by many. EQAs still regularly encourage their use.</p> <p>Health and safety is reported to be well addressed by centres both in their premises, on workplace visits and placements.</p>
<p>Candidate Support:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>This area is rightly a focus of EQA enquiries at centres and the comments are good. Learners generally report high levels of support from the centres and assessors with regular meetings and access to the assessment teams outside of those formal assessment meetings. Inductions are undertaken and initial assessment conducted. These can be driven by eligibility for funding rather than the qualification and selection of optional units. The latter can be led by the centre particularly</p>

	<p>where work placements are involved rather than identified from the learner's actual work. EQAS do monitor this aspect.</p> <p>Whilst overall centres and assessors support learners well there are occasional instances where the learners are left to produce evidence with insufficient guidance from the assessors as to what is required and what constitutes good evidence.</p>
<p>Assessment and Verification:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>In general EQAs found that assessment is of a good standard and meets the requirements of the qualifications and regulations. This is reflected in the small amount of actions and sanctions that have been necessary in the last year. In addition the number of centres with DCS has increased for these qualifications with only one or two losing that status. This is a credit to centres who are delivering the qualification in challenging circumstances as part of taught and delivered programmes within the Apprenticeship framework or other funding regimes.</p> <p>The full range of assessment methods is being used and favourable comments are often made in relation to observations and the use of this method.</p> <p>The size of units in some cases remains a source of comments from centres as does the amount of knowledge that is covered particularly in comparison to other generic areas (Management, Customer Service). One example of large unit content is around sustainability (Unit 203) which the learner may not be able to influence or evidence if the organisation they are working in/for does not have policies or procedures in that area.</p> <p>In general terms EQAs report that centres undertake suitable IV sampling and related activities including observations of assessors, interviews with learners and standardisation. This is an area perhaps more affected by staff changes in centres and EQAs do monitor consistency and report that generally it has been handled well. Where this is not the case in a small number of specific occasions actions have been set or recommendations made by the EQA.</p>
<p>Management Systems and Records:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>The last year has continued to be quite difficult in many centres with budget restrictions leading to re structuring and often mergers and closures. Management often attend the visits and show support for their staff and an eagerness to show that they are working to maintain standards. Funding changes also mean that they have to re focus how and what they deliver.</p>

	<p>Registrations are often delayed due mainly to funding structures and budgets, however this is not really having an adverse affect on the assessment processes. Records in centres are generally good and there are no reports of any issues with centre records in the last year. One comment that was often made was that centres are not notifying OCR of staff changes but with so many going on it is perhaps understandable. This again did not affect performance and there were no issues reported where DCS was compromised.</p> <p>With the odd exception where incomplete or inaccurate information had been provided to the EQA before the visit most EQAs report that centres are well prepared for the visit and provide access to all information, portfolios, staff and learners that were requested.</p>
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<p>Assessment Summary:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Sampling is undertaken at visits and, as stated earlier, in most cases all request have been complied with. There remains a tendency for EQAs to sample greater numbers of DCS claims over those in progress but most exceed the minimum requirement and from feedback with EQAs it appears they are confident they sample sufficiently to gain a suitable picture of the activity in the centre. They will increase the sampling where they may have any concerns.</p>
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2. Sector Developments

<p>Business and Administration is a cross sector suite of qualifications and as such has no specific legislation or regulations that apply to it. Some units, mainly those imported, may have aspects that changes in legislation can affect but there are no such issues in the last year or expected in the near future.</p> <p>The last NQF qualifications have now closed for certification and the QCF versions have been extended for registrations until August 2014. These qualification are under review by Skills CfA following the Richard Review of Apprenticeships. The replacements are within a consultation phase at the time of writing this report and the impact of any changes as yet unknown. Centres will need to be able to prepare for the changes and be supported in doing so prior to them being open for registration.</p> <p>Funding is still focussing on apprenticeships and registrations reflect that with some 83% of registrations last year at the level 2 or 3 qualification that forms the competency based element of the framework.</p>
