

September 2013

REPORT FOR PUBLICATION

1. The qualifications and standards

<p>Assessment Team:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>This report is based on the finding from 53 External Verifier visits to 27 active centres. In the past year there were 338 candidate registrations and a total of 214 full qualifications awarded. In addition many centres offer only unit 8 of the level 3 certificate.</p> <p>Reports confirm that all centres have sufficient assessors and internal quality assurance staff to ensure access to assessment for all candidates. Assessors are usually highly qualified health and safety practitioners. EV's generally meet the majority of the centre assessment team at their visits and sample between 20% and 40% of portfolios. Where candidate numbers are in single figures there is usually 100% portfolio sampling. There were 64 candidate interviews conducted and in all cases candidates express their satisfaction of the support received from the centres. There were 33 recommendations made by EV's. A number of these relate to reviews of centre policies and procedures in light of changes to legislation.</p> <p>Visit reports confirm that assessment in our centres continues to be comprehensive and thorough, covering all forms of evidence presented by the candidates. Candidate evidence continues to be of a very high standard.</p>
<p>Resources:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>All centres have sufficient and suitable resources. These include detailed centre designed workbooks that offer information about the qualification, induction and evidence collection guidance. In addition centres provide</p>

	<p>access to professional journals and publications. Centres generally have training programmes and facilities available. Some centres offer on-line workshops and discussion groups for candidates who are in geographically remote areas. Reports confirm that there are no significant issues around centre resources.</p>
<p>Candidate Support:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>All centres offer an in-depth induction programme with some sort of skills or job analysis to ensure that candidates can provide suitable evidence. Induction usually includes evidence collection guidance and detailed assessment planning. EV's report that Centre records confirm that candidates have regular access to the assessment process. This is further confirmed by the candidates interviewed by the EV's. Centres also offer portfolio workshops and online support. The range of assessment methods is varied and suits candidate needs. There is use of holistic assessment, though centres tend to guide candidates through a unit by unit method of progress and achievement.</p>
<p>Assessment and Verification:</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Reports confirm that assessment and verification is working well in centres.</p> <p>There were two instances identified by EV visits where the quality of the assessment process had fallen below the required standard. Clear corrective action points were raised and implemented by the centres concerned and the sanctions subsequently lifted. No centre has had action points raised on consecutive EV visits.</p> <p>Assessment methods are varied with work product and case history being the prime source of evidence. Good use is made of professional discussion. EV's also report good use of detailed witness testimony. In some cases the EV has interviewed the witness to confirm the authenticity of the testimony. There is a lot of online support for candidates and most assessors make themselves available to their candidates at all reasonable times.</p> <p>Internal verification is ongoing in all centres and full detailed records of quality assurance activities are available in centres. Verification includes observation of the assessor working with candidates at various stages of the assessment process (induction, assessment planning, questioning, feedback etc).</p> <p>Standardisation activities tend to vary though all centres hold regular meetings at which assessment issues are raised. Where the assessment team consists of two</p>

	<p>people the standardisation tends to be off the cuff and informal.</p> <p>Many assessors are members of professional bodies and maintain their CPD through meetings and activities with the professional body.</p>
Management Systems and Records:	<p>Findings:</p> <p>Generally centres have good systems and procedures in place. Reports confirm that the assessment teams are aware of and implement centres policies and procedures.</p> <p>Reports confirm that management systems work well and provide a clear audit trail of the assessment process and allied centre activities such as CPD and candidate progress. Some centres have systems in place to identify and highlight where candidate progress stalls. In these cases there is a procedure for additional support where required.</p> <p>The two instances identified in the previous section also had action points raised with regard to management systems.</p>
Assessment Summary:	<p>Findings:</p> <p>All EV visit reports have been scrutinised and clarification sought where necessary.</p> <p>EV's are supportive of their centres offering guidance and answering queries as required. All the recommendations made by EV's to their centres were clear, relevant and doable. All were made in order to help the centre improve performance. EV's have highlighted good practice seen in centres and provided positive feedback to centres and individuals within the centres.</p>

2. Sector Developments

OCR will not accept any further candidate registrations after 31st December 2013. Current candidates will have sufficient time to complete their qualification before OCR withdraws certification. All centres are aware of this.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) continues to invite consultation with interested bodies and people when reviewing or updating existing regulations. Current examples include review of the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) Managing and working with asbestos and modernising explosives legislation. These consultations offer excellent CPD activity to assessors and verifiers.