SDS SQA Colleges and private trainers meeting for Work based Core Skills assessors - 30.08.19

30 August 2019

11:08

**Meeting Date:** 30/08/2019 11:00

**Location:** CDN, Airthrey Castle, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA

**Attendees:**

**College WB assessors:**

Monica McQuade- D&G college

Katherine Ellis- West Lothian College

Caris Spal- Borders college

Anne Walters- Inverness College

**Independent Training Providers**

Carol Massey- Bon accord Training

Elaine McCubbin- RT resources

Anne Crowe- NHS Scotland

John Cran- Oilean Training

**External Verifiers:**

Alan Deans- EV numeracy

Ann Ralph- EV numeracy

Jacquie Clark- EV ICT

**Agencies:**

Karen Murray- SDS

Julie Gray- SDS

Sandy Riddell- SQA Awarding Body

Purpose of Session:

The purpose of the session was:

* To develop a mutual understanding about any barriers to using naturally occurring evidence (All- SQA/providers/colleges/SDS/external verifiers)
* To share own approaches used to gather core skill evidence by work-based assessors (providers/colleges)
* To critique and suggest bespoke solutions for generating naturally occurring assessment evidence in the workplace (external verifiers/SQA core skill leads)
* To gather the high level anonymised learnings from the surgery session to share with the wider Modern Apprentice provider network (CDN/SQA/SDS)

The session was relating to the delivery of core skills, particularly numeracy and ICT for Health and Social care Modern Apprenticeship frameworks including early years and childcare frameworks.

# Notes

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| Agenda Item | Notes |
| Welcome and Introduction to session | KM provided a background to the genesis of the session which were:    The not uncommon finding in Education Scotland and SDS quality reviews that core skills are not being contextualised or delivered using naturally occurring workplace evidence or that apprentices do not value them  The asks of the short life working group of the College Development network's Essential Skills forum to consider how we can address challenges of core skill delivery in Work based learning/apprenticeships |
| Summary of asks for the day | Each of the group members set out their goals for the day:  Providers noted that they were keen to gain advice from External verifiers on how they could optimise the use of naturally occurring evidence  External Verifiers noted that they wanted to understand better the challenges and provide support where they could  Agencies noted that they were keen to identify how the workshop would support learning for the wider delivery of core skills in the workplace |
| General Questions | As a round table discussion we debated some of the pre-questions that had been submitted by providers/colleges.  **Do we have to complete work based core skill units or core skills; can the work place core skills be a mix between classroom generated and natural evidence?**  This generated a lot of debate because there are genuine challenges in generating all evidence for the workplace core skills units as "naturally occurring" in almost all job roles related to this framework area.  The SQA Accreditation owned core skill units have [guidance on what providers should do which can be found on their website.](https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/accreditationfiles/Quals/Guide_to_Assessing_Workplace_Core_Skills_2016.pdf) We would urge all assessors to read this. However- it is a large document, so to summarise: Plan and give consideration as to what tasks in the workplace might generate core skill evidence (which might be part of the SVQ)   * Use naturally occurring work placed evidence wherever you can for assessment tasks * Where naturally occurring evidence from the workplace cannot be used, consider contextualising evidence drawing the standards from [the SQA exemplar assessment packs.](https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Qualifications/Workplace_Core_Skills/Workplace_Core_Skills) This may, for example, be an industry based project or industry related task * Where the above two possibilities have been exhausted utilise the exemplar assessment for those parts of the unit standards not already covered. * Think about trying to create assessments that cover more than one core skill. For example, could create work-related project for ICT and numeracy for the elements that cannot be generated in the workplace? * BUT don't just head straight for the exemplar and use that for everything because it meets the standard   There was an ask of the group to consider if a bank of contextualised material could be provided. SR noted that SQA Awarding Body already have the [Ushare site](https://ushare.education/Ushare/Home) where providers can share materials. However, the agencies have taken an action to consider whether we can support more specific sharing for apprenticeship providers.    It was clear that these challenges about not being able to always generate evidence in the workplace and it being a potential barrier for achievement for a few should be raised with those involved in apprenticeship design and approval. SDS will alert the SAAB framework and standards Group to this issue.  **When do providers complete core skills? Do providers result during or after SVQ completion?**  This generated a short discussion and some of the group identified that they had tried different approaches but the most effective and appropriate way is to generate evidence as the apprentice proceeds through the SVQ. Some felt that it was a confidence matter when the generation was left to the end and that this was not an advisable approach.    **How do assessors confirm achievement/are clear that the core skill is at the right level for L3, L4 and 5 with naturally occurring evidence?**  As most subject assessors are not core skill experts there can be a level of anxiety as to whether a task meets the correct core skill level particularly for the use of naturally occurring evidence. The general feedback to the group for this was to plan well and compare the tasks that you have to exemplar tasks in the assessments on SQA Accreditation website. It might also be something that you seek feedback from a development visit from an awarding body such as SQA AB. If you seek a development visit from SQA or other AB, it is important that you are well prepared with clear questions and thoughts about what you intend to do so that you get the most out of the visit.  It was agreed that resorting to the use of the exemplar assessments should be last resort and only for the individual tasks where you have exhausted all possibilities including the use of, for example, industry contextualised projects. |
| Small group discussions with the External verifiers | The group moved into some smaller groups to discuss ICT and numeracy specifically with the External verifiers present. These were safe space conversations where assessors could table their own particular challenges and share solutions.  Questions discussed included:  Numeracy  How do providers generate work based evidence for numeracy (L4 and 5)? Can we go through some specific worked examples on this?  Can we go through sustained calculations?    ICT  For ICT L5 task 2- how complex do the non-routine tasks need to be? |
| Plenary and next steps | The group were asked what they would take away from the day's session:  Assessors' comments/actions included:   * Going back to share with colleagues and will do some standardisation and develop some materials to share * Really appreciated the clarification on the ICT complexity of task * Got some great ideas for numeracy contextualisation * Good idea to try and integrate where possible numeracy and ICT particularly when doing a project because lacking naturally occurring evidence. A research piece is a great plan * Got a great tip about creating marking guidelines for ICT   EV comments were:   * The session confirmed what found in practice that cannot always generate all evidence through natural situations for some sectors * There is a need to create more working groups and have development sessions on this * New providers/assessors need support on this activity * The outcomes of this session should be passed to group senior EVs for consideration     Agency comments:   * SDS will consider how it can support these asks going forward in association with SQA accreditation and awarding bodies * SQA AB- a reminder to all that the qualifications don't sit with the awarding bodies but with the regulator (SQA Accreditation) |

From <[*https://skillsdevelopmentscotland-my.sharepoint.com/personal/karen\_murray\_sds\_co\_uk/Documents/Staff%20and%20provider%20CPD%20stuff/Provider%20CPD/coreskill%20workshopAug19/Agenda%20for%20core%20skill%20surgery.docx*](https://skillsdevelopmentscotland-my.sharepoint.com/personal/karen_murray_sds_co_uk/Documents/Staff%20and%20provider%20CPD%20stuff/Provider%20CPD/coreskill%20workshopAug19/Agenda%20for%20core%20skill%20surgery.docx)>