

SAQA's verification of the Kha Ri Gude adult literacy campaign learner achievement

SAQA is engaged in a verification exercise of the Kha Ri Gude results that lead to the successful candidates being recorded as having obtained an ABET level 1 qualification on the National Learner Record Database (NLRD).

This verification is based upon the following:

- An examination of the curriculum and instructional materials (the mother tongue literacy manual and numeracy manuals, the English for everyone manual, the Learner Assessment Portfolio (LAP) and the respective teacher guides (undertaken in 2009 and due to be reviewed in 2011).
- A verification workshop at which a large sample of the completed LAPs were checked for the accuracy and integrity of the marking and for the consistency of the level of marks awarded.

On the basis of the above the results for programme years 2008, 2009 and 2010 were to be recorded on the NLRD.

The verification process now enters a further stage of refinement with two major foci:

- Site visits towards the end of the year's programme designed to check on the authenticity of the learner input into the LAPs.
- At the verification workshop to be held in early 2012 to verify that the marking accurately matches the criteria for marking developed by the Kha Ri Gude campaign, that is, verifying that the marks awarded accurately correspond to the actual level achieved by the learner).

The rationale for the site visits

- Kha Ri Gude has an excellent administrative and logistics system. It is nevertheless the reality that most classes in the campaign operate in relatively informal situations.
- Literacy campaigns have, as a generality, tended not to assess learner success. In using the LAPS supported by a rigorous verification programme Kha Ri Gude has developed a unique and promising approach to assessing and verifying learner success. It is an important development and demonstrating that this is indeed an elegant way forward would be a significant finding.

Purpose of the site visits

The site visits are intended to support and inform the overall process of moderation and verification. They are part of the progressive development of an appropriate quality assurance system for Kha Ri Gude.

In the first two years of moderation, various constraints meant that SAQA could only endorse the validity of the assessment of the portfolios themselves by overseeing the moderation of a large sample of the completed LAPs. Ideally, over time, SAQA should be

able to strengthen its confidence in the internal assessment, moderation and verification procedures of campaign. Checking its assumptions does, however, require some measure of independent verification.

Key questions for the site visits

In essence, the site visits involve three key verification questions:

1. Can one confirm the identity of the learners (using their ID or Kha Ri Gude number) who are real members of the class and who have been working on a LAP?
2. Is there a credible fit between their skills demonstrated in the LAP as compared to a brief independent test?
3. How good is the local internal quality assurance as demonstrated in the work of the voluntary educators in marking the LAP, and the supervisors who moderate them (and therefore evokes a subsidiary question on how insightful the educators are in judging the required levels of achievement as spelled out in the LAPs themselves in the form of useful marking criteria.

Some suggestions on a site visit process

1. All protocols must be observed in respect of liaison with the district and local Kha Ri Gude staff.
2. It is important to remember that we are not conducting a comprehensive evaluation of Kha Ri Gude neither is it an inspection. The centre of our concern is the validity of the results that SAQA aims to record on the NLRD.
3. The site visitor should adopt a stance of non-intrusive curiosity about the working of the learning site and an affirmative approach to educators and learners.
4. Much will be learnt from conversations, with gentle, unobtrusive probing.
5. The visit may well start with a group encounter in which the educator and learners talk to the visitor about the experience of Kha Ri Gude. How did they come to participate in the programme? What do they think about it? Do they recommend it to friends? What difference has it made to their lives? What were the best things they learnt?
6. It is essential that any group discussion is then followed by individual interviews with learners. Conversation with the individual learners should yield a clear judgement of the genuineness of the activities and achievements of the learning site.
7. Material required for the interviews includes a copy of the literacy and numeracy manuals, a copy of the learner's LAP, and some pre-prepared exercises sheets that are analogous to the ones the learners have completed in the LAP. In addition there should be a class list for the site.

Some possible questions to the individual learner

1. Gently request an identity check via the class list (which should have their ID number and or Kha Ri Gude number).
2. Ask if the programme is meeting their expectations so far – have they got as far as they wanted. Ask them to show you how far they have got in the manual so far and in their individual LAP.
3. Ask them to do a couple of exercises related to how far they have progressed in the manuals and LAP.
4. Depending on the degree of report, you may ask some additional questions such as:
 - a. Could you read anything before you started KRG? Please describe
 - b. Could you write anything before you started KRG? Please give examples
 - c. Could you count or calculate before you started KRG? Please describe
 - d. What were the most important things you learnt from KRG?
 - e. What can you do now that you couldn't do before?
 - f. What have you tried to read out of class?

Some possible questions to the educator

1. What did you find most satisfying about running the programme?
2. Tell me about the learners who made the most rewarding progress? What factors do you think helped to make them successful
3. Tell me about the more difficult challenges of work?
4. Do you think the learners are making independent progress in the portfolios or are they being helped too much by friends?

The exercises

These should be in a format similar to those in the LAP or a LAP from a different year. Various exercises should, at the very least, check the capability expected for the particular stage in the programme. These would include:

1. Write their name, ID number and address.
2. Write the date and (approximate) time.
3. Write the names of two best friends.
4. Make a list of three things they need to buy at the shop.
5. Write a sentence to the Mayor about something good or something bad in your town or rural district.

Data management

Site visitors must:

1. Remember that it is essential for us to be able to link each learner's test exercises and any relevant observations to the particular LAP. The learner's ID number is the key here. If the learner has forgotten her ID number, the facilitator should be able to provide this from the class list.
2. Keep the tests and any other documents relevant to the verification exercise in a clearly marked file with the site's name and number and the name of the educator and supervisor.
3. Write a brief report indicating your impression of the learning site in relation to the whole site visit.
4. Provide a score out of 10 for your estimate of the genuineness and integrity of the teaching, learning and assessment at the site. Be prepared to argue and defend this score.

Determining the sample: a suggested procedure

1. Get a list of coordinators and the location of their districts and take an appropriate random sample from them that is slightly larger than needed. Check that they represent the Kha Ri Gude mix of rural, semi-rural, informal settlement and urban. If they do not take a further random sample.
2. Get the lists of supervisors for each of the drawn coordinators and draw three from each. Check that they have suitable locals.
3. Draw four sites from each supervisor in the sample.
4. When liaising ask the coordinator/supervisor to suggest which of the sampled sites is most convenient to visit.
5. Usually two sites per district will be visited.