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Happy New Year

2010 was a very busy year with lots of changes for all of us. Thank you for all your hard work and your patience.

E-portfolios

We have now completed the first year of using the e-portfolio system. Hopefully you are all now more familiar with the functions of the e-portfolio and are seeing the advantages. Many of you have given me positive feedback and really enjoy using the new system. It definitely makes it easier having all the “paperwork” in one place and accessible by all involved.

Obviously there have been teething problems and we are continuing to work closely with Skillwise to improve these and to incorporate new functions. They have recently upgraded the workflow of the system which is not immediately obvious but will enable them to build in the extra functions we require. In the near future Skillwise are going to change the look of the e-portfolio. The functions will remain the same but it will be laid out differently. It will look similar to other websites you may use. The options that currently appear in the menu on the right hand side of your screens will become tabs across the top of the page you are on. These will make them easier to identify and will follow the workflow more accurately. This change will not affect any of the evidence already on the system.

I would encourage you all to share your experiences with the e-portfolio as we are all still learning and this is the best way of both standardising processes and realising the best way of using the system.

In the summer we will be able to fully evaluate the e-portfolio as we will have our first set of students who have completed their NVQ in this way.

Second year students

All students are currently progressing well. As normal some are much nearer completion than others.

Please remember that all NVQ units for these students must be completed and have been signed off by the IV by the 31st May 2011. This is extremely important as they must actually have their NVQ certificate in order to obtain their BTEC and Modern apprenticeship award at the end of June.

Second year induction 14th Oct

Please note the date of the second year induction day now as every year some students do not attend due to this being overlooked.

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**New standards**

As you are all aware the NVQ standards changed from September 2010 so the first year students are working towards these. The standards were not available until the end of October and obviously took a little time to upload onto the e-portfolio system. Many of the students were very keen to get started so this was unfortunate but by now they should have all made a start on their portfolio.

The new standards are part of the QCF framework and so students are working towards units of credits. There are now 14 mandatory units which amount to 68 units of credit. In order to complete their full award they also need to complete a minimum of 3 optional units to achieve at least 7 credits. The optional units SWMIT suggest you choose between are 017, 018, 019, 020, 021 and 027.

You will see that on the e-portfolio the assessment criteria have been set to be covered a minimum of 4 times. The ranges do not have any guidance in the standards so please refer to the guidance written by the IV’s which has been circulated to lead assessors and is available on the SWMIT website and in your file library on the e-portfolio. We have not set a minimum number of pieces of evidence per learning outcome as we feel that sufficient will be produced in order to cover the assessment criteria and range as required.

The other major change is that all units now need a minimum of 2 observations by an assessor. Assessors are still required to be pharmacists or pharmacy technicians and from July will also need to be registered.

The BTEC standards also changed over the summer and so the first years are studying for this new award. All 19 Units are now mandatory and the award now incorporates some new units. Many of the units actually fit well with their NVQ and at assessor day we will be looking at how we can link the NVQ and BTEC more closely to save duplication of work.

The NVQ level 2 standards also changed in September. Please ensure that your new candidates are working to the new standards as we cannot register people on the old standards even if they have completed units.

The assessment criteria still need to be cover 3 to 4 times on the new standards. Guidance regarding the range coverage is currently being written by the IV’s and will be circulated in due course.

New CPRFH forms for both awards are available on the SWMIT website. City and Guilds are no longer providing paper copies of the standards. They can be downloaded from their website if required.

**External verifier visit**

The EV carried out remote monitoring rather than actually visiting the centre in December. Thank you to all those people who were connected with the visit either by phone interviews or by sending portfolios. The centre received a good report thanks to all your hard work as assessors and IV’s.

The action points were to continue to add your names & dates to the comments made when feeding back to candidates on the e-portfolio. We also need to record the supporting evidence you have seen when assessing evidence and where this is stored if it is not being uploaded onto the system. If we can do this successfully we will need to upload less supporting evidence and reduce the risk of breaking confidentiality.

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**Dates for your 2011 diary**

**Assessor Updates**

- 22nd February
- 13th May
- 30th June
- 21st November

Please ensure you book a place asap, as numbers are limited and **all must attend**.

- A1 assessor training 10th March
- 25th October

**Level 2 induction**

- 8th April
- 29th September

**Level 3 induction**

- 20th & 21st September

**Level 3 second year induction**

- 14th October