Assessment Strategy for SVQs within the Logistics footprint

August 2015

Introduction

This strategy supersedes and replaces the Assessment Strategy for Skills for Logistics SVQs dated May 2010 approved 18 August 2010.

This revised Assessment Strategy is compliant with UK legislation relating to age discrimination and reflects the guidance provided to SSCs/SSBs by SQA Accreditation in September 2013.

The principles are in addition to the regulatory requirements that Awarding Bodies must meet as specified by SQA Accreditation.

Application of the Strategy

This Assessment Strategy was updated with the Awarding Bodies who offer the SVQs. This assessment strategy covers the SVQs listed below within the logistics sector.

- SVQ 2 Driving Goods Vehicles at SCQF level 5 – van, rigid, articulated/drawbar
- SVQ 3 Driving Goods Vehicles at SCQF level 6
- SVQ 2 in Warehousing and Storage at SCQF Level 5
- SVQ 2 in Warehousing and Storage Support Operations at SCQF Level 5
- SVQ 3 in Warehousing and Storage at SCQF Level 7
- SVQ in Logistics Operations at Level 3

The Assessment Strategy is a requirement for any SSC/SSBs and Awarding Bodies (ABs) that import the relevant National Occupational Standards into SVQs.

Annexes describe specific assessment, verification and related certification requirements that will apply to SVQs based on specified NOS. Currently there are two such annexes: Annex A dealing with Driving Goods Vehicles and Annex B dealing with Warehousing and Storage.

Principles for the Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy is designed to provide overarching principles for the Awarding Bodies that complement the requirements of the regulatory body for SVQs, SQA Accreditation. The Awarding Bodies are responsible for providing quality assurance processes for the assessment of the logistics standards within SVQs. The Awarding Bodies are in the best position to provide detailed assessment guidance and evidence requirements; they will need to consider whether this is achieved individually or collectively.

Suitably qualified and experienced Assessors, Internal Verifiers, and External Verifiers, or the equivalent role, must be allowed to apply their professional judgement however, they must also ensure that they comply with the assessment guidance and evidence requirements in a consistent manner. Assessment should be effective but not overly burdensome, and assessors and verifiers should establish methods to achieve this balance.

External quality control of assessment

The quality assurance principles enshrined in national guidelines produced by the regulatory bodies, if implemented correctly, provide sufficient guidance to the Awarding Bodies in matters relating to the quality assurance and control of SVQs in the logistics sector. If any concerns are raised about the effectiveness of an Awarding Body these objections should be made initially with the relevant Awarding Body, and if necessary, with the regulatory body.

The standards setting body for the logistics sector will meet as required with the Awarding Bodies to discuss and resolve assessment issues. These meetings will seek to improve quality and consistency, and in particular will provide opportunities to identify and address any emerging areas of risk resulting from the performance of assessment centres, and to target external verification activity if necessary. Working with the Awarding Bodies, the standard setting body will:

- facilitate the flow of non-confidential information between the Awarding Bodies relating to the delivery of the logistics qualifications
- collate information and statistics about the take up of the qualifications for each nation
- identify trends and developments affecting the delivery of the qualification
- consider any changes in legislation, policies, or other external factors that could affect the legitimacy of the standards and the qualifications
- resolve issues relating to the interpretation of the logistics national occupational standards
- provide ongoing review of feedback on the content of the national occupational standards, particularly to inform incremental review
- report and consider risk factors arising from the performance of assessment centres
- resolve issues relating to the definition of occupational experience of assessors, internal verifiers, and external verifiers
- act as the arbiter on the interpretation of the Assessment Strategy.

External verifiers will be required to sample the work of all assessors and implement rigorous risk management strategies consistently across all centres for which they are responsible. Internal verifiers should sample evidence from candidates and observe each assessor conducting candidate assessments at regular intervals.

External verifiers should also generally aim to sample work the work of candidates at each centre, appropriate to the centre size; number of candidates registered and identified risk rating by the Awarding Body.

Performance in the workplace

It is critical to the validity of the SVQs that performance is assessed in the workplace. Therefore, the candidate should be in a relevant job role throughout the period of assessment. All the units of competence in the logistics standards are designed to reflect the expected performance of practitioners in real workplace settings. The standards have been tested to ensure that performance evidence can be collected in a reasonable time and cost. Where a candidate is not in a position to provide evidence due to their current assignment or position, they will need to negotiate suitable opportunities to generate evidence, e.g. through a work placement or a simulation. This must be planned and agreed

with the assessment centre and if necessary with employers at the commencement of the qualification.

In addition, the SSC/B recognises that some candidates may use these NOS in the context of a learning environment as part of a programme of preparation for work. In these situations, centres may set up or devise assessment situations as required, with prior agreement of the External Verifier.

The use of witness testimony is recognised as an appropriate tool for assessors in collecting evidence about candidate performance in the workplace. However, before using a witness testimony, assessors must satisfy themselves that:

- Witnesses are clear as to the purpose and use of the testimony
- Witnesses have relevant experience and expertise in the area of competence in which they are providing testimony for
- There is no relationship between the candidate and witness or witness and assessor that might invalidate the testimony.

As a heavily regulated industry most candidates being assessed for a qualification based on the NOS covered within this strategy are also subject to other testing requirements relating to the acquisition of a statutory licence or certificates[1].

Use of simulation to obtain performance evidence

Simulation should not be viewed as a main source of performance evidence in SVQs. The most reliable performance evidence is generated through naturally occurring work activities. It can be disruptive and expensive to create a realistic working environment to provide an alternative to this.

If simulation is required, then this must be agreed with the External Verifier, who will have to decide whether the circumstances warrant its use. Only when other sources of performance evidence cannot be accessed effectively without undue burden on the candidate, should simulation be allowed. External Verifiers should discuss these situations with the Assessor and Candidate, and be able to establish a rationale for the decision. The Awarding Body is responsible for the parameters under which the simulation should operate in order to avoid the use of invalid and unacceptable practice. The need for simulation may result from:

- Safety
- Legislation
- Regulation
- Contingency
- Cost

Where simulation is used to generate evidence of competence, this should not be used as the sole source of evidence for any one unit of competence. Other sources and types of evidence will need to be generated to corroborate the evidence derived from simulation.

Occupational expertise of Assessors for the SVQs in Logistics

Assessors, or equivalent role, for the SVQs in the logistics sector must be occupationally competent and knowledgeable in respect of the units they are going to assess. The Awarding Body must ensure that assessors have verifiable, relevant and current industry experience and knowledge of the occupational working area at, or above, the level being assessed. This experience and knowledge must be of sufficient depth to be effective and

[1] The most up to date requirements should be checked out on the HSE and DSA websites

reliable when judging candidate's competence. Assessors' experience and knowledge could be verified by:

- CV and references
- Possession of a relevant SVQ or other equivalent qualification
- Membership of a relevant professional body

The occupational experience must be at a level suitable to the level of the qualification being assessed. To assess SVQs at SCQF level 8, the Assessor must have operated at managerial level or above. For SVQs at SCQF levels 5-7, the Assessor must have operated at technical/operational level or above.

Assessors must also:

- Be familiar with the National Occupational Standards making up the SVQs which they are seeking to assess to be able to interpret and make judgements on current working practices and technologies within the area of work

- Have sufficient time to carry out the role

- Receive an appropriate induction to the SVQs that they are assessing

- Actively engage in relevant, industry specific continuing professional development activities to keep up-to-date with developments relating to the practice in which they are assessing.

- Hold or be working towards an appropriate Assessor qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator. Assessors holding older assessor qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards.

Workplace assessment – the role of supervisors and managers in the assessment process.
Where employers opt for an employer direct model the qualification requirements specified by the regulator, SQA Accreditation, may be waived as described below:

The employer direct model is where colleagues, supervisors and or managers in the workplace are involved in the assessment process. Under this model, the employer, with the agreement of their Awarding Body and may choose between:

- Achieving the appropriate SQA approved unit qualification for assessment and internal verification

Or

- Demonstrate that the employers' training and development activity undertaken to prepare, validate and review these assessment / verification roles is conducted to the National Standards for assessment and verification.

The use of the alternative option described above which waives the need for the regulatory approved units, must be confirmed by prior agreement with the Awarding Body and be applied on an organisation by organisation and qualification by qualification basis.

Occupational expertise of Internal Verifiers for the SVQs in Logistics

Internal Verifiers or equivalent for the SVQs in logistics must:

- Have an understanding of the role being verified, based upon some occupational expertise and experience in logistics appropriate to the level of SVQ that they are seeking to internally verify, and to the pathway(s) being progressed

- Hold or be working towards an appropriate Internal Verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator. Internal Verifiers holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards

- Keep up-to-date with developments in relevant logistics practice

- Have a thorough understanding of the National Occupational Standards making up the SVQs which they are seeking to internally verify, and be able to provide advice upon the interpretation of the standards.

Occupational expertise of External Verifier for the SVQs in Logistics

External Verifiers or equivalent role must hold or be working towards an appropriate External Verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator. External Verifiers holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards.

There is no requirement for external verifiers to have occupational experience of working in the logistics sector, but it is highly desirable that they do, and at least have experience in working in related occupational areas. External Verifiers should therefore have some occupational understanding of working in the logistics sector at a level appropriate to the qualifications they are externally verifying.

External Verifiers must have a thorough understanding of the national occupational standards making up the SVQs which they are seeking to externally verify.

Annex A

Specific criteria for the assessment and verification of Driving Goods Vehicles

Assessors

• In the case of the qualification Driving Goods Vehicles assessors must hold a Driving Licence with the entitlement needed to drive the vehicle on which the assessment is being undertaken

• Assessors must satisfy the external verifier that they are occupationally competent in the employment context in which assessment is undertaken

• When assessment takes place in the context of the movement or handling of dangerous goods the assessor must hold a current ADR certificate.

Internal Verifiers

• In the case of the qualification Driving Goods Vehicles internal verifiers must have a working knowledge of the DVLA Driving Licence regulations relating to the candidate and the vehicle on which the assessment is being undertaken

• When assessment takes place in the context of the management, movement or handling of dangerous goods the internal verifier must have a working knowledge of ADR certification and the risks associated with the transport of dangerous goods.

External Verifiers

• When assessment takes place in the context of the handling of dangerous goods the external verifier must have a working knowledge of ADR certification and the risks associated with the transport of dangerous goods.

Annex B

Specific criteria for the assessment and verification of warehousing and storage assessors

In the case of the qualification Warehousing and Storage at levels 1 and 2 where the candidate uses equipment that requires specific training, or a ‘licence’ (certificate), for example lift trucks, assessors must have undertaken the specific training, or hold the ‘licence’ for the type of equipment on which the assessment is to take place.

Expert witness
Where the assessor has not undertaken the specific training, or does not hold the ‘licence’ for the type of equipment on which the assessment is to take place, the testimony of an expert witness should be sought. An expert witness must be someone who is both competent on the type of equipment and is working sufficiently closely with the candidate to be able to comment on their operating ability. Competence may be demonstrated by the achievement of a ‘licence’ or evidence of specific training. The expert witness is not consulted as a professional assessor, but as someone who is expert in the use of the type of equipment being used.