



# **CfA Assessment Strategy**

for

## **Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs at Levels 1-4**



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# 1 Intended audience

This document provides the Assessment Strategy to accompany the Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs at levels 1-4 (2005).

The primary audience for this document is the NVQ/SVQ Business and Administration awarding bodies. Other audiences are likely to include funding bodies and assessment centres.

## 2 Background

As the national standard setting body for Business and Administration, the CfA is responsible for the revision and maintenance of the National Occupational Standards and NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration.

This Assessment Strategy contains the CfA's requirements on:

- external quality control
- risk management
- independent assessment
- performance evidence
- qualifications and experience required to assess and verify Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs.

Advice and guidance is also provided on occupational competence and qualification requirements to train or teach Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs in publicly funded programmes.

The overall aim of the Assessment Strategy is to ensure the consistency of assessment and verification and improve the quality of the NVQ/SVQ qualifications. The CfA has developed the Assessment Strategy in line with the Regulatory Bodies' guidance and in consultation with its awarding body partners currently accredited for the NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration.

### 3 Introduction

To be successful, advanced systems of vocational education and training should be subject to constant review and where necessary, adaptation. This is vital if they are to reflect the changing demands of sector needs. The development of this Assessment Strategy has provided the CfA and its awarding body partners with a timely opportunity to evaluate and improve the existing assessment and quality assurance practices for the Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs.

During the development of the Assessment Strategy, the CfA has taken into account:

- current guidance
- particular concerns regarding the assessment and quality assurance of the previous NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration
- the views of employers
- and the issues of practicality and cost effectiveness.

In doing so, the CfA has produced a number of recommendations that build on, and improve, existing assessment practice and quality assurance regimes. These improvements should lead to an increased understanding of the standards and minimise occasions when different interpretations arise.

The recommendations on the external quality control of assessment and independent assessment build on and strengthen the existing systems of verification. Risk assessment models have been well developed by awarding bodies. The CfA will gather annual risk management data from awarding bodies and compare these findings with regulatory body reports and inspection findings on a regular basis. The aim of these activities is to identify areas for improvement that will assist quality developments in assessment centres.

The Assessment Strategy also includes key definitions intended to reduce disparities in assessment decisions between centres. The Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs are primarily designed to support administrators at work. However, the CfA also recognises that the standards are often used to support initial training of young people, as well as the training and development of administrators at work. The assessment of competence at levels 3 and 4 must take place at work. The assessment of competence at levels 1 and 2 can take place at work, or in an approved realistic working environment. The Assessment Strategy identifies the criteria for realistic working environments and how these can be approved by external verifiers.

All assessors and verifiers must be occupationally competent and appropriately qualified to assess or verify the Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs. In publicly funded provision, teachers and trainers must also be occupationally competent and appropriately qualified to teach or train learners. Business and Administration teachers, trainers, assessors and verifiers are key to effective and consistent delivery. External verifiers are charged with specific responsibilities to ensure occupational competence requirements for assessors and verifiers are met at all times.

The Assessment Strategy seeks to provide clarity in key areas where there has been confusion and inconsistency. A common understanding and appreciation of occupational competence will help raise the quality of teaching, training, assessment and verification in Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs. Common definitions of real work and the characteristics of an approved realistic working

environment will increase understanding and ensure consistent delivery of competent performance.

## 4 External quality control of assessment and verification

*The Assessment Strategy must recommend how external quality control of assessment will be achieved. This will normally be through the use of independent assessment. Where independent assessment is not recommended, other equally effective measures must be given.*

### External Quality Control: All Levels

Awarding bodies will provide an external verification service to all assessment centres in line with the *NVQ Code of Practice* for NVQ qualifications and *Implementing SVQs: A Guide for Awarding Bodies* for SVQs. The regulatory bodies (QCA, SQA, ACCAC and CCEA) will monitor awarding body practice. Publicly funded, and some other training provision, is also subject to inspection.

For NVQs such models and guidance are contained in the report by QCA entitled *Assessing and Managing Risk in NVQs*. The guidance does not apply to SVQ awarding bodies operating in Scotland.

Employers do not support the use of additional independent assessment in Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs. As a result awarding bodies will ensure equitable and fair delivery of NVQ/SVQ assessment and verification in Business and Administration by carrying out standard external verification and regular risk assessments in each assessment centre.

Awarding bodies will provide CfA with details of their risk assessment model, including any relevant documentation, and the CfA will collect annual risk assessment data on the Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ Assessment Strategy for the period 1 August and 31 July each year. The CfA recommends awarding bodies collect evidence of:

Number of B&A centres	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Colleges				
Work based training providers				
Commercial businesses				

Number of B&A personnel	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Qualified external verifiers				
Qualified internal verifiers				
Qualified assessors				

Numbers of personnel who demonstrate B&A occupational competence by:	Holding a level 3 or 4 Administration NVQ/SVQ	Having appropriate time-bound work experience	Submitting evidence of valid and reliable cpd
External verifiers			
Internal verifiers			
Assessors			

<b>Number of Administration centres</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
Using work-based assessors				
Using peripatetic assessors				
Using teachers or trainers to assess NVQ/SVQ competence				
Using an approved realistic work environment to assess candidates				
Using simulated evidence to assess candidates				
Using proxy qualifications to substitute one or more NVQ/SVQ unit				
Under sanctions				
Levels of sanctions applied in the last 12 months				

<b>Number of centres having effective evidence of:</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
Assessment planning				
Assessing triangulated evidence				
Verification planning across units, assessors, candidates and assessment practice				
Internally verifying the assessment process throughout the programme				
Internal verifier observation of assessors' assessing candidate competence in the work place or approved realistic work environment				
Continual professional development in Business and Administration, assessment and internal verification				

**Identify arrangements for additional external monitoring to provide sufficient information to demonstrate the equivalence of independent assessment:**

**OR**

Awarding bodies will supply an annual report on its risk assessment activity for the period 1 August and 31 July each year. Under these circumstances the CfA will negotiate the presentation of requirements with individual awarding bodies.

In addition, awarding bodies will compile commonly asked questions regarding the interpretation of the NVQ/SVQ standards and report these to the CfA on a quarterly basis. The CfA will respond with clarifications to be used by all awarding bodies.

Awarding bodies must inform assessment centres of the following requirements:

- Level 1 and 2 candidates may submit evidence of competence generated in either an approved realistic working environment or from work.
- Level 3 and 4 candidates must submit evidence of competence produced at work.
- Training and development activities must be separated from assessment activities.
- The roles of assessor and trainer must be separate. Where the same person performs both roles, the awarding body will ensure external verification practice supports the maximum reduction of risk.

## 5 Occupational competence and qualifications for assessors, internal and external verifiers

*The Assessment Strategy must define the occupational requirements for assessors and verifiers in consultation with awarding bodies.*

### 1 Assessor and verifier qualifications

In line with the document, *The Code of Practice for NVQ Awarding Bodies (QCA)*, the following outlines the requirement for assessor and verifier qualifications. Please note assessors and verifiers in Scotland should refer to the document, *Implementing SVQs: A Guide for Awarding Bodies (SQA)*.

- external verifiers must have the V2 or D35 unit. Unqualified external verifiers have twelve months to achieve the V2 qualification, during which time they should be supported by their awarding body throughout their training period
- internal verifiers must have the V1 or D34 unit. Unqualified internal verifiers have eighteen months to achieve the V1 qualification, during which time they must be supported by a qualified internal verifier throughout their training period
- assessors must hold the A1 unit or D32 and D33 units. Unqualified assessors have eighteen months to achieve the A1 qualification, during which time they must be supported by a qualified assessor and internal verifier throughout their training period.

All assessors and verifiers must receive appropriate induction to the NVQ/SVQ standards. They must also have access to ongoing training and updating on current Business and Administration issues and maintain their occupational competence to NVQ/SVQ level 3 Business and Administration standards for levels 1-3 and level 4 Business and Administration standards for level 4 NVQs/SVQs.

### 2 Business Administration occupational competence for assessors and verifiers

External verifiers must demonstrate administration occupational competence in all the mandatory units and a significant proportion of the optional units, together with an industry awareness of, and familiarity with, the remaining optional units. Awarding bodies must maintain a record of occupational competence across their external verifier team and provide expert support from within the team when required by other external verifiers.

Assessors and internal verifiers must possess the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration<sup>1</sup>. Assessment centres are required to maintain continuous professional development records for all assessors and verifiers, showing how Business and Administration competence was originally acquired and is maintained and upgraded over time.

Assessors and internal verifiers must demonstrate occupational competence to assess or verify individual units in line with the requirements set out below:

### **2.1 To assess or verify the level 1-3 Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs assessors and verifiers must:**

- possess a level 3 NVQ/SVQ in Business and Administration
- or**
- possess a vocational qualification closely related to the Business and Administration competences, at a minimum of level 3
- or**
- for those units they wish to assess or verify have at least one year's experience as a level 3 administrator in the last three years

**and**

- a record of continuous professional development that is planned and reviewed on at least an annual basis.

### **2.2 Health and safety units – Levels 1–3**

In line with guidance from the Employment National Training Organisation, where there is assessment and verification of the health and safety units, assessors and verifiers must hold the relevant unit themselves or demonstrate:

- a good understanding of health and safety issues and have attended a recognised health and safety training course

**and**

- experience of contributing to health and safety within the workplace within the last five years.

### **2.3 To assess or verify the level 4 Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ assessors and verifiers must:**

- possess a level 4 Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ
- or**
- possess a vocational qualification closely related to the Business and Administration competences, at a minimum of level 4
- or**
- for those units they wish to assess and verify have at least two years' experience as a level 4 administrator in the past five years

**and**

- a record of continuous professional development that is planned and reviewed on at least an annual basis.

*See Appendix 1 for guidance on qualifications and occupation competence for Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ teachers and trainers.*

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<sup>1</sup> These should be viewed as minimum requirements.

See Addendum for occupational competence and qualifications for assessors, internal and external verifiers for Specialist Business and Administration Standards.

### 3 Verifying the Occupational Competence of Assessors and Internal Verifiers

Before centres are approved to offer the NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration, they must provide their awarding body with evidence of appropriate occupational competence for each member of the Business and Administration team in accordance with awarding body procedures.<sup>2</sup>

The Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs cover a broad range of occupational activities, and it is very unlikely that any one member of the team will be occupationally competent in every unit.

After initial 'subject approval', external verification visits will investigate the maintenance and upgrading of the team's occupational competence in Business and Administration. Assessment centres must provide external verifiers with detailed records of continuous professional development for every member of the Business and Administration team.

#### Competence and qualifications at a glance:

Delivering Business and Administration assessment and verification	A1 or D32/33	V1 or D34*	V2 or D35*	H/S	BA N/SVQ 3 or BA N/SVQ 3 = or O/C	BA N/SVQ 4 or BA N/SVQ 4 = or O/C	CPD
Assessing level 1-3	E			E	E		E
Assessing level 4	E					E	E
Internally verifying level 1-3	D	E		E	E		E
Internally verifying level 4	D	E				E	E
Externally verifying level 1-3	D	D	E	E	E		E
Externally verifying level 4	D	D	E			E	E

E = essential

D = desirable.

\* will have had to have gained lower level qualifications to progress to higher D levels

Further guidance is given in Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> Centres should engage in some form of discussion regarding the occupational competence of their assessors and verifiers to ascertain which aspects of the revised qualification they are now competent to assess or verify.

## 6 Producing appropriate performance evidence

*This Assessment Strategy defines which aspects of the National Occupational Standards must always be assessed through performance in the workplace.*

*It also defines the extent to which simulated working conditions may be used to assess competence and any characteristics that simulation should have, including definitions of what would constitute a 'realistic working environment' for the qualifications concerned.*

- Level 1 and 2 evidence can be produced at work or in an approved realistic working environment
- Level 3 and 4 evidence must be produced at work.

The definitions reproduced below are to be used by assessors and verifiers when addressing the production of genuine and appropriate performance evidence:

### **Real work is:**

*'where the candidate is engaged in activities that contribute to the aims of the organisation by whom they are employed', e.g. administrators in paid employment, administrators working in a voluntary capacity or on extensive work experience programmes.*

### **A realistic working environment (RWE) is:**

*'where the candidate is subjected to a work environment and is producing performance evidence subject to all of the following conditions:*

- *time pressures*
- *work problems*
- *accountabilities*
- *office environment*
- *tools to do the job'*

*e.g. learners in a model or virtual office.*

External verifiers will need to approve RWEs on an individual basis before any assessment can begin. Authenticity is essential and approval needs to be endorsed on an annual basis by the external verifier.

Further guidance is given in Appendix 2.

### **Special assessment arrangements**

Individual awarding bodies each have guidance on meeting the needs of candidates with special assessment requirements. The CfA is keen to ensure that all candidates are given reasonable opportunities to achieve NVQ/SVQ accreditation. If centres have any doubt as to the acceptability of their special assessment arrangements, they should seek the guidance of their awarding body before starting to assess their candidate.

### **Proxy qualifications**

The CfA will publish a list of proxy qualifications for single or cluster NVQ/SVQ units on its website. Approved proxy qualifications may be used as a substitute for single or clusters of NVQ/SVQ unit assessments.

Awarding bodies may submit suitable independently assessed qualifications for endorsement as Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ unit proxy qualifications. (Information on endorsement for awarding bodies is contained in the CfA Endorsement Guide)

## 7 Definitions of standards

As standards are used by employers and in assessment centres, occasions arise when clarification or interpretation may be necessary. The CfA operates a frequently asked questions (FAQ) system for centres and awarding bodies.

The service does not interfere with the existing relationship between awarding bodies and their centres but is intended to support the awarding bodies. In particular, the support focuses on instances where enquiries of a similar nature occur repeatedly and a consistent answer or clarification is needed. To be effective, the interpretations reached will need to be regarded as definitive.

The CfA will operate a quarterly reporting system with its awarding body partners where any such guidance will be provided. However, it will not apply retrospectively to candidates' portfolios. For consistency, awarding bodies will need to circulate these definitions to all external verifiers of Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs on a quarterly basis.

## 8 Evidence requirements for imported units

Detailed evidence requirements have been incorporated within the CfA Assessment Guide. Awarding Bodies must refer to this document for specific evidence requirements for each imported unit.

### 1. ENTO

The CfA has imported the following health and safety units from the Employment standards setting body:

<b>CfA Unit Title</b>	<b>SSB</b>	<b>SSB Unit Number</b>
Ensure your own actions reduce the risks to health and safety	ENTO	Unit A

Simulation is not permitted in the assessment of any part of this unit. The CfA Assessment Strategy encompasses all of the evidence requirements for the above standards.

### 2. E-skills UK

The CfA has imported the following IT User units from the e-skills standard setting body:

<b>CfA Unit Title</b>	<b>SSC</b>	<b>SSC Unit Name</b>
Use IT Systems	e-skills UK	Use IT Systems
Use IT to exchange information	e-skills UK	Use IT to exchange information
<i>Use</i> Word processing software	e-skills UK	Word processing software
<i>Use</i> Spreadsheet software	e-skills UK	Spreadsheet software
<i>Use</i> Database software	e-skills UK	Database software
<i>Use</i> Website software	e-skills UK	Website software
<i>Use</i> Artwork and imaging software	e-skills UK	Artwork and imaging software
<i>Use</i> Presentation software	e-skills UK	Presentation software
<i>Use</i> Specialist or bespoke software	e-skills UK	Specialist or bespoke software

The CfA Assessment Strategy encompasses all of the evidence requirements for the above standards.

### 3. Financial Services Skills Council

The CfA has imported the following units from the Financial Services Skills Council:

<b>CfA Unit Title</b>	<b>SSC</b>	<b>SSC Unit Number</b>
Process customers' financial transactions	Financial Services Skills Council	Unit 19, National Standards for Insurance Level 2
Operate credit control procedures	Financial Services Skills Council	Unit 21, National Standards for Insurance Level 2

The CfA Assessment Strategy encompasses all of the evidence requirements for the above standards.

### 4. Accountancy Occupational Standards Group

The CfA has imported the following accountancy units from the Accountancy standard setting body:

<b>CfA Unit Title</b>	<b>SSB</b>	<b>SSB Unit Number</b>
Managing the payroll function	AOSG	Unit 74, Payroll Administration standards
Completing year end procedures	AOSG	Unit 75, Payroll Administration standards

The CfA Assessment Strategy encompasses all of the evidence requirements for the above standards.

### 5. Management Standards Centre

The CfA has imported the following management units from the Management Standards Centre:

<b>CfA Unit Number and Title</b>	<b>SSB</b>	<b>SSB Unit Number</b>
Provide leadership for your team	MSC	B5
Provide leadership in your area of responsibility	MSC	B6
Manage risk	MSC	B10
Develop productive working relationships with colleagues	MSC	D1
Develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders	MSC	D2
Recruit, select and keep colleagues	MSC	D3
Allocate and monitor the progress and quality of work in your area of responsibility	MSC	D6
Provide learning opportunities for colleagues	MSC	D7

The CfA Assessment Strategy encompasses all of the evidence requirements for the above standards.

## Appendix 1

### Guidance notes

#### **Occupational Competence of Teachers, Trainers, Assessors and Verifiers**

### **Part Experience in the Field of Administration**

The use of business and administration competencies in modern job roles is widespread. There are likely to be potential teachers, trainers, assessors and verifiers of Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs who demonstrate competence in only a limited number of the units. This cannot be read as competence in the entire suite of units, and teachers, trainers, assessors and internal verifiers can only make judgements in areas where they are competent themselves. Should potential assessors or internal verifiers need to expand their level of competence to assess or verify other units, the CfA expects centres to offer them opportunities to acquire skills, experience and competence either at work, or in industrial placements, as part of a continuous professional development process.

### **Notes for Assessors and Verifiers Regarding Occupational Competence**

The CfA expects all assessors and verifiers to have gained their business and administration occupational experience in a real work administrative job role. While it is recognised that both assessors and verifiers need significant administrative skills, simply being an assessor or verifier does not provide individuals with occupational competence in business and administration.

### **Notes for External Verifiers**

The role of the external verifier is central in confirming and ensuring that centres are employing assessors and verifiers with the appropriate occupational competence. The following section gives some indications of poor practice that has been found when centres attempt to judge the occupational competence of assessors and verifiers. It also provides initial suggestions on the sorts of evidence that centres may wish to use to support their decisions on the occupational competence of assessors and verifiers.

It is recommended that external verifiers are aware of the following unacceptable practices that have occurred with regard to the occupational competence of assessors and verifiers in the field of business and administration:

- Assessing an NVQ/SVQ, such as Customer Services, Management or IT, then assuming this can qualify as an automatic proxy to assess Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs
- Having experience of working at a higher level in another occupation and then assuming this can automatically provide competence in business and administration. For instance, someone working at a high level of management will not have had the technical administrative experience required in the Level 3 NVQ/SVQ

- Having assessed a lower level for a period of time and then assuming that this experience qualifies the assessor to assess a qualification at a higher level. All level 1, 2 and 3 assessors and verifiers must have had level 3 business and administration job roles and hold qualifications that support their knowledge and understanding, skill development or competence at work. All level 4 assessors and verifiers must have had level 4 business and administration job roles and hold qualifications that support their knowledge and understanding, skill development or competence at work.

## **Internally and Externally Verifying the Occupational Competence**

Evidence regarding the appropriate occupational competence and continuous professional development of assessors and verifiers might include:

- the provision of CVs and/or written statements
- records of personal interviews - 'development interview'
- identification of relevant qualifications
- identification of relevant and suitable work experience
- benchmarking of current skills/practice to Business and Administration standards
- and the provision of a continuous professional development log that demonstrates how occupational competence is maintained over time.

Continuous professional development needs to be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

## **Requirements to teach or train Business and Administration NVQs/SVQs in publicly funded centres**

The following qualifications are recommended for teachers and off-the-job trainers working with candidates on publicly funded programmes:

- Trainers should hold, or be working towards, the level 3 NVQ/SVQ in Learning and Development or equivalent and the level 3 NVQ/SVQ in Business and Administration or equivalent for Business and Administration learners at levels 1-3
- Trainers should hold, or be working towards, the level 3 NVQ/SVQ in Learning and Development or equivalent and the level 4 NVQ/SVQ in Business and Administration or equivalent for Business and Administration learners at level 4
- Teachers should hold, or be working towards, the level 4 NVQ/SVQ in Learning and Development or equivalent and the level 3 NVQ/SVQ in Business and Administration for Business and Administration learners at levels 1-3
- Teachers should hold, or be working towards, the level 4 NVQ/SVQ in Learning and Development or equivalent and the level 4 NVQ/SVQ in Business and Administration for Business and Administration learners at level 4.

All teachers and trainers should receive appropriate induction to the NVQ/SVQ standards and have access to ongoing training and updating on current issues relevant to the Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ standards.

The CfA recognises all national teaching and training qualifications that have been endorsed by Lifelong Learning UK.

### Teacher and trainer occupational competence

All teachers and trainers should possess the appropriate occupational competence to deliver learning programmes for the NVQs/SVQs in Business and Administration. Centres should maintain continuous professional development records for all teachers and trainers showing how Business and Administration competence was originally acquired and is maintained and upgraded over time.

### Teacher and trainer competence and qualifications at a glance:

<b>Delivering Business and Administration assessment and verification</b>	BA N/SVQ 3 or =	BA N/SVQ 4 or =	LD NVQ 3 or =	LD NVQ 4 or =	O/C	CPD
Teaching level 1-3	E			E	E	E
Teaching level 4		E		E	E	E
Off the job training level 1-3	E		E		E	E
Off the job training level 4		E	E		E	E

E = essential  
D = desirable.

## Appendix 2

### Guidance notes

#### Assessment and Verification

- **Levels 1 and 2**

Performance evidence must be generated at work or in an approved realistic working environment.

- **Levels 3 and 4**

Performance evidence must be generated at work.

#### Quality in Assessment

Assessors must guarantee candidate evidence is authentic, valid, sufficient, current and reliable. Assessors therefore need to triangulate evidence, e.g. combine several sources of evidence to ensure all the above criteria are met. The CfA recognises four major sources of evidence:

**Performance evidence**

1. observation at work
2. examination of work products

**Supporting evidence**

3. questioning (this includes verbal and written questions, questionnaires, professional discussion, etc.)
4. witness testimony provided by a line manager, colleague or customer

#### Holistic assessment

The CfA supports the economic use of assessment. Assessors planning to assess on a limited number of occasions are advised to consider the following approach to holistic assessment:

- Identify the candidate's most important activities or processes at work
- Plan to assess each major activity or process at work
- Include the following assessment methods on each visit to the workplace: professional discussion, observation of competence, examination of work products in situ, and interviewing the candidate's line manager and/or colleagues at work.

#### Ensuring sufficiency of evidence

With the exception of a few imported units, Business and Administration units do not include information on the number of times that something needs to be assessed, or the length of time over which assessment should take place. True competence means consistent performance over time. Assessors must be sure that the evidence they assess confirms consistent competence. Both the assessment centre and external verifier need to have a high level of confidence in

the quality of assessment undertaken, and the consistent performance of the candidates to the standards.

### Separating training from assessment

Materials used for training, or evidence of the outcomes of training, are not evidence of competence and **must be** separated from the summative assessment process. Only assessed evidence of competence at work, or in an approved realistic working environment, should be presented for the NVQ/SVQ.

The roles of assessor and trainer must be separate. Where the same person trains and assesses, the awarding body will have assessed the risks on an annual basis.

### Internal verification

The assessment requirements for the Business and Administration standards mean there are some changes of practice and emphasis for internal verifiers. The major changes are listed below:

- Internal verifiers are responsible for monitoring the occupational competence of new and existing assessors. They can do this by:
  - keeping copies of assessor/IV CVs and written statements
  - maintaining records of personal interviews, e.g. appraisal or development interviews, and observations of administrative competence at work
  - benchmarking skills/practice to the Business and Administration NVQ/SVQ standards
  - implementing CPD to maintain teacher/trainer/assessor/IV currency of occupational competence
  - maintaining quality records of relevant work experience
  - seeing and recording original evidence of relevant qualifications
- Internal verifiers must also maintain the currency of their own occupational competence to verify
- Internal verifiers must ensure approved realistic working environments are only used for level 1 and 2 candidates. These realistic working environments must meet the criteria specified in this Assessment Strategy, and both the environment, and the candidate who will use the environment, need to be approved by the external verifier in advance of any assessment taking place. External verifiers will monitor the use of realistic working environments closely during external verification visits
- Considerable emphasis has been placed within this guidance on the professional judgements of assessors. This is key to ensuring quality in the determination and presentation of evidence. Research indicates that assessors do this best when they receive regular observations, ongoing support, constructive feedback and, when necessary, coaching from their internal verifier. Assessment centres should ensure that individual and collective confidence is built in judging evidence and making assessment decisions. This is most easily achieved through the systematic provision of opportunities for assessors and IVs to meet with each other, to share experiences and good practice, learn new

skills, identify areas for individual and team development and plan to use new techniques or increase understanding.

### **External verification**

Awarding bodies will operate their standard external verification practice in line with the regulatory body requirements expressed in the *NVQ Code of Practice* and *Implementing SVQs: A Guide for Awarding Bodies*. External verifiers will plan regular visits with assessment centres and observe candidate competence being assessed at work or in an approved realistic working environment.

## Addendum 1

Occupational competence and qualifications for assessors, internal and external verifiers for Specialist Business and Administration Standards

### 2.5 Specialist Units

External verifiers must have a good working knowledge of all specialist units. Awarding bodies will ensure that their complete external verification team includes the breadth of specialist administration competence necessary to deliver all the specialist administration units offered by the awarding body.

Internal verifiers and assessors must meet the occupation competence requirements by demonstrating recent relevant experience in the specialist units in line with the administration occupational competence requirements as follows:

- **Accounting**

Unit 306 **Managing the payroll function**

Unit 307 **Completing year-end procedures**

Please refer to the Accountancy Occupational Standards Group Assessment Strategy.

- **Agriculture**

For Unit 327: **Maintain agricultural records and prepare claims for subsidies**, competence in agricultural or horticultural administration.

- **Custodial Care**

For:

Unit 226: **Calculate critical dates for sentences**

Unit 227: **Make administrative arrangements for appearance of individuals at court**

Unit 228: **Make administrative arrangements for the movement of individuals outside the custodial establishment**

Unit 229: **Administer documentation for the appeals process**

Unit 230: **Administer personal money for individuals in custody**

Unit 231: **Prepare documentation to help authorities decide the conditions on which to release individuals from custody**

Unit 232: **Make administrative arrangements for the release of individuals from custody**

Unit 233: **Contribute to maintaining security and protecting individuals' rights in the custodial environment**

Unit 325: **Calculate and verify critical dates for sentences**

Unit 326: **Verify the release process**

Competence in custodial care administration: If, due to exceptional circumstances, these conditions cannot be met, the centre must bring this to the attention of the awarding body and negotiate alternative, temporary arrangements that must satisfy the external verifier that the quality of assessment will be upheld, for example a qualified administration assessor may support a trainee assessor with custodial care occupational competence, whilst the trainee works towards A1. Such arrangements should not be

allowed to continue for more than eighteen months and information on these exceptional arrangements should be made available to the CfA.

- **Finance**

For:

Unit 207 **Process customer financial transactions**

Unit 208 **Operate credit control procedures**

Competence in financial administration.

Please refer to the Financial Services Skills Council Assessment Strategy.

- **Information technology**

For:

Unit 106 **Use IT to exchange information**

Unit 107 **Word processing software**

Unit 212 **Use IT Systems**

Unit 213 **Use IT to exchange information**

Unit 214 **Word processing software**

Unit 215 **Spreadsheet software**

Unit 216 **Database software**

Unit 217 **Presentation software**

Unit 218 **Specialist or bespoke software**

Unit 314 **Word processing software**

Unit 315 **Spreadsheet software**

Unit 316 **Website software**

Unit 317 **Artwork and imaging software**

Competence in information technology.

Please refer to the e-skills UK Assessment Strategy.

- **Law**

For:

Unit 328 **Administer Legal Files**

Unit 331 **Administer case files**

Unit 332 **Administer appeals**

Unit 333 **Investigate cases**

Competence in legal administration: If, due to exceptional circumstances, these conditions cannot be met, the centre must bring this to the attention of the awarding body and negotiate alternative, temporary arrangements that must satisfy the external verifier that the quality of assessment will be upheld, for example a qualified administration assessor may support a trainee assessor with custodial care occupational competence, whilst the trainee works towards A1. Such arrangements should not be allowed to continue for more than eighteen months and information on these exceptional arrangements should be made available to the CfA.

- **Management**

For:

- Unit 320 **Develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders**
- Unit 321 **Provide leadership for your team**
- Unit 409 **Manage risk**
- Unit 414 **Develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders**
- Unit 415 **Allocate and monitor the progress and quality of work in your area of responsibility**
- Unit 416 **Recruit, select and keep colleagues**
- Unit 417 **Provide learning opportunities for colleagues**
- Unit 418 **Provide leadership in your area of responsibility**

Assessors and verifiers are required to have:

- a suitable qualification in support of a management job at the appropriate level and in the appropriate specialism
- at least two years experience and working knowledge of the operational and assessment processes for Management NVQs/SVQs

**and**

- at least two years relevant and credible management experience within the last five years.

Please refer to the Chartered Management Institute Assessment Strategy.

- **Parking**

For:

- Unit 329 **Administer Representations**
- Unit 330 **Administer The Appeals Process**

Competence in parking administration: If, due to exceptional circumstances, these conditions cannot be met, the centre must bring this to the attention of the awarding body and negotiate alternative, temporary arrangements that must satisfy the external verifier that the quality of assessment will be upheld, for example a qualified administration assessor may support a trainee assessor with parking administration competence, whilst the trainee works towards A1. Such arrangements should not be allowed to continue for more than eighteen months and information on these exceptional arrangements should be made available to the CfA.

- **Secretarial**

For:

- Unit 221 **Prepare text from notes**
- Unit 222 **Prepare text from shorthand**
- Unit 223 **Prepare text from recorded audio instructions**
- Unit 211 **Organise and support meetings**

Competence in secretarial skills.