



Assessor's Guidelines for the SVQs in Floristry at levels 2 and 3

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About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ in Floristry at levels 2 and 3**. You may be able to think of other ways of assessing your candidates and recording your decisions about their competence.

Using assessments based on these examples does not guarantee successful verification — it is still your responsibility to ensure that internal quality assurance procedures are followed.

Introduction

This introduction provides a brief overview of SVQs and how they are assessed in the workplace. If you are already familiar with the concept of SVQs, you may wish to go to the next section.

About SVQs

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications which set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy. The qualifications have been designed by standards-setting bodies — in most cases these bodies are also Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) — made up of experienced practitioners who represent employers, professional bodies, trade unions, education and voluntary organisations.

Each standards-setting body is responsible for developing national standards which define *what* employees (or potential employees) must be able to do, *how well*, and *in what circumstances*, to show that they are competent in their work.

Each SVQ which a standards-setting body develops has to fit into a broad framework which allows qualifications in the UK and throughout Europe to be compared. SVQs are specified at five levels which reflect the various technical and supervisory skills knowledge and experience, which employees should have as they progress in their industry.

Explanation of levels

- Level 1** Defines competent performance in a range of activities which are largely routine and predictable.
- Level 2** Specifies that competent performance must be shown in a broader range of work activities which are less routine and predictable. The employee will have more autonomy and responsibility, and may have to work as part of a team.
- Level 3** Specifies that competent performance must involve the employee in carrying out a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable autonomy and responsibility, including the possibility of controlling or guiding others.
- Level 4** Specifies competence as complex technical or professional work activities which require a substantial degree of personal autonomy or responsibility. Managing staff and other resources is often involved.
- Level 5** Specifies competent performance as involving the employee in carrying out a significant range of activities in a wide variety of situations which are often unpredictable. Substantial responsibility and autonomy is involved in the work, which requires decision-making in the allocation of resources and the work of others. This will require complex skills such as analysis, design and evaluation.

How are standards defined in SVQs?

All SVQs consist of standards which can be broken down into various parts.

Units define the broad functions carried out in the sector, and are made up of a number of **Elements**. These **Elements** describe the activities which employees have to perform, and will require candidates to demonstrate certain skills or knowledge and understanding.

The quality of performance in what people must be able to do — how well they have to perform — is described by **Performance Criteria**. These may also be called Statements of Competence or ‘what candidates should be able to do’.

The section on knowledge and understanding says what candidates must know and understand, and how this knowledge applies to their jobs.

You may also come across standards containing statements on scope. These statements could, for example, list the equipment that candidates are expected to be familiar with and use in their occupational area.

Increasingly, you may see changes to this format as standards become more user-friendly and are written in plain English. For example, there may be some standards containing range statements or **Evidence Requirements**, but over time these should disappear. You may, however, find that information on the context, nature and amount of evidence which is required to prove competence (which used to be given in range statements and Evidence Requirements) is now defined in the assessment guidance for the qualification. Assessment guidance is drawn up by the awarding body and is packaged along with the standards to form the SVQ.

Who is involved in SVQs?

There are several roles:

- ◆ **the candidate:** the person who wants to achieve the SVQ (eg an employee)
- ◆ **the assessor*:** the person who assesses the candidates and decides if they are competent (eg a supervisor)
- ◆ **the internal verifier*:** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg the supervisor’s line manager)
- ◆ **the external verifier*:** an individual appointed by SQA who ensures that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the SVQ

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by SQA to prove they have the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. This occupational competence will have been defined by the standards-setting body. Occupational competence could be defined in terms of the number of years in an

occupation, the contexts in which this must be achieved, and/or a range of qualifications recognised by the industry. There is a definition of occupational competence in the assessment strategy for these SVQs (see SQA's website www.sqa.org.uk).

Assessors and verifiers are also expected to obtain an appropriate qualification in assessment and verification — this can be the Assessor and Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment and verification) either in their current format or as 'D-Units' or an alternative qualification which SQA recognises.

The steps involved in assessing a candidate for an SVQ

In deciding whether a candidate should get an SVQ, you will go through these stages:

- ◆ planning for assessment
- ◆ generating and collecting evidence of the candidate's competence in the Units
- ◆ judging the evidence of the candidate's ability and making an assessment decision based on the evidence
- ◆ recording the assessment decision and the candidate's achievement

1 The SVQ in Floristry

The SVQs in Floristry have been developed by Lantra, the standards-setting body for the sector, and are intended for people in the retail floristry sector. These people may be working as trainee florists, supervisors, managers or owners of a retail floristry business. They will require skills and knowledge in Professional Commercial Floristry, Customer Services and Communications, and all aspects of running a retail business, eg Health & Safety, COSHH.

The SVQs are designed to be assessed in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. Examples of the settings or centres in which the SVQs are likely to be delivered include: colleges, florist's shops and appropriate training centres.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQ in Floristry at levels 2 and 3.

SVQ in Floristry at level 2 (G99T 22)

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	Lantra ref	
D94Y 04	Unit FL1	Maintain the Condition and Appearance of Plants to Optimise their Sales Value
D95A 04	Unit FL2	Monitor the Quality of Cut Materials
F5YY 04	Unit FL3	Construct Funeral Designs
F600 04	Unit FL4	Construct Wedding Designs in Mediums
D95E 04	Unit FL5	Construct Arrangements
D9AJ 04	Unit CU2	Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
D9AK 04	Unit CU5	Develop Personal Performance and Maintain Working Relationships
D95F 04	Unit CU68	Assemble Tied Floristry Designs
D95G 04	Unit CU69	Assemble Wired Floristry Designs
F0A7 04	Unit C8	Process Payments for Purchases in a Retail Environment

Optional Units: choose two

F08R 04	Unit C2	Display Stock to Promote Sales to Customers in a Retail Environment
F090 04	Unit C3	Help Customers Choose Products in a Retail Environment
F049 04	Unit 9	Give Customers a Positive Impression of Yourself and Your Organisation
F03Y 04	Unit 21	Deliver Reliable Customer Service
F6DV 04	Unit level 2	Customer Care 2

SVQ in Floristry at level 3 (G99V 23)

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	Lantra ref	
B50T 04	Unit FL6	Negotiate and Agree Terms and Conditions for the Sale of Floristry Products and Services
B50V 04	Unit FL7	Plan, Construct and Evaluate Floristry Designs with Medium
F601 04	Unit FL8	Plan, Assemble and Evaluate Tied Floristry Designs
F602 04	Unit FL9	Plan, Assemble and Evaluate Wired Floristry Designs
D9CG 04	Unit CU3	Promote, Monitor and Maintain Health, Safety and Security
F12H 04	Unit A1	Manage Yourself
F09D 04	Unit C13	Maintain the Availability of Goods for Sale to Customers in a Retail Environment

Optional Units: choose one

SQA ref	Lantra ref	
F04N 04	Unit 25	Organise the Delivery of Reliable Customer Service
F05D 04	Unit 40	Promote Continuous Improvement in Customer Service
F04F 04	Unit 42	Lead a Team to Improve Customer Service
F6DW 04	Unit level 3	Direct Selling and Customer Acquisition in Contact Centres 3

An assessment strategy for the SVQ

As part of its review of the SVQs in Floristry at levels 2 and 3, the standards-setting body Lantra has developed an assessment strategy which defines a range of requirements:

- ◆ the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers
- ◆ a definition of simulation
- ◆ definition of the workplace
- ◆ information on a model of independent assessment or external quality control

Both SQA and centres must comply with these requirements.

Why would people be interested in the SVQ?

People will take SVQs for a variety of reasons: to gain promotion, to prove their job competence, or for personal development. There will be other reasons too. One of the first things to do is to find out why your candidates want to do the SVQ, and to advise them of the appropriateness of the qualification. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to your candidates, they might help you to do this.

How do candidates begin?

Choosing the SVQ

You should make sure that candidates get guidance before starting out on an SVQ — they need advice to ensure that their existing job remit, skills, experience, and their plans for progression, are matched to the SVQ selected. It does not have to be you, as the assessor, who carries out the matching process, but whoever has responsibility for this should ensure that the assessment opportunities available to the candidate are also considered.

An example

Hazel had worked in the retail floristry trade for five years. During this period she had attended college on a day-release basis to gain her SVQ in Floristry at level 2. When Hazel had her family she gave up her work for three years, then returned and worked part-time in a flower shop. Hazel had approached her employer to see if there were any suitable qualifications she could obtain to further her career. They agreed that she had suitable working experience to work towards an SVQ in Floristry at level 3. A meeting was arranged between an external assessor, the employer and Hazel to discuss the various requirements of the qualification so that an assessment plan could be drawn up and agreed by all the parties. It was decided that Hazel would work towards the level 3 SVQ in the workplace as this would enable her to work at her own pace and have the support of colleagues who had gained the qualification in the same manner.

2 Preparing to assess the SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to begin to go about assessing your candidates for the SVQ in Floristry at levels 2 and 3. This advice is offered as examples of good practice — you may develop your own approaches to assessing your candidates which also work well.

Your role and your candidate's role

Assessing the SVQ will involve several stages. Both you and the candidate should be clear on your roles in the assessment process before you begin.

Your role

- ◆ ensure candidates understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- ◆ ensure the conditions and resources required for assessment are available
- ◆ help candidates to identify and gather evidence
- ◆ observe and record candidates carrying out the activities described in the standards — records should say what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what it demonstrates
- ◆ assess products of the candidate's own work
- ◆ question candidates and record results
- ◆ help candidates to present evidence
- ◆ authenticate the evidence candidates provide
- ◆ judge evidence and make assessment decisions
- ◆ identify gaps or shortfalls in candidates' competence
- ◆ provide feedback to candidates throughout the assessment process
- ◆ record achievement

Candidates' role

- ◆ prepare for assessment — become familiar with the standards, what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- ◆ help to identify sources of evidence and how these could be assessed
- ◆ carry out activities, and/or produce products of own work, and/or answer questions
- ◆ gather and present evidence
- ◆ receive and act on feedback from the assessor

Planning

In planning for assessment, you will find it helpful to meet with your candidate and plan what is to be assessed, in what way, and when and where the assessment is to take place. This discussion can be confirmed in the form of an agreed assessment plan between you and your candidate.

You should treat assessment plans as working documents — they can be updated and changed as you review progress with your candidate.

As you are planning assessment, don't forget to make the most of opportunities to *integrate* assessment. This means planning to assess an activity which draws on the contents of different Units or Elements. It can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing your candidate's competence.

If you are a new assessor working towards your A/V Units or 'D-Units' (the national standards in assessment and verification) you will need copies of completed assessment plans as part of your evidence.

To help you plan for assessment, we have produced an assessment plan for the level 2 SVQ which covers Unit FL2. You will notice that we have included spaces to enter dates when the assessment plan has been reviewed. Any gaps identified during these reviews should be discussed with your candidates and noted for action in the assessment plan.

Assessment plan

Units: FL2 Monitor the Quality of Cut Materials Elements: FL 2.1 and 2.2					
Activities	PCs	Method of assessment/Sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units ('What you should be able to do' and K&U)
Check incoming materials: conditioning materials, flowers, foliage and berried materials. Cutting, sealing, and feeding. Check for quality, type and quantity. Correct conditioning methods. Select correct containers.	FL 2.1 — 1 – 7 inclusive	Direct observation Oral questioning Candidate's portfolio/log book	14 April 08	Candidate's portfolio. Witness testimony from supervisor if required — suitable for both Elements	Unit CU2 — Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety. Both Elements CU 2.1 and CU 2.2 .
Monitoring the quality of cut materials in storage and on display.	FL 2.2 — 1 – 9 inclusive	Direct observation Oral questioning Candidate's portfolio/log book	14 April 08		
Correct care of cut materials, use a stock rotation plan implemented by your shop policy, check and recognise the signs of pest and diseases, dispose of cut materials that are no longer saleable. Take the appropriate action if the health of cut materials is not as required.					
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review	FL 2.1 — c, e, f, i, l, m, n. FL 2.2 — b, c, e, f.	Written questions			Written questions

Assessor's signature: *S. Russell*

1st review due: *29 April 08*

Candidate's signature: *Hazel Cuthbert*

2nd review due: *14 May 08*

Date of agreement: 1 April 08

Date of completion: 31 May 08

Selecting methods of assessment

The methods of assessment you use should be valid, reliable and practicable:

- ◆ by *valid* we mean that the assessment method should be appropriate to the standards
- ◆ by *reliable* we mean that the assessment method should ensure consistent results when used with different candidates, different assessors and on different occasions
- ◆ by *practicable* we mean that the method ensures that the assessment makes best use of available resources, equipment and time

Before you assess a candidate, you must make sure that the methods of assessment you have chosen to use, along with any assessment materials (such as questions and sample answers) have been agreed within your centre through its system of internal quality assurance. This system is often called *internal verification* — its purpose is to help to ensure that assessment methods are valid, reliable and practicable.

There are both benefits and challenges when you are assessing SVQs in the workplace, or in conditions in the workplace. When you select methods of assessment, you should try to offer the candidate the benefits of workplace assessment and minimise any potential difficulties.

The benefits can include:

- ◆ familiarity of the work area and equipment, so the candidate is comfortable during assessment
- ◆ resources to be used are readily available
- ◆ performance and product evidence will be valid and can be authenticated
- ◆ candidate can seek guidance from fellow colleagues and supervisor if required
- ◆ candidate can progress at his/her own pace.

The challenges might be:

- ◆ pressure of work
- ◆ location of workplace
- ◆ all criteria not met during the time and date of assessment — all the criteria required in some Units may not occur in the workplace, so simulations may have to be used

An example

Candidates working in a retail florist shop will have to demonstrate the ability, skills and knowledge and understanding to prepare, assemble, and optimise tied designs to meet the requirements of Unit CU68. The assessor would be able to gather and collect evidence by direct observation, oral questioning and product evaluation in the workplace. It would be reasonable for the candidate to produce a

selection of the designs stated in the Performance Criteria within their normal day-to-day work output.

Methods of assessment

Assessment can involve a range of assessment methods. For SVQs, some of the most commonly used methods are observation, product evaluation, and questioning.

Observation

Observation by an assessor is considered to be the most valid and reliable method of assessment. It can be organised in a variety of ways:

- ◆ working alongside the candidate
- ◆ arranging to visit when naturally-occurring activities are carried out by the candidate
- ◆ arranging for activities to take place

Observation by the assessor can often be supplemented by other assessment methods, such as questioning. It may be appropriate to ask oral questions of candidates as they carry out naturally-occurring activities. For example:

- ◆ observation of candidate producing product evidence, eg tied floristry designs, supplemented by questions regarding floristry definitions for various tied designs
- ◆ observation of candidate dealing with and serving customers, taking orders, cash transactions, answering the telephone
- ◆ direct observation of candidate dismantling and preparing the window area of shop, then setting up a window display

Product evaluation

As candidates work towards achieving the SVQ, they will produce evidence in the form of products of their work. The nature of this evidence can vary widely depending on what the candidate's job entails, but examples of product evidence may include:

- ◆ a completed floristry design produced by the candidate
- ◆ written evidence in the form of a project set by the assessor
- ◆ written evidence in their portfolio
- ◆ completed order forms from the workplace
- ◆ photographic evidence of completed floristry designs

Questioning

Candidates have to show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the SVQs. For these SVQs, knowledge and understanding is specified for each Element. Much of the knowledge and understanding will be apparent from what candidates do or produce as part of their work. However, this will not always be the case, and questioning can be a useful way of confirming what candidates know and understand.

Questions can be asked in a variety of forms, such as oral questions, short answer written questions, and multiple choice.

You should be careful that the method of questioning does not go beyond the competence required for the SVQ and become a barrier to fair assessment. For example, some candidates will feel more comfortable with oral questions than written.

Examples

Candidates can be asked questions whilst being observed unpacking, cutting and conditioning cut materials — occasions when all the knowledge and understanding required for the Element may not be apparent from direct observation.

Question: What if you noticed that a box of spray carnations that had just arrived fresh from the flower market was infested with pests. What would you do?

Answer: I would isolate the box right away; I would inform my supervisor so she could inform her suppliers, then I would check and double check the rest of my flower and foliage order. I would also check the flower display and other stock of fresh materials in case they showed any similar signs (Unit FL 2 *Monitor the Quality of Cut Materials*).

Question: Candidate produces a table arrangement as listed in the Unit FL4 *Construct Wedding Designs in Mediums*. Knowledge and understanding is not apparent from observation. You could set a written question, eg ‘What is the definition of a table arrangement?’

Answer: A selection of materials arranged into a suitably sized container. The arrangement would be used to decorate the table where people would be seated to enjoy a lunch or dinner. The table arrangement could be used for formal and informal occasions. Generally the container and materials used would follow a theme, colour scheme, or depict the occasion or event that is taking place. The main points for the florist to remember whilst designing a table arrangement is that it must not impede conversation between the people seated at the table, so the design should be in a low style or it should be designed to sit above eye level.

Other methods of assessment

These methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication. See section 3 for more about authenticating candidates' evidence.

Personal statements

You may sometimes find it helpful to ask a candidate to give an account of why they performed an activity in a certain way or how they produced a sample of their work. This is often referred to as a **personal statement**. You should take care to ensure that by asking candidates to produce such statements, you are not asking them to demonstrate competence beyond what is required by the standards. You should also be selective in the use of personal statements, and make sure they have not been produced as a substitute to a more valid, reliable and practical method of assessment.

An example

The candidate could use a personal statement in Unit C2 *Display Stock to Promote Sales to Customers in a Retail Environment*. You might have been able to observe the candidate maintaining a display of goods, but not have been able to observe the candidate meeting all the Performance Criteria for the Unit. The personal statement would also allow the candidate to show their grasp of knowledge and understanding.

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you may not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your candidates, but might feel that other people would be able to provide a statement on what your candidates have been doing or producing as part of their work. Statements of this kind are often referred to as 'witness testimony', and are often used to support other evidence produced by candidates. If witness testimony is used, you should, ideally, identify witnesses and opportunities for using their testimony as part of assessment planning.

You should bear in mind that the weight of the evidence will vary, depending on the knowledge and expertise of the person providing the witness testimony. You will have to take these factors into account as you make your judgement.

Strongest	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards. This person may also be an assessor or internal verifier qualified with the A/V Units or 'D-Units'.
	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards.
	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work, but with no knowledge of the standards.
	Someone who may be a colleague of the candidate, but with no knowledge of the standards.
Weakest	Someone with no or little knowledge of the candidate's work or no knowledge of the standards.

Witness testimony is unlikely to be sufficient in itself for a decision about the candidate's competence, and would normally be supplemented by questioning candidates.

An example

In Unit CU5 *Develop Personal Performance and Maintain Working Relationships* candidates must be aware of their personal performance in the workplace. They also must show competence in maintaining relationships with fellow staff members. Witness testimony produced by the candidate's supervisor or employer would be very useful, as it could detail the skills and abilities of the candidate in their work role, and also cover personal review meetings that take place.

It is also useful if the witness is identified as possessing the relevant A/V or its equivalent themselves.

Simulation

Simulation is any structured assessment exercise involving a specific task which reproduces real-life situations.

On some occasions, it may not be practical to assess a candidate in real work. Examples might be where the standards require candidates to carry out emergency or contingency procedures, or where client confidentiality is an issue, or where a candidate's job role does not cover all aspects of the qualification.

Lantra has defined what it regards as simulation, and has specified in the standards when simulation is and is not acceptable. The standards also state when candidates must demonstrate competence in the workplace.

For more details on simulation and what constitutes performance in the workplace, look at the assessment strategy on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

An example

- ◆ In Element 2 of Unit FL3, *Construct Funeral Designs*, The candidate must be able to package a funeral tribute for transport. As this does not occur in the normal day-to-day routine of the workplace very often, an alternative is to invent a situation where a funeral tribute must be suitably packaged for transportation by car and plane for a funeral service on the following day.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence may come from previous experience or learning, case studies or assignments.

SQA's Guides to Assessment and Quality Assurance (see section 5) have more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable and practicable.

3 **Generating evidence**

The methods of assessment you use should generate sufficient evidence to demonstrate the candidate's competence.

We described earlier the circumstances in which you might choose to use different methods of assessment. Starting on the next page, this section gives you examples of forms which you can use to record and present evidence of:

- ◆ observation (by the assessor)
- ◆ questions and candidate responses
- ◆ personal statement (produced by the candidate)
- ◆ witness testimony

There are blank forms, which you can copy and use in assessment, in Appendix 1.

Observation

For observation, note that the form asks you to record the skills and activities observed. This helps you to make a judgement on how the activity was carried out and what it demonstrates.

Observation record

Unit/Element(s): FL2.1 – FL2.2

Candidate: Hazel Cuthbert

Date: 14 April 2008

Skills/activities observed:	'What you should be able to do' covered:
<p>Unpacking and checking incoming cut materials. Check for quantity, quality, and correct type/variety. Conditioning of cut materials — flowers, foliage, berried materials, by using the correct equipment, recognising and using correct methods of conditioning, cutting, sealing and feeding. Use of correct containers. Completed in a realistic timescale.</p> <p>Monitoring the ongoing quality of cut materials, checking for signs of pests and disease. Recognising the signs. Monitoring cut materials in storage and on display. Check the conditions of the environment are suitable for the materials. If they are not suitable the candidate remedies this or seeks guidance on this. Dispose of cut materials that are no longer saleable in a safe and appropriate manner.</p>	<p>FL2.1 Elements 1 – 7 inclusive</p> <p>FL2.2 Elements 1 – 9 inclusive</p>

<p>Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation: FL2.1 — not all Elements apparent, supplemented with oral questioning FL2.2 — not all Elements apparent, supplemented with oral questioning</p>

<p>Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute: Unit CU2 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety Elements CU2.1 and CU2.2</p>

<p>Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate Today you performed most of the Elements to my satisfaction. However I would like to arrange another date where I can observe you implementing a stock rotation plan. I feel your abilities and understanding of stock rotation and planning a stock rotation plan let you down. The oral questions you answered showed you did not understand the principles and methods of stock rotation.</p> <p>Also you were unsure how to deal with cut materials when they were not at a suitable stage of maturity for use in an order. Your answers on your own responsibilities under HASAWA, COSHH and The Sale of Goods Act, need more attention. I suggest you revise all the above areas mentioned and we will do another oral and written question session on my next visit.</p>

Assessor's signature: *S Russell*

Date: 14 April 08

Candidate's signature: *Hazel Cuthbert* Date: 14 April 08

Questions and candidate responses

This form can be used to record any questions you might ask the candidate to establish what they know and understand. You should note the candidate's responses on this form too.

Note that there is a space near the top of the form for you to record when, where, how and why you asked the questions.

Where you want to give the candidate written questions, this form could also be used.

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit: FL2 Monitor the Quality of Cut Materials	Element(s): FL2.1 and FL2.2
Circumstances of assessment: direct observation of the candidate in the workplace, supplemented by oral questioning to clarify some elements of the knowledge and understanding not apparent.	
List of questions and candidate's responses:	
Q: Can you identify five countries that export flowers?	
A: Holland, Israel, Spain, Columbia, South Africa.	
Q: You have just received a delivery of cut materials from the flower market. How can you identify where some of the materials were grown and exported from?	
A: You can check for this information by checking the labels on the packaging and boxes that the materials come in. On the labels the country of origin is listed as well as the grower's company name, and the name and variety of the flower/foilage. The quantity and grade are also listed and, in some cases, the name of the person who packaged the materials.	
Q: What action would you take if you discovered signs of pests in a newly delivered box of spray carnations?	
A: I would isolate the box immediately making sure it was nowhere near any other fresh materials. I would inform my supervisor immediately so she could double check the rest of the delivery with me. Before she went on to let her supplier know about this, she would have to give them a detailed count of how many boxes had been infected.	
Assessor's signature: <i>S Russell</i>	Date: <i>14 April 2008</i>
Candidate's signature: <i>Hazel Cuthbert</i>	Date: <i>14 April 2008</i>

Candidate's personal statement

If it is being used, a personal statement should always be completed by the candidate. The statement should record what they did, how and why they chose to carry out an activity or produce work in a certain way. Where other people may have been present during an activity, they may be able to provide witness testimony. The candidate should record how the statement links to other evidence in the column provided.

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, 'What you should be able to do' covered
18/05/08		<p>Today I was instructed by my supervisor to clear away our window display and prepare the window for a new display to go in. I had to put all the sundry items back on the display shelves, some were boxed and put back in storage for shop orders.</p> <p>All the fresh materials had to be reconditioned and kept in the back shop to be used in funeral work as they were too mature to go back out onto the flower display stands. The artificial and dried materials that were used in the window display had to re-bunched and priced so that they could go back into the appropriate stands in the shop. I had to clear all the area, removing all the props, drapes, and stands. I then had to wash and clean the window inside and outside. Once I had done this I then had to sweep the area outside the shop, sweep and mop the floor area inside the shop and then clean and polish our display shelves at the side of the window. The display stands had to be cleaned and dusted.</p> <p>In our storage area in the basement I had to find the box with all our drapes and materials and select the ones we would use for the new display. One of the senior florists (Jodie) assisted me with this as I was not sure which ones would be suitable. The supervisor decided she wanted coloured labels to match the colours we were going to be using in the display, so I had to go to the art shop and select some suitable cardboard. I cut the cardboard neatly to use as pricing and information labels for all the items which we were displaying. I then helped Jodie to set up the drapes and display stands ready for the window display to be set up.</p>	<p>Witness testimony written by Jodie, along with photographs of completed window display in my portfolio — to cover Unit C2 (1-18). Portfolio Unit C2 evidence no 3 page 40.</p>	<p>C2 — Element 1</p> <p>Covered: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13</p>

Signed (candidate):

Hazel Cuthbert

Date:

18 May 2008

Witness testimony

Remember that, if you choose to use witness testimony, it must be capable of being authenticated — even if the testimony itself is being used to authenticate a candidate's claim to competence.

To make sure the witness testimony is genuine, you must ensure that you have a record of who is acting as a witness, their relationship to the candidate (eg supervisor, client) address, telephone number and the date. There are spaces for this information in the form.

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level: SVQ in Floristry at level 2

Candidate's name: Rosemary Brown

Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):

Element(s): CU 5.1

Date of evidence: 15 July 2008

Name of witness: Anne Gilchrist

Designation/relationship to candidate: Employer

Details of testimony:

Rosemary attended a personal review meeting with myself today. The point of the meeting was the need for Rosemary to improve on timescales when producing a selection of floristry designs. Rosemary is now producing various designs competently, however, of all the designs that Rosemary produces, her wedding work is still too slow. We agreed that Rosemary would try to improve on this by becoming more conscious of the time and we would review the situation next month.

We also discussed Rosemary's other duties that had not been completed to a satisfactory standard. Rosemary explained that she was not completely sure of what she was being asked to do. Rosemary had not asked for the instructions to be repeated or for any further assistance, therefore she had only completed some of the duties. We discussed the benefits of open communication and stressed that she should ask when instructions are not clear to her, or seek more guidance from senior staff members, as that is also part of their duties. Rosemary agreed to try and communicate better and to speak up when she does not understand certain points. We agreed communication was an issue that also needed to be raised at the staff meeting as improvement in this area by all members of staff would help overall performance and output.

Anne Gilchrist/owner: Flower Power

I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate.

Signed by witness: *A Gilchrist*

Date: *15 July 2008*

Please tick the appropriate box:

Witness:

Holds A/V or D32/D33 Award

Is familiar with the SVQ standards to which the candidate is working

Filling the gaps

It may be that your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you may find in assessing the candidate that certain situations have not arisen during assessment, such as handling contingencies. Often such contingencies relate to dealing with health and safety issues or unexpected problems with workflow like delays in receiving information from another part of the organisation.

In this SVQ, such gaps are likely to occur in generating evidence for related studies issues, for example, Units covering Health and Safety regulations and procedures, and First Aid and Emergency situations.

It is also likely to occur in some of the Units where the candidate must be observed during an activity or process, for example, Unit FL3 *Construct Funeral Designs*. In this Unit the candidate must produce funeral designs on a moss foundation, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to source quantities of moss. Also the candidate must display the ability to package a funeral tribute for transportation purposes, which is not a request which is asked for very often in the day-to-day routine of the florist shop.

You may be able to overcome some these difficulties by the use of simulations and oral questioning, where permitted. The candidate could attend relevant workshops and short training courses on how to deal with first aid and emergency situations in the workplace. There are also short courses aimed at the responsibilities of the employee and employer in Health and Safety issues, and all of these may be useful for collecting evidence for the knowledge and understanding, as well as some of the Performance Criteria.

In the *Construct Funeral Designs* Unit the candidate would have to be informed in advance about the use of moss for the Unit, giving adequate time for them to source supplies of moss.

Guidance and support to candidates

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — feedback should be ongoing, clear and constructive. Feedback should be given against the national standards by relating it to the evidence provided, including the knowledge specifications.

Where there are any shortfalls in a candidate's competence, you should discuss these with your candidate and make plans for re-assessment.

Judging candidates' evidence and making an assessment decision

In judging candidate evidence, you must be satisfied that your candidates can work consistently to the required standard, and that the evidence they have produced is their own. You must consider whether your candidate understands and applies the knowledge evidence and how this links to performance evidence.

Evidence must:

- ◆ be relevant to the SVQ
- ◆ be authentic
- ◆ show current competence
- ◆ be sufficient to help you form a decision about the candidate's competence

Insufficient evidence

You have to judge whether the candidate has produced enough evidence required by the standards for you to reach a decision about their evidence.

Where there is insufficient evidence, you should say this to your candidate. You should tell them that it is not that they are not yet competent — there is simply not enough evidence on which to make a decision.

In this situation, your feedback to your candidates must help them produce more evidence and/or plan for further assessment.

Authenticating candidates' evidence

Authentication is required where you have not observed candidates' performance at first hand.

You can check whether a candidate has produced evidence which they claim shows their competence by questioning them or, if this is appropriate, asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from other colleagues of the candidate.

An example

When an assessor is not available to observe the candidate producing evidence at first hand, there must be a format to authenticate the candidate's work. For example, the candidate may produce a table arrangement for Unit FL5, but because the assessor was not present, the candidate must show that it is his/her work. This could be done by arranging for a video camera to be set up to record them while they work (most employers will agree to this as long as it does not interfere with other staff members or shop routines).

If a video camera is not available the candidate could ensure they were photographed during the construction of the arrangement. The photographs would

have to be supplemented with other forms of evidence, such as witness testimony. The candidate's supervisor would be ideally placed to observe and then write up a witness testimony report. A colleague could also write a witness testimony if they had observed the work in progress. The candidate could also supplement this by producing a personal statement. When the assessor is unable to see the candidate produce evidence at first hand, the candidate should be able to produce three items of authentication.

4 Recording achievement

You should retain all evidence — clearly referenced — for internal and external verification.

The candidate's evidence is normally kept in a file, often called a *portfolio*. These documents help you and your candidates to collect, present and cross-reference the evidence to the national standards. They are also a means of recording your assessment decisions, and they tell an external verifier what stage a candidate has reached in achieving the SVQ.

Recording documents do not need to be paper-based — it is possible to use an electronic format for collecting and structuring the evidence. Whatever format you and your candidates choose to use, the documents must show what evidence was generated, the assessment decisions you made, how the evidence meets the standards, and where the evidence can be located. You should avoid photocopying items simply to put them in a portfolio — a clear explanation of where the evidence can be found (for example, in a filing cabinet) may be sufficient for the external verifier to follow it up and include it in the visit.

There are various reasons why record keeping is so important:

- ◆ it provides a way of tracking a candidate's progress in achieving an SVQ
- ◆ it helps candidates to make claims for certification of their competence
- ◆ internal verifiers and external verifiers use the records to sample assessment decisions
- ◆ it helps us to monitor the quality assurance of our qualifications

If your candidate's evidence is incomplete, or cannot be located, or if there is inaccurate cross-referencing to the standards, there is a risk that an internal verifier or external verifier will be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

To help you and your candidate present evidence and record your assessment decision, we have provided examples of the forms which you and your candidate might use to compile the portfolio.

- ◆ Completing the Unit progress record
- ◆ Using the evidence index
- ◆ Completing the Element achievement record

These forms are also used in SQA's portfolio.

Completing the Unit progress record

You should complete this form each time your candidate achieves a Unit from the SVQ by adding your signature and the date next to the relevant Unit.

At this stage, candidates should make sure they have completed the recording documents correctly and that their evidence can be easily located. Only then should they circle the relevant Unit number at the top of the form. This enables both of you to see at a glance what stage the candidate is at in their SVQ.

Unit progress record

Qualification and level: SVQ Floristry at level 3
 Candidate: Hazel Cuthbert

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in **seven mandatory** Units and one **optional** Unit.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory	FL6	FL7	FL8	FL9	CU3	A1	C13										
Optional	25																

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit	Assessor's Signature	Date
CU3 Promote, Monitor and Maintain Health, Safety and Security	<i>S Russell</i>	30.09.08
C13 Maintain the Availability of Goods for Sale to Customers in a Retail Environment	<i>S Russell</i>	28.10.08
FL6 Negotiate and Agree Terms and Conditions for the Sale of Floristry Products and Services	<i>S Russell</i>	03.12.08

Optional Units achieved

Using the index of evidence

The purpose of the index of evidence is to help you locate and work through the candidate's evidence. It should give you a summary of what evidence the candidate has collected, and where (eg in a portfolio) it can be found.

The index of evidence should be completed by entering:

- ◆ the index number for each piece of evidence
- ◆ a description of each piece of evidence
- ◆ the place or location where it can be found
- ◆ the initials of the internal verifier and the date (if they have sampled the candidate's evidence)

Ideally, it should be candidates themselves (with your support and encouragement) who complete the index.

You must make sure that the information in the evidence index is accurate when your candidates' portfolios are presented for assessment and verification — particularly the information about where the evidence can be located. This is important because we suggest that anything which has been produced as day-to-day work is kept in its normal location, but anything which has been produced through assessment for the SVQ, eg observation checklists, is filed in the candidate's portfolio. In this way, your candidate can avoid having to photocopy work products just for the sake of including them in a portfolio. It also means that evidence produced as a result of assessment is kept safely in a central file.

If the index of evidence is not completed with an accurate description and location of the evidence, there is a risk that an internal verifier or external verifier might be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

Completing the Element achievement record

To help you and your candidates cross-reference the evidence to the standards of the SVQs, we have provided records similar to those produced in the SQA portfolio. Use one record for each Element. The grids should be completed by:

- ◆ entering the evidence index number in the first column
- ◆ giving a brief description of the evidence in the second
- ◆ ticking the relevant boxes for the Performance Criteria (or statements of competence as they are sometimes known)
- ◆ entering the areas of knowledge and understanding the piece of evidence covers

If integrated assessment is used (linking ‘what you should be able to do’ or Elements across different Units) the evidence should be cross-referenced back to the relevant Units.

We have provided a completed example to show how to use the record.

Unit: FL 5 Construct Arrangements

Element: FL5.2

Notes/Comments

Evidence consisted of direct observation by myself, witness testimony and photographic evidence. Where direct observation evidence was not available, Hazel displayed competence by accurately answering specific questions relating to the photographic evidence and witness testimony. Knowledge and understanding was supplemented by written questions set by myself. This was a closed-book exercise.

The candidate has satisfied the Assessor and Internal Verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate:	<i>Hazel Cuthbert</i>	Date:	<i>10.11.08</i>
Assessor:	<i>S Russell</i>	Date:	<i>10.11.08</i>
Internal Verifier:	<i>D Dickson</i>	Date:	<i>17.12.08</i>

5 Further information

What else should I read?

The publications listed here provide additional information on how to implement SVQs. Details of these and other SQA publications are available on our website at **www.sqa.org.uk** on the 'Publications, Sales and Downloads' section. They can be ordered from SQA's Customer Contact Centre — telephone 0845 279 1000. Please note that there may be a charge for some of these publications.

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

External Assessment Moderation in National Qualifications and Higher National Qualifications: a guide for centres

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Employers and Training Providers

Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs in Examinations and Assessments

Quality Assurance Principles, Elements and Criteria

Operational Help Centre

The Operational Guide for Centres has been replaced by the online Operational Help Centre on **www.sqa.org.uk**

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

Unit:

Element:

Notes/Comments

The candidate has satisfied the Assessor and Internal Verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate:

Date:

Assessor:

Date:

Internal Verifier:

Date:

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, 'What you should be able to do' covered

Signed by candidate:

Date:

Observation record

Unit/Element(s):

Candidate:

Date of observation:

Evidence index number:

Skills/activities observed:	'What you should be able to do' covered:

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature:

Date:

Candidate's signature:

Date:

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit:	Element(s):
Evidence index number:	
Circumstances of assessment:	
List of questions and candidate's responses:	
Assessor's signature:	Date:
Candidate's signature:	Date: