

## Expert Witness Strategy

Assessment is the process of determining a Candidate's competence against national standards (i.e. skills defined by the National Occupational Standards). The assessment process involves observing a Candidate carrying out normal work activities, reviewing associated job paperwork and assessing a Candidate's knowledge through questioning.

Typically it would be expected that all assessment activities would be carried out by a qualified Assessor. A qualified Assessor would be expected to have achieved a national qualification such as A1, L&D9DI or D33.

Where it is not possible or practical to have a qualified Assessor in the same location as a Candidate, the following strategy outlines how Expert Witnesses can be used to support the assessment process by carrying out on-the-job observations. The requirements for an Expert Witness are outlined on the next page.

1. Observations would be carried out by an Expert Witness with a qualified Assessor continuing to be responsible for assessment planning, providing feedback and for all other assessment activities e.g. review of paperwork, knowledge questioning.
2. An Expert Witness would be required to:
  - agree a time with the Candidate for the observation to take place and advise the Assessor;
  - observe the Candidate carrying out normal work tasks/activities;
  - record details of each task/activity observed and confirm its completion according to the required standard;
  - authenticate any supporting documentation/job paperwork (for example, a Candidate's name may not always appear on the job paperwork so his/her involvement should be confirmed);
  - comment on the Candidate's technical ability, knowledge of equipment, team work, safe working practices, etc;
  - make a recommendation to the Assessor on the Candidate's ability to carry out the task/activity.
3. The Assessor will review all the evidence provided by the Candidate, including the observation by the Expert Witness, and make a judgement on the competence of the Candidate.

## **Expert Witnesses**

Expert Witnesses are discipline experts who would generally be expected to have a minimum of 5 years relevant experience. Expert Witness CVs should be available for review by the External Verifier.

All Expert Witnesses should participate in a briefing/coaching session to ensure that they are familiar with the standards and qualification being assessed and that they understand their role to observe candidates and record observations and comments.

The following are some key points which must be covered in briefing/coaching sessions with Expert Witnesses.

### **1. Assessing competence against occupational standards**

- What does competence mean?
- What is an occupational standard?
- How does assessment relate to the standard?
- What specific standards and qualification are being for the observation?

### **2. Carrying out observations**

- What can be assessed by observation?
- How to prepare for observation.
- Good practice during observations.

### **3. Making recommendations and providing supporting evidence**

- Confirming that job paperwork is available and confirms the activities and that the paperwork can be attributed to the Candidate.
- Recording observations and comments.
- Providing a clear recommendation to the Assessor on the Candidate's performance and ability to carry out the task/activity.