

Assessor's Guidelines for the SVQ2 Formwork (Construction) SCQF level 5

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About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ2 Formwork (Construction) SCQF level 5**. 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 and the SCQF

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications which set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy and are usually delivered in the workplace or in partnership with a college or other training provider. The qualifications have been designed by standards-setting bodies 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.

There are SVQs for nearly all occupations in Scotland and they are available at SVQ levels 1–5. SVQs are currently notionally placed in the SCQF as the individual SVQs may be at differing SCQF levels and have differing amount of credit points, depending on the structure and context of the SVQ. SVQs are a means of recognising the skills and knowledge people need in employment, ie job competence. Successful completion of an SVQ provides clear evidence that the learner works to nationally recognised occupational standards.

Each Unit defines one aspect of a job or work-role, and says what it is to be competent in that aspect of the job. To be awarded a full SVQ, learners must achieve each of the SVQ Units which make it up by demonstrating that they are competent in that aspect of the job. The Units which make up the SVQ can also be taken as freestanding awards. Some SVQs or SVQ Units are incorporated into other awards or programmes including HNCs and Modern Apprenticeships.

Explanation of levels

SVQ1 (SCQF level 4)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable.
SVQ2 (SCQF level 5)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. At this level, there will be activities, which are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement.
SVQ3 (either SCQF level 6 or 7)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy, and control or guidance of others is often present.
SVQ4 (either SCQF level 8 or 9)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.
SVQ5 (SCQF level 11)	Competence involves the application of skills and a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountability.

For further information on SCQF go to www.scqf.org.uk.

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 **Performance Criteria**. These Performance Criteria describe the activities which employees have to perform, and will require candidates to demonstrate certain skills or knowledge and understanding. These Performance Criteria may also be called **statements of competence** or **what candidates should do**.

The section on scope of **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 supervisor)
- ◆ **the internal verifier*:** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg 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. Occupational competence has been defined by the standards-setting body in the assessment strategy for this SVQ. The assessment strategy can be downloaded from 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/Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment and verification), or an alternative qualification which SQA also 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 SVQ2 in Formwork (Construction) at SCQF level 5

The national occupational standards for the SVQ in Formwork (Construction) have been developed by the Sector Skills of ConstructionSkills and are intended for people in the craft sector of the construction industry and related sectors.

These people may be working as carpenters, joiners or formworkers. They will require skills and knowledge in, among others, practical ability, health and safety, interpreting information and working to time scales.

The SVQ is 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: construction sites, colleges and training centres.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQ2 Formwork (Construction) SCQF level 5 (GD4K 22)

The candidate must achieve all of the mandatory Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC Ref	Title
FW18 04	5		VR 509	Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems
FW17 04	5		VR 510	Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork
FN2J 04	5		VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
FW0J 04	5		VR 642	Conform to Productive Work Practices
FN2V 04	5		VR 643	Move, Handle or Store Resources

An assessment strategy for the SVQ

As part of their review of the SVQs, the standards-setting body ConstructionSkills 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

The relevant parts of the assessment strategy are available for download from SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk. 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 carried out the matching process, but whoever has responsibility for this should ensure that the assessment opportunities available to the candidate are also considered.

New entrant

Candidates must be employed in the construction industry as an apprentice in site carpentry or formwork. They will attend a college of further education for a prescribed period of time during their apprenticeship.

Whilst attending college, candidates will generate all the necessary evidence to meet the requirements of the SVQ Units in their chosen occupational area.

In addition to this, candidates will be required to sit and pass a Health and Safety test and Practical Skills test, both administered by the Construction Industry Training Board (Construction Skills).

An example

James had just left school and was deciding which career to follow. He had taken qualifications at school but felt he was more a hands on type of person which was confirmed when he had studied the Scottish Progression Awards in construction and had particularly enjoyed the carpentry and joinery part of the course. With this in mind he contacted Construction Skills and completed an application form. He was invited to sit the Construction Skills learning exercise which he passed at a level suitable for him to pursue a career in carpentry and joinery or formwork.

He contacted some local companies and managed to secure a Modern Apprenticeship with one of them. He had to attend the local FE college on a block release basis to complete his 'off the job' training whilst also gaining relevant work experience in his trade with his company. During his four year apprenticeship James also sat and passed his Health and Safety test and Practical Skills test which allowed him to successfully complete his SVQ level 2 in Formwork (Construction).

Experienced worker

This route is available to candidates who have been employed as a formworker for several years but hold no formal qualifications which would give them national recognition for the skills they already have.

A skills matching exercise would be undertaken, recording the candidate's skills, knowledge and expertise against the SVQ Units. The candidate would, under guidance from the assessor, construct a portfolio of evidence to achieve these Units.

Where candidates are unable to generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the Units, some planning would be required in order to provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate competence. All these arrangements would be agreed by everyone involved and written up into an assessment plan for the candidate.

An example

Angus had served his apprenticeship with a small company and had not had the opportunity to attend college to gain certification for his training. He had a vast knowledge of his trade and many years practical experience but no formal qualifications. To enable him to apply for work on more sites he had to have a Construction Operative Registration Card which was only issued on production of proof of holding a relevant qualification such as an SVQ.

To enable him to be eligible for a card he enrolled for the SVQ level 2 in Formwork (Construction) with a local training provider. The training provider allocated an assessor to Angus who did a skills match against the Units to see what expertise Angus had already and to identify any training needs. As a result of this an assessment plan was drawn up for Angus and agreed by all the parties involved.

Angus then, with assistance from his assessor, proceeded to gather evidence to satisfy the Performance Criteria of the Units using observations, witness testimonies, personal statements and practical evidence. He was questioned by his assessor to ensure he had the knowledge and understanding to back up the performance evidence which was recorded in his portfolio. After gathering sufficient evidence for all the Units and passing the Health and Safety test, his assessor signed off the portfolio as complete which allowed Angus to apply for his registration card.

2 Preparing to assess the SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to begin to go about assessing your candidates for the SVQ. 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. 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 (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 which covers Unit VR 509 *Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems*. 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

Unit: VR 509 Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems					
Performance Criteria 5: Comply with the given contract information to carry out the work efficiently to the required specification					
Activities	PCs	Method of assessment/Sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (PCs and range)
Columns Walls Beams Slab Panels Bolt Boxes	3 and 5	Observation, witness statement, product evidence and questions	18 March 11	Wall panels from Unit VR 510: Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork	Unit VR 641 — Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Unit VR 643 — Move and Handle or Store Resources
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					

Assessor's signature: *Robert Watson*

1 review due: 22/03/11

Candidate's signature: *James Cameron*

2 review due: 30/03/11

Date of agreement: 07/03/11

Date of completion:

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 might be:

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

The challenges might be:

- ◆ pressure of work
- ◆ location of workplace
- ◆ all criteria not met during the assessment

An example

Agreement might be made with a candidate working on a construction project who has to demonstrate how to erect formwork for a column that this will be carried out by observation as and when the situation arises. If the assessor is working alongside the candidate they would be well placed to observe the candidate's performance, perhaps using a prepared checklist, and to question the candidate afterwards to confirm their knowledge and understanding of the operation.

Methods of assessment

Assessment may 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 types of 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 erecting/striking formwork, supplemented by questions regarding terminology and regulations
- ◆ observation of candidate taking instructions, interpreting information, working as part of a team
- ◆ observation of candidate preparing the work area and storing of tools and equipment on completion

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 include:

- ◆ formwork erected for a column with the relevant members produced and fixed by the candidate
- ◆ written evidence in the form of an assessment
- ◆ authenticated photographic evidence

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 Unit. Much of a candidate's knowledge and understanding will be apparent from what they do or produce as part of their work, but 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.

Question: Why does plywood used for formwork have a resin bonded face?

Answer: To give a high quality finish and maximise the re-usage.

Question: Why is it important to clean the formwork panels immediately after striking?

Answer: To remove any blemishes from the surface and check for defects to save time at the next erection.

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 might sometimes find it helpful to ask a candidate to give an account of why they did an activity in a certain way or how they produced a product 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 VR 510 *Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork*. You may not have been able to observe the candidate meeting all the Performance Criteria for erecting formwork for a column. The personal statement would allow the candidate to explain the process and procedures as well as demonstrating 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 may 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 called *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 VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*, candidates are required to 'Comply with all workplace safety legislation requirements at all times'. A witness testimony produced by the candidate's supervisor or employer would be very useful, as it could detail the ability of the candidate to conform to legislation in their work role.

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.

ConstructionSkills 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, you can download the assessment strategy from SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Example

In Unit VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*, PC2 requires the candidate to demonstrate the correct use of a fire extinguisher. For obvious reasons simulation is the only way this could be assessed.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence can be 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 download from SQA's website:
www.sqa.org.uk.

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/PC: VR 510 Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork
 PC 5 Comply with the given contract information to carry out the work efficiently to the required specification

Candidate: James Cameron **Date of observation:** 10/02/11

Evidence index number: 02

Skills/activities observed:	PCs covered:
<p>Erection of column formwork.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrated organisational skills in preparing the work area and gathering tools and equipment.</p> <p>During the erection of the formwork the candidate was competent in measuring, marking out, plumbing and bracing using the correct tools and equipment.</p> <p>Appropriate checks were carried out in regard to height, position, plumb, stability and finish during the observation.</p> <p>Throughout the observation the candidate displayed an awareness of other trades and recognition of the requirements of the specification and time factors.</p> <p>The candidate also met all relevant legal requirements in terms of Health and Safety and codes of practice.</p>	<p>Unit VR 209 PC 1 and 3</p> <p>Unit VR 510 PC 5</p> <p>Unit VR 510 PC 5</p> <p>Unit VR 209 PC 3</p> <p>Unit VR 641</p>

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:

The candidate demonstrated he was aware of the reasons why it is important to erect and secure the formwork correctly in terms of position, plumb straight and wind. From the observation it was clear that he understood how to overcome problems and ensure compliance with the specification and Health and Safety.

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:

As indicated above.

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:

The candidate carried out the task in a professional and assured manner, focusing on the need to meet the specification and adjusting to suit on-site conditions. At all times the candidate was aware of his responsibilities regarding Health and Safety and other operatives in the vicinity.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature:*Robert Watson*

Date: 10/02/11

Candidate's signature:*James Cameron*

Date: 10/02/11

Questions and candidate's 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: VR 510 Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork	PC: 5
Evidence index number: 03	
Circumstances of assessment: Following the observation the candidate was questioned to confirm their knowledge and understanding of the operations carried out.	
List of questions and candidate's responses: Q: Why is a kick box used? A: To ensure the column is located exactly in the correct position. Q: Why is release agent used on the face of the form and what would the consequences be if it was not used? A: To ensure the concrete does not stick to the face of the form. If it was not used, the face of the form would be damaged and therefore would not be re-usable incurring extra cost.	
Assessor's signature: <i>Robert Watson</i>	Date: 11/02/11
Candidate's signature: <i>James Cameron</i>	Date: 11/02/11

Candidate's personal statement

If a personal statement is being used as evidence, it should 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, and 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, PCs covered
08/02/11	05	<p>On 8 February at approximately 8.30am whilst preparing to erect column No 16 on the first floor of the multi-storey car park, I noticed that when the formwork had been struck from the previous job the face of one of the sides had been damaged beyond repair but not replaced.</p> <p>I reported this discrepancy to my foreman and suggested I stripped the plywood from the bearers, cut a new panel and re-assemble the column side exactly the same as the original. This would ensure the column was as per the specification.</p> <p>He confirmed this was acceptable and instructed me to proceed.</p> <p>Before stripping the plywood from the form, I recorded all the dimensions of the form section and marked which bearers were which to ensure they were returned to their original position. I then went to the site timber store and selected a sheet of plywood suitable for the work. I asked a labourer for assistance in lifting and carrying the sheet to my place of work. I marked out the required size on the sheet and using a portable circular saw ripped the sheet to size. During this operation I wore the relevant PPE (ear defenders, goggles).</p> <p>I then re-assembled the form panel as per the original and final checked the sizes before recommencing with the erection of the column formwork.</p>	<p>08: Witness Testimony: Mr McKerlie, Foreman</p> <p>09: Witness Testimony: Mr Gordon, Site Storeman</p>	<p>VR 211 PC 3 and 4 VR 209 PC 5 VR 160 PC 2, 3, 4 and 5</p>

Signed (candidate): *James Cameron*

Date: 08/02/11

Witness testimony

Remember when you to use witness testimony that 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:	SVQ2 Formwork (Construction)
Candidate's name:	James Cameron
Evidence index no:	09
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	08, 10
Performance Criteria:	Unit VR 160 PC 5
Date of evidence:	08/02/11
Name of witness:	Mr McKerlie
Designation/relationship to candidate:	Foreman
Details of testimony:	
<p>On the morning of 8 February 2011, James Cameron reported to me a damaged formwork panel for a column. He suggested stripping the plywood from the column bearers and replacing it with new material. I instructed him to proceed with this and have it checked before erection. He, unassisted, recorded all the relevant dimensions of the existing panel before dismantling. He requisitioned a sheet of suitable plywood from the site stores, and with the help of a labourer, carried it correctly across the site to his place of work. Once the material had been marked to the required size he set up the portable 110v circular saw, checking all the relevant parts prior to use. Wearing the correct PPE, he cut the material in a safe manner and stored the saw away after use. He returned the off-cuts to the site store and disposed of the waste properly.</p> <p>James then re-assembled the form panel to the original dimensions and had me check it. I found his work to be accurate and to a very good standard and instructed him to continue with the erection of the column.</p>	
<p>I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate. Signed by witness: <i>Davie McKerlie</i> Date: 08/02/11</p>	

Witness (please tick the appropriate box):

Holds A/V Units

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

Filling the gaps

There may come a time when your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you may find that certain situations, such as handling contingencies, have not arisen during assessment. Often these will 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:

VR 209 *Confirm Work Activities and Resources for the Work* and
VR 210 *Develop and Maintain Good Working Relationships*

You may be able to overcome these by simulation and questioning or secondment to another part of the organisation. It may be necessary, in extreme cases, to find another organisation which can provide the relevant experience for candidates to generate the required evidence.

Guidance and support to candidates

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — feedback should be on-going, 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 candidate 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 by asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from other colleagues of the candidate.

An example

Authentication will be required when a candidate has produced a piece of evidence that could, on the face of it, have been produced by anyone. For example, a candidate may have fabricated a formwork panel. It may require questioning or witness testimony to confirm that the work is genuinely the candidate's own.

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. In a Formwork (Construction) SVQ, it is strongly recommended that you use these nationally devised recording documents. If you choose to use your own recording material, this has to be approved by SQA.

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 candidates' 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 Unit 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: SVQ2 Formwork (Construction)

Candidate: James Cameron

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in five **mandatory** Units

Unit Checklist

Mandatory	VR 509	VR 510	VR 641	VR 642	VR 643							
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Mandatory Units achieved

Unit Number	Title	Assessor's Signature	Date
VR 509	Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems	<i>Robert Watson</i>	16/03/11
VR 510	Erect and Strike Timber and Proprietary Formwork		
VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare		
VR 642	Conform to Productive Work Practices	<i>Robert Watson</i>	23/04/11
VR 643	Move, Handle or Store Resources	<i>Robert Watson</i>	12/05/11

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.

Index of evidence

SVQ title and level: SVQ2 Formwork (Construction)

Evidence number	Description of evidence	Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If no, state location	Sampled by the IV (initials and date)
1			
2			
3			
4	Record of questions and candidate responses	Yes	A Green 14/02/11
5	Personal statement	Yes	A Green 14/02/11
6			
7			
8			
9	Witness testimony	Yes	A Green 14/02/11

Completing the Unit 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 Unit. 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 PCs 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 achievement record

Unit: VR 509 Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems

Evidence Index No	Description of Evidence	Performance Criteria						Knowledge and understanding relating to Performance Criteria																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6											
4	Record of questions and candidate responses					√							√											
5	Personal statement					√		√		√	√	√	√	√										
9	Witness testimony					√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√										

Unit: VR 509 Fabricate and Maintain Timber and Proprietary Formwork Systems

Notes/Comments

James carried out the tasks in a confident manner demonstrating the ability to recognise problems and come up with a solution ensuring he still conformed with the specification. He showed good communication skills and the ability to follow company procedures.

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

Candidate: *James Cameron*

Date: 12/02/11

Assessor: *Robert Watson*

Date: 12/02/11

Internal verifier: *Alan Green*

Date: 12/02/11

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 Business Development and Customer Support Team — telephone 0303 333 0330. Please note that there may be a charge for some of these publications.

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

External Verification: A Guide for Centres

Guide to Assessment

Introduction to Assessment Arrangements for Schools and Colleges

SQA's Quality Framework: a guide for centres

Operational Help Centre

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