



SVQs in Construction Crafts: Training and Assessment Programme

Frequently asked questions — Issue 1 10 June 2005

Q1 Is there a fixed sequence for the TAP?

There is no rigid sequence for the programme, though most people will follow a logical progression through the Units. Delivery is flexible, and the needs of the candidates is the most important thing to consider.

Q2 Do all the tasks leading up to a test have to be completed by each candidate?

This isn't mandatory, but remember that this is a National Training Programme for apprentices, so there would need to be firm grounds for omitting any of the tasks. You'd need to consult your internal verifier. SQA's External Moderators will monitor this aspect of the programme.

Q3 Do the tasks have to be formally assessed?

No. The assessor only needs to give the candidate feedback on each task. This feedback is to be recorded — as briefly as possible — on the sheets provided (and should be retained for external verification).

Q4 When should candidates attempt the first practical assessment?

This varies. So far, the norm is somewhere between Week 6 and Week 8 of the programme, but some candidates may fall outside these timescales.

Q5 Do candidates have to complete all the tests?

Yes. The tests are the basis for ensuring that National Standards are being established in the programme.

Q6 How often can candidates be re-assessed for knowledge evidence?

Normally one re-assessment is allowed, but in certain circumstances (subject to internal verification), a second re-assessment may be possible.

Q7 What options are there when a candidate fails to meet the standards in one of the practical tests?

There are several options, and an effective internal verification system is critical for deciding whichever one is selected. Options include:

- ◆ Dismantle the section of work which has failed, and rebuild or re-assemble it. This is often the preferred option, but it depends on the problem being identified soon enough at the construction/assembly stage.
- ◆ Proceed to the next series of training tasks, and then to test for those skills at the **next practical test**. This may be a good option, but it can only be used when the skills which were not demonstrated can be re-assessed in the next test. You can't re-assess a candidate in a training task.
- ◆ Re-assess using a specially-designed task that measures the skills which were not achieved in the original test. This can be a useful option which avoids the candidate rebuilding/reassembling a large test model.
- ◆ Rebuild/reassemble the complete test. This would normally be the last resort. Candidates could get demoralised by this experience.

Q8 When should the candidates attempt the first written assessment?

This depends on the individual candidate. So far, somewhere between Weeks 7 and 10 is the norm.

Q9 How should a candidate be re-assessed after failing one of the written assessments?

This would depend on the margin of failure. If the candidate has narrowly failed a section (eg has achieved 7 out of 12, when 9 out of 12 was required to pass) you could re-assess orally (subject to internal verification). If the candidate has failed by a wide margin, you'd have to re-assess using the alternative assessment paper. Remember, though, that the candidate only needs to resit the failed section of the paper.

If a candidate fails again at the re-assessment, extensive remediation would be required before a second re-assessment can be conducted.

Q10 What is the preferred method of storing individual candidate's knowledge evidence (written tests) and performance evidence (checklists)?

To date, five of the six pilot centres in Bricklaying, and all six pilots in Carpentry and Joinery, are using individual candidate's portfolio systems. External verification visits have found this to be very effective.

Q11 Would candidates keep their teaching notes/handouts in these portfolios?

No. The centre would keep the candidates' portfolios in a secure location. Candidates will keep their teaching notes etc in their own possession, as normal.

Q12 During the training programme who would normally keep and store the candidate's portfolios?

Normally the centre would make provision for this.

Q13 What information would normally be kept in the portfolios?

All the evidence which has been generated by the candidate. This would include all primary evidence such as practical checklists for training tests, written responses to assessments, evidence recorded for generic Units, finished drawings, and building science assessments produced for Core Skills.

Also included would be secondary evidence such as feedback sheets for practical tasks, photographic evidence, and workplace evidence documentation.

Q14 What advice is being given on the new teaching approaches that are required for the new programme?

The general advice is that new modes of teaching must be geared towards the assessments at the end of each Unit. For example, every Unit will require candidates to demonstrate knowledge evidence for Health and Safety, so there are always assessment questions on this topic. This obviously impacts on the teaching to be done early in the programme.

There are also building calculation questions in each Unit, so this means Numeracy must be taught on an on-going basis in each Unit.

Some centres have developed an innovative 'Unit syllabus' approach. This approach ensures that the knowledge and skills to be assessed in each Unit have been covered. This method is very effective in preparing candidates for the summative assessments.

Q15 What should teaching staff do if they have day-to-day questions which they need answered quickly during year 1 of the new TAP?

SQA's Moderation Team is the first point of contact. The team will arrange for a specialist to answer your question. SQA will monitor the volume of enquiries, and will provide more support if it's needed.

Q16 How long are these TAPS due to run before they are reviewed or re-validated?

There will be an initial review after completion of the two-year TAP for all crafts.

Q17 How can centres who are delivering the TAP influence these reviews?

Centres will be asked to give feedback on completion of each Unit in the programme.

Q18 Will moderation visits be conducted during year one of the TAP?

All pilot centres were moderated at least once during year one, and we expect this to be true for the 6 other crafts now embarking on the TAP.

Q19 What is the moderation model for the TAP?

Clear guidance will be issued on the retention of evidence for the TAP, and moderators will be very clear on all aspects of this.

Q20 What single piece of advice would you give to anyone who is delivering the TAP?

Carefully read the introduction information at the start the TAP document, and read the section at the beginning of each Unit before you start teaching that Unit.

Q21 Is completing the TAP enough for the candidate to be awarded SVQ level 3?

No. The TAP provides off-the-job training and assessment for apprentices. They will still be required to show that they are providing evidence from the workplace, using the procedure that has been agreed by SQA, SBATC and CITB.

Q22 Do the TAPs have numbers for entering candidates?

No. The SVQ Group Award and Unit numbers should be used to enter and result candidates. The TAP is a training and assessment support package to help centres with the delivery and implementation of the SVQ. It's not an award in its own right.

Q23 How does my centre get approval for the TAP?

There is no separate approval procedure for the TAP. If your centre is approved to offer the relevant SVQ, you are authorised to use the TAP.