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**Assessment Strategy**

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| **Sector** | Creative - Media |
| **Qualification Title(s)** | Diploma in Creative Media at SCQF Level 7 |
| **Developed by** | ScreenSkills |
| **Date approved by ACG** | 08/01/2020 |
| **Version**  | 2 |

**Introduction:**

The purpose of an assessment strategy is to provide awarding bodies with a consistent approach to assessment that complies with SQA Accreditation’s regulatory requirements.

The key areas this assessment strategy will cover are:

* how external quality control of assessment will be achieved
* which aspects must always be assessed through performance in the workplace
* the extent to which a realistic work environment and simulated working conditions may be used to assess competence
* the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers

Awarding bodies must use the assessment strategy as the basis for developing and defining the evidence requirements and assessment methods their providers will use. This includes specifying how the qualification will be internally and externally quality assured.

This strategy covers ScreenSkills competency/skills-based qualification the Diploma in Creative Media at SCQF Level 7 which is used in the following industries:

TV, Film, Radio and Audio and Journalism; creative roles in the wider creative industries may also use the Diploma. Following the review of the National Occupational Standards for Journalism, Production Film & TV, Radio & Audio Content Creation and the existing Creative and Digital Media Diploma, the employers have requested that observation in the workplace be used as the primary method of assessment.

These Assessment Principles are designed to supplement the guidance issued by Awarding Bodies.

## **External quality control**

Competency based qualification assessment decisions are monitored and standardised through a robust verification system as outlined by SQA Accreditation. Units of competence within these qualifications are based on National Occupation Standards (NOS). Units of competence differ from NOS as they are assigned a level, a credit value and include evidence requirements and assessment guidance.

In addition to SQA Accreditation requirements, the internal and external verification of the assessment process will be provided through the following;

Awarding bodies will:

* carry out risk assessments of organisations seeking to be approved centres to ensure that they have all the appropriate policies, procedures and staffing in place to deliver training
* apply quality assurance and control measures to all approved centres to ensure consistency of delivery
* use a risk-based approach to sampling assessment decisions to ensure that they are appropriate, consistent, and monitored across and within all approved centres
* use monitoring to provide information on the performance of centres and assessors, to inform external verification visits
* ensure that all approved centres have in place systems and processes that are robust, consistently applied and lead to good practice in recordkeeping, support, advice, assessment and verification of learner and staff activities
* operate a system for monitoring continuing professional development for external verifiers
* operate systems and opportunities for sharing best practice and latest developments in qualification matters between centres
* provide feedback to ScreenSkills of issues related to the national occupational standards and their effectiveness in vocational qualifications

## **Workplace assessment**

The ScreenSkills Diploma in Creative Media is based on NOS, and the need to demonstrate competence in the workplace. Therefore, the workplace is the preferred primary location for assessment, enabling candidates to be assessed under normal commercial operating conditions.

The workplace is defined as an environment in which candidates would use organisational equipment or processes under commercial operating conditions, after any training, induction or related probationary period has been completed. It is accepted that some areas of knowledge and understanding may take place in a different environment i.e. training centre/area which is not the immediate workplace.

 However, any knowledge and understanding assessments undertaken must be directly linked to workplace performance and should include performance evidence.

Sources of evidence are listed below:

**Observation**

Observation of candidates can only be carried out on-the- job and is the preferred primary source of evidence. This should include inspection and evaluation of products produced.

**Questioning**

Questioning of candidates to support performance or provide knowledge evidence can take place either on or off the job

**Witness testimony**

ScreenSkills supports the use of witness testimony as a natural and effective way of contributing to a learner’s source of evidence of competence. This should not, however, be the primary method of assessment and should be used to supplement other methods. The quality of this type of evidence will be affected by occupational competence and experience of the witness.

As a minimum, a witness must be:

* occupationally competent with sufficient experience to judge the assessment activity undertaken by others
* able to demonstrate that they have the necessary expertise in the occupational area for which they are providing testimony
* an expert in the occupation to be assessed i.e. experienced line manager or senior colleague and is not the Assessor

Centres must provide arrangements to provide veracity of any witness testimony evidence/signature authenticity.

**Simulation**

In sectors as diverse as the creative industries, there are work environments that are difficult to simulate e.g. working on live sets, live event reporting to deadlines. ScreenSkills defines simulated activities as “those which are carried out without the environment resources or equipment found within the workplace and involve acting or other scenarios which are not ‘real’ work tasks”.

## The use of appropriate simulations must be agreed with the External Verifier appointed by the awarding body prior to the simulation taking place and should be carried out within an agreed realistic working environment (see Realistic Work Environment and Simulation section – Page 6)

**Supplementary evidence**

Supplementary evidence must relate directly to the candidate performance on-the-job, and may include professional discussion, product and photographic evidence, relevant documentation, reports, presentations and work records etc.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding can be offered as supplementary evidence, if it is a measurable assessed outcome of learning which links to aspects of knowledge and understanding detailed in the relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS) and confirms current competence.

Assessors should make best use of all the assessment methods available to them in ensuring the most reliable and effective use is made of claims of prior learning and experience which relate to the individual circumstances.

**Recognition or Prior Learning (RPL)/Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL)**

Evidence of past achievement may be included as permissible evidence within the assessment methods. All learners must demonstrate current competence with respect to RPL/APEL. The Assessor must ensure that the most reliable and effective evidence is used relating to claims for RPL/APEL.

**Realistic Work Environment (RWE) and Simulation**

In sectors as diverse as the creative industries, there are work environments that are difficult to simulate e.g. working on live sets, live event reporting to deadlines.

High quality Realistic Work Environments (RWEs) and simulations may be used to assess competence at the discretion of the Awarding Body, where it is considered the environment provided fully reflects a commercial working environment; and that the demands on the candidate during simulation are neither more or less than they would be in a real work environment/ situation

Examples that are accepted are detailed below:

 • where performing specific activities would be very costly to perform in terms of time,

 materials and equipment

• where safety of the workplace could be affected or disruption to work processes could occur

• where issues of confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements (NDA) restrict access to real

 work opportunities

RWEs and simulations must be designed to match the physical characteristics of an operational processing environment as detailed below:

* the RWE must take into account legislation, regulations and codes of practice which apply to the regulated workplace environment
* assessments must be carried out under realistic work pressures that are found in the normal industry workplace
* assessments must be carried out in conditions and facilities which are typical of those encountered in the normal industry workplace
* the range of materials, equipment and tools that learners use must be up-to-date and be of the type routinely found in the normal industry work environment.
* all work carried out must be completed in a way, and to timescales that are acceptable in the normal industry workplace
* provide interaction with colleagues and contacts using the methods of communication used in the workplace (if required)
* learners must be expected to achieve a volume of work comparable to that expected in the normal work situation being replicated.
* learners must be given workplace responsibilities that will enable them to meet the requirements of the assessment

Use of simulation and RWE must be discussed with the assessment centre and approved by the External Verifier/Awarding Body, in advance of use, with a clear rationale provided for its intended use. If approval is given, all Awarding Body guidance and requirements must be strictly observed.

## **Occupational expertise of assessors and quality assurers**

*This outlines the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers.*

**Assessors:**

* must hold, or be working towards, valid assessor qualifications as defined by the Qualification Regulator currently D32, D33, A1, A2, L & D9D, L & D9DI
* must be occupationally competent in the units they are assessing. Centres must evidence that the assessor has achieved the appropriate qualification (or equivalent), at or above the level they are assessing **OR,** they must provide supporting evidence that they are able to make valid judgments through experience built up by working in the industry
* must have a working knowledge of the qualification and a full understanding of that part of the award for which they have responsibility for
* must demonstrate current evidence of continuing professional development in a relevant area of practice.

**Internal verifiers:**

* must hold a valid internal verifier qualification or be working towards suitable qualifications for internal verification, as defined by the Qualification Regulator(s) currently D34, V1, L & D11
* must be occupationally competent in the units they are assessing. Centres must evidence that the internal verifier has achieved the appropriate qualification (or equivalent), at or above the level they are verifying, or provide supporting evidence that they are able to make valid judgments
* must have a working knowledge of the qualifications they are internally verifying
* must be either working in the appropriate sector itself OR they must be able to demonstrate they possess practical and up-to-date knowledge of current working practices appropriate to the sector in which they are carrying out verification activities
* must demonstrate current evidence of continuing professional development in a relevant area of practice.

**External verifiers:**

* must be familiar with the industry; have up-to-date working knowledge /experience of the technical processes and terminology for which they provide external verification. If appropriate, this experience could be evidenced through professional registration
* must hold valid qualifications in assessment and internal verification as above, and hold, or be working towards valid qualifications for external verification, currently L & D12 as defined by the Qualification Regulator.
* must demonstrate current evidence of continuing professional development in a relevant area of practice.