



**OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY**

**SVQ COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT AND  
VERIFICATION STRATEGY**

**May 2016**



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## 1. Introduction

### Purpose of Strategy

This Assessment and Verification Strategy sets out OPITO's requirements and recommendations for the assessment, verification and external quality control of SVQs for the Upstream Oil and Gas Industry.

This Strategy is particularly relevant to:

- organisations using Competence Standards, Occupational Standards and Vocational Qualifications to assure the competence of staff;
- organisations seeking OPITO approval for their Competence Management Systems;
- organisations implementing in-house competence assurance programmes.

The Strategy should be read in conjunction with any specific assessment guidance published within each Standard and the requirements of Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations, if relevant.

### Definitions

<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is the process of ensuring that individuals are competent to undertake their job roles in accordance with an agreed Standard.
<b>Assessor</b>	An Assessor judges Candidate performance and evidence against a relevant Standard(s).
<b>Auditor</b>	See External Verifier
<b>Awarding Body/ Audit Organisation</b>	Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations quality assure the delivery and assessment of qualifications and/or Standards.
<b>Candidate</b>	Candidates are individuals who seek to be assessed as competent against a Standard(s).
<b>Competence</b>	Competence is the ability to perform activities within an occupation to the standards expected within employment. Individuals must provide evidence that they have the required experience, technical skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour to perform a job role/function and that they apply them consistently, safely and in accordance with procedures and Standards.
<b>External Verifier/Auditor</b>	An External Verifier/Auditor is employed by an Awarding Body/ Audit Organisation or by a Standards Setting Bodies/Organisations to ensure that Standards are being implemented consistently across all organisations. This will generally be achieved through an external verification visit or an audit. This role may also be carried out by Qualification Verifiers.
<b>Internal Verifier</b>	An Internal Verifier assures the quality and consistency of assessments carried out against the relevant Standard(s). Internal Verifiers may also be referred to as Internal Quality Assurers or Quality Monitors.



<b>Occupational Standard</b>	An Occupational Standard defines the expected level of performance, knowledge and understanding an individual must achieve when carrying out job roles/functions in the workplace. Occupational standards therefore act as benchmarks for assessing on-the-job competence and can be used to monitor the performance of the workforce on an on-going basis to maintain a safe and productive workforce. Occupational standards must be assessed in the workplace in accordance with operational requirements and procedures.
<b>Standards Setting Bodies/Organisations</b>	Standards Setting Bodies/Organisations work with employers to develop National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the industries, sectors and occupations they represent. OPITO is the Standards Setting Body for the upstream oil and gas industry.
<b>Training Standard</b>	A training standard sets benchmarks for the assessment of skills and knowledge and provides a foundation for individuals required to work in the oil and gas industry.
<b>Verification</b>	Verification is the process of ensuring that all assessments have been fair, safe, valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and consistent across all assessment decisions.
<b>Vocational Qualification</b>	Vocational Qualifications provide recognition of an individual's ability to work in real working environments. Such qualifications include Global Vocational Qualification, Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

## Typical Sections of a Standard

<b>Outcomes/Elements</b>	describe the skills that need to be demonstrated to achieve the Standard. <b>All</b> the Outcomes/Elements must be met to achieve the Standard.
<b>Performance Criteria</b>	define the evidence that candidates must provide to show that they have the required skills. <b>All</b> the Performance Criteria must be met to achieve the Standard.
<b>Scope</b>	defines the range of activities that must be assessed to achieve the Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Typically all the Scope must be met to achieve the Standard (unless specifically stated otherwise).
<b>Knowledge</b>	defines what the Candidate must know and understand in order to complete the skills being assessed. The knowledge is considered essential and not what is nice to have.
<b>Assessment Guidance</b>	provides details of how assessment must be carried out and what types of assessment methods must be used.
<b>Evidence Requirements</b>	define the type and quantity of evidence that must be provided. <b>All</b> these requirements must be met.



## 2. Principles for the Assessment and Verification of Competence

### The Purpose of Assessment and Verification

To be **competent**, individuals must provide evidence that they have the required experience, technical skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour to perform a job role/function and that they apply them consistently, safely and in accordance with relevant procedures and Standards.

The purpose of the **assessment process** is to ensure that individuals are competent to undertake their job role or function within the oil and gas industry.

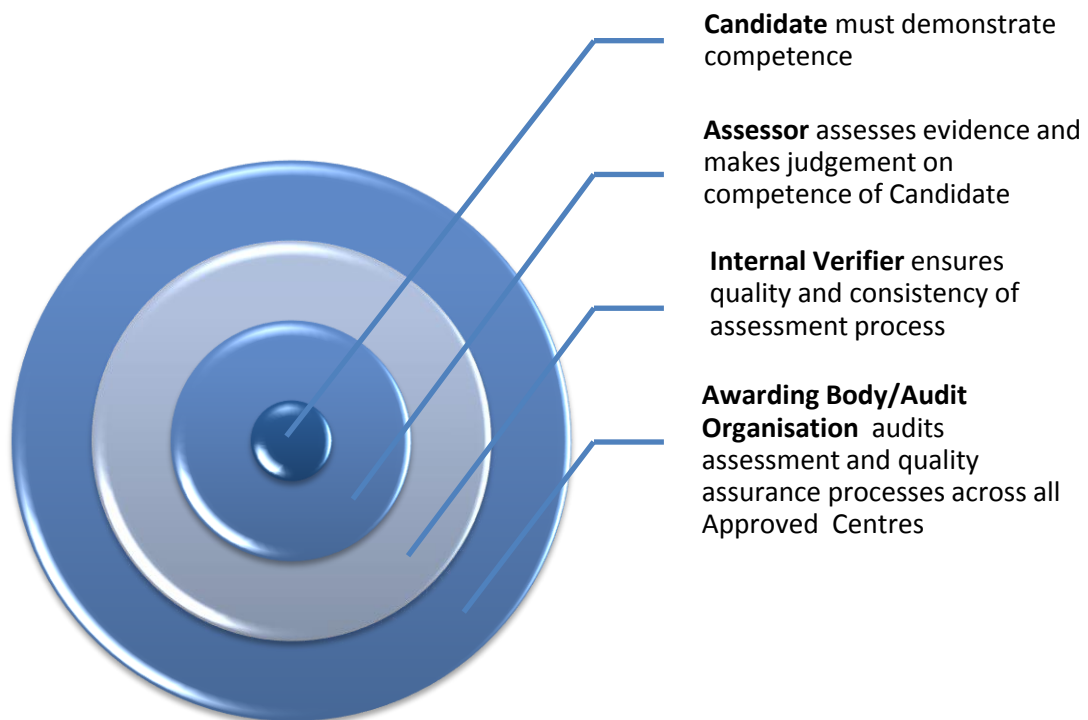
The purpose of the **verification process** is to ensure that all assessments have been fair, safe, valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and consistent.

### Guidance for the Assessment and Verification of Competence

1. Assessing competence must include observation of Candidates performing tasks in the workplace to a specified Standard(s). Observations are ideally expected to be carried out by a trained Assessor wherever possible. Where it can be shown that is not possible or practical to have a qualified Assessor in the same location as Candidates, Expert Witnesses can be used to support the assessment process by carrying out on-the-job observations on behalf of a trained Assessor. (Refer to page 18 for more guidance.)
2. Observation of Candidates must be supported by questioning to ensure that Candidates have, and can apply, relevant knowledge and understanding for the specified Standard(s).
3. Relevant workplace documents and job records can be used to support the assessment process. Additional supporting evidence could include witness testimony from individuals who are in a position to provide informed feedback on the performance of Candidates.
4. Simulation must only be used when it is not practical and/or safe to obtain direct evidence of Candidates' performance and when expressly indicated by individual Standards.
5. All assessments must be subject to a valid verification process conducted by competent Internal Verifiers. Internal Verifiers must sample evidence across all Assessors, Candidates and assessment sites. (Refer to page 17 for more guidance.)
6. All Candidates must have access to fair and equitable assessment opportunities and have a right to appeal against any decision made by their Assessor.
7. Robust internal quality assurance systems must be implemented to ensure that the quality of the assessment and verification processes is maintained. Where formal qualifications are to be achieved this must be in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations.)

## Roles & Responsibilities

*The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with the requirements of Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations, if relevant.*



### Candidates

Candidates are individuals who will be assessed as competent against a Standard(s).

Candidates' responsibilities are to:

- work with their Assessor(s) to identify opportunities where they can demonstrate their competence in accordance with the relevant Standard(s);
- perform agreed tasks in the workplace in accordance with all health, safety and environmental requirements;
- gather evidence (where required) to support their claim of competence in accordance with the relevant Standard(s).



## Assessors

Assessors' responsibilities are to:

- plan and manage the assessment process;
- carry out assessments of Candidates' performance against the relevant Standard(s);
- ensure that Candidates' evidence is relevant, valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient;
- make a judgement as to the competence of the Candidates;
- record assessment decisions.

Assessors must be competent and qualified to carry out the assessment process – they must meet the following minimum requirements:

- be technically competent in the discipline area of the Standards they are assessing against \* – this could be demonstrated in a number of ways:
  - they are an experienced practitioner or supervisor in the same discipline;
  - they have been assessed as competent for the relevant Standard(s) and/or have achieved an equivalent qualification;
  - they have previously performed or supervised the activities defined in the Standard(s) and can demonstrate that they have maintained their technical expertise and knowledge of current processes and practices;
- hold a recognised Assessor qualification (e.g. L&D9DI, L&D9D, A1, A2, D32, D33) and be operating to the requirements of the current Standards for trained Assessors\*;
- fully understand the requirements defined in the Standard(s) for which they are carrying out the assessment process;
- comply with the required assessment and internal verification processes and quality procedures for the Standard(s);
- comply with the requirements for recording assessment decisions for the Standard(s);
- liaise with other Assessors and Internal Verifier(s) to ensure a consistent approach to assessment is maintained. (Refer to page 16 for guidance on standardisation.)

\* details of Assessor competence and experience must be available for review by Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations, as relevant

Assessors must maintain the currency of their skills:

- Assessors must participate in regular updates / training / Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities relating to their technical discipline, standards assessed and assessment practices – typically, as a minimum, on an annual basis;
- Assessors who have not carried out any assessments for a period of 2 year or more for the Standards against which they will be assessing Candidates, must undertake refresher training before carrying out any assessment activities. This refresher training must ensure that they are fully conversant with the criteria defined in the Standards they will be assessing against and, if relevant, the current version of the Assessor qualification.





Additional notes on the requirements for Assessors:

- Assessors will be required to demonstrate technical competence for the following individual disciplines depending on the qualification(s) being assessed: measurement processes; offshore deck operations; processing operations: hydrocarbons; well services (coiled tubing); well services (mechanical wireline); well services (providing fluids); well services (providing nitrogen); process engineering maintenance (electrical); process engineering maintenance (mechanical); process engineering maintenance (instrument & control);
- should an Assessor also act as an Internal Verifier, the Assessor cannot take any part in the verification of the Candidates that they have assessed – this must be done by a different Internal Verifier;
- Assessors who are in training can undertake assessments but all assessments against Standard(s) must be reviewed by a qualified Assessor and/or an Internal Verifier. Assessors in training would be expected to complete their own Assessor qualification within a year of their involvement in the assessment process.

### Internal Verifiers

Internal Verifiers' main responsibilities are to:

- ensure the quality and consistency of assessment decisions made by the Assessors;
- ensure that the assessment processes comply with required quality assurance systems;
- provide feedback to Assessors on the judgements they have made about Candidates' competence.

Internal Verifiers must be competent and qualified to carry out the verification process – they must meet the following minimum requirements:

- have sufficient occupational expertise in the broad discipline area covered by the relevant Standard(s) to permit valid judgements about assessments and appeal decisions – typically this would be demonstrated by the Internal Verifier having worked at either operational or supervisory level in the broad discipline area;
- hold a recognised Internal Verifier's qualification (e.g. L&D11, V1, D34) and be operating to the requirements of the current Standards for trained Internal Verifiers\*;
- fully understand the content of, and the assessment requirements for, the Standard(s) for which they have responsibility for verifying;
- internally verify assessments across all sites, Assessors and Candidates – including interim verification; (Refer to page 17 for guidance on internal verification and sampling.)
- provide feedback, advice and support to Assessors;
- comply with the internal verification processes and quality procedures for the Standard(s);
- maintain records of internal verification activities for the Standard(s);
- conduct and/or participate in standardisation activities to ensure a consistent approach to assessment is maintained; (Refer to page 16 for guidance on standardisation.)
- participate in, and support, their organisation's internal quality systems and ensure that any corrective actions and recommendations required following internal audits are carried out in a timely manner.

\*Details of Internal Verifier competence and experience must be available for review by Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations, as relevant.



The Internal Verifier may also carry out the following additional activities, in accordance with their organisation's and, where relevant, the Awarding Body/Audit Organisation's quality systems:

- implement an appeals procedure to settle any disputes between Candidates and Assessors;
- facilitate, or contribute to, the induction, training and development of Assessors;
- participate in, and support, external quality audits and ensure that any corrective actions and recommendations required following the audits are carried out in a timely manner.

Internal Verifiers must maintain the currency of their skills:

- Internal Verifiers must participate in regular updates / training / Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities – typically on a minimum of an annual basis;
- Internal Verifiers who have not carried out any verification for a period of 2 year or more must undertake refresher training before carrying out any internal verification activities. This refresher training must ensure that they are fully conversant with the Standard(s) they will be internally verifying and, if relevant, the current version of the Internal Verifier qualification.

Additional notes on the deployment of Internal Verifiers:

- Internal Verifiers would normally be expected to complete an Assessor qualification and have been carrying out assessments for a minimum of 6 months before going on to become an Internal Verifier;
- should an Internal Verifier also act as an Assessor, the Internal Verifier cannot take any part in the verification of the Candidate that they have assessed – this must be done by a different Internal Verifier;
- should Internal Verifiers undertake Candidate assessments, they must meet all the requirements outlined above for an Assessor;
- should an Internal Verifier with sufficient occupational expertise in the broad discipline area not be available, internal verification could be carried out by an experienced Internal Verifier from a related discipline (e.g. another maintenance or process related discipline). Alternatively, specific approval could be sought from an Awarding Body/Organisation and/or External Verifier/Auditor for the use of an experienced Internal Verifier from a related discipline.



## Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations

External quality control of assessment will be carried out by Awarding Bodies/Organisations.

Awarding Bodies/Organisations will be responsible for:

- **Approval** of new Centres to ensure that they are suitably equipped and prepared to assess against the Standards and have sufficient Assessors and Internal Verifiers in place;
- **External Verification** to monitor Approved Centres' performance to ensure that the requirements of the Standards and the OPITO Upstream Oil and Gas Industry Assessment and Verification Strategy are being met.

Awarding Bodies/Organisations must ensure that:

- Approved Centres have implemented robust quality assurance systems to ensure that the quality of the assessment and verification processes is maintained and meets the requirements of the Standards.
- Assessments are subject to a valid verification process - Approved Centres must be able to demonstrate that they have implemented a valid sampling plan which samples evidence across all Assessors and Candidates.
- Candidates have access to fair and equitable assessment opportunities and have a right to appeal against any decision made by their Assessor.
- Approved Centres maintain a list of Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Expert Witnesses who are involved in assessment and internal verification activities for each Standard/ Qualification, supported by CVs.

The primary method of external quality control of assessment will be through Approval and External Verification visits/audits to Approved Centres. Alternative methods, such as paper approvals, postal verification or online verification (where online portfolios have been generated), may be used following a valid risk assessment of each Approved Centre.

External Verification must be carried out on a minimum of an annual basis for active Approved Centres. Standardisation activities across External Verifiers/Auditors must take place on a regular basis to ensure consistency between Approved Centres.

Awarding Bodies/Organisations will be responsible for taking relevant sanctions against Approved Centres who have not met the requirements of the Standards and the OPITO Upstream Oil and Gas Industry Assessment and Verification Strategy and for ensuring that corrective actions are implemented.



External Verifiers/Auditors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- hold (or be working towards it) a recognised External Verifier qualification (e.g. L&D12, D35 or V2)
- be competent in internal verification;
- have relevant occupational competence;
- have experience of working within the upstream oil and gas industry.

External Verifiers/Auditors will be required to:

- participate in the approval of Approved Centres;
- monitor Approved Centres' performance and review Candidate evidence across a representative sample of Assessors and Internal Verifiers;
- provide feedback, advice and support to Approved Centres;
- review Approved Centres' lists of Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Witnesses who are involved in assessment and internal verification activities for each Standard/ Qualification on an annual basis.

External Verifier/Auditors should maintain the currency of their skills and should participate in updates / training / Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities – on a minimum of an annual basis.



### 3. Assessment Guidance

*The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with any specific assessment guidance published within each Standard and the requirements of Awarding Bodies/Audit Organisations, if relevant.*

#### Planning for Assessment

Assessors must familiarise themselves with the relevant Standards. This will identify the skills that will need to be demonstrated, and the types of evidence that a Candidate will need to generate.

Effective assessment planning will ensure that:

- Candidates understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- relevant sources of evidence can be discussed with Candidates
- assessment processes can be linked to Candidates' work patterns and naturally occurring opportunities to generate evidence
- sufficient time is available to collect documentary evidence, including product evidence and witness testimonies
- observations can be planned around work plans, shift patterns, etc
- the use of Expert Witnesses to carry out observations, if required, can be planned and appropriate approvals sought (see page 18 for more guidance)
- alternative arrangements for evidence for infrequently occurring activities or activities that cannot be readily generated in the workplace can be planned and appropriate approvals sought if required, for example, for the use of simulation (see page 15 for more guidance).

#### Assessment Methods for Assessing Competence in the Oil and Gas Industry

*Awarding Bodies should specify the appropriate assessment methods in order to ensure that the requirements specified within each Standard are achieved. Typically used and appropriate assessment methods which may be deployed are described below.*

#### Observation of Performance

Observations are used to assess Candidates' performance as they carry out normal work activities in accordance with the Standard(s). Observation can allow an Assessor to assess a range of criteria, for example:

- that the Candidates are following the correct procedures and job specifications;
- that Candidates are following safe systems of work;
- that communication with colleagues and clients is effective.

Records must be retained of what has been observed and how this relates to the Standard(s).

It is expected that observations will be carried out by a qualified Assessor or by an Expert Witness Advisor (EWA) acting on behalf of the appointed Assessor. Please refer to further guidance on use of Expert Witnesses on page 18.



## Questioning

Assessment of knowledge and understanding will typically cover knowledge of facts and procedures, understanding of principles and concepts, application of principles and procedures.

Questions can be used to:

- confirm that the evidence collected by Candidates is valid and authentic;
- fill gaps in evidence where Candidates have not been able to demonstrate specific skills as they did not occur when they were being observed;
- confirm that Candidates know **why** they are doing something;
- assess if the Candidates have the relevant knowledge/experience to deal with non-standard or contingency situations.

Questions can be written and/or oral. Assessors must retain a record of all the questions asked, together with the Candidates' responses.

## Product Evidence

Product evidence could include job related paperwork that has been generated as part of normal work activities e.g. operations reports, job logs, daily status reports, charts, handover reports.

Review of product evidence can allow Assessors to assess if Candidates have:

- carried out the required work activities in accordance with job requirements and procedures;
- made a relevant contribution to the overall job;
- completed the paperwork correctly e.g. recorded relevant information and completed all required sections.

## Additional Supporting Evidence

Examples of additional evidence which may be collected to support the assessment process include:

- Candidate **personal logs or personal statements** which can be used to record activities over a period of time and explain evidence collected, including the context for the assessment and the Candidate's role;
- **witness testimony** from individuals who are in a position to provide informed feedback on the performance of Candidates – this could include experienced colleagues, supervisors, mentors, technical specialists and clients;
- a **CV or job history** which can provide supporting evidence of Candidates' job experience/history;
- completion of a relevant **qualification/training course** which can provide evidence that Candidates have relevant knowledge of operational theory and procedures, work methods, operation of the equipment and safety procedures.



## Integration of Assessment

Wherever possible opportunities for integrating assessments should be identified. For example:

- it may be possible to assess more than one Standard during an Assessment
- it is often appropriate to assess knowledge during observations
- knowledge can often appear in more than one Standard within the same discipline area – this needs only to be assessed on one occasion.

## Judging Evidence

Evidence should cover the performance criteria, scope and knowledge required for the Standards as defined on the evidence requirements.

Considerations when judging Candidates' evidence include:

- is there sufficient evidence or are there any gaps in the evidence
- is the evidence relevant, valid and reliable
- is the evidence current – the general guidance is that evidence should be less than 2 years old but there can be exceptions
- can the evidence be attributed to the Candidate and or is further authentication required – for example, this may require additional questioning of the Candidate and/or counter-signatures from witnesses.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Evidence from prior learning must be relevant to the standard concerned, and be authenticated, reliable and valid. Evidence more than two years old should not be considered unless in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances will require agreement of the external verifier. Where there have been significant changes within the sector within the previous two years, prior experience and learning should be used with caution and additional evidence sought.



## Simulation Guidelines

Standards define the expected level of performance individuals must achieve when carrying out job roles/functions in the workplace.

The majority of the Candidates' evidence must be drawn from their normal working activity and simulation can only be used where it is difficult or hazardous to obtain direct evidence of Candidates' performance and when expressly indicated by individual Standards.

Examples of when simulation may be required:

- health and safety considerations would prevent assessments being carried out under normal working operations
- it would not be feasible to replicate a situation such as emergency/critical conditions, hazardous operations, adverse weather conditions or contingency scenarios
- naturally occurring evidence is so infrequent that gathering evidence from normal working operations would be impractical

Simulation must take place in a realistic working environment. The environment and conditions for the assessment must reflect normal working situations; equipment must be the same or similar to that currently used in industry; and normal working procedures must be observed.

This use of simulation should be by exception and must be approved in advance by an External Verifier/Auditor. The following information should be provided:

- reasons for carrying out the simulation in place of collecting direct evidence
- how the simulation will be conducted – including details of the equipment, facilities and physical environment used.





## Standardisation Guidelines

All assessments must undergo a standardisation process to ensure that they are valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair and that they can be delivered in a consistent way by all Assessors.

Regular standardisation activities should take place with all Assessors and Internal Verifiers to discuss the assessment process to ensure a consistent approach is being applied and to discuss any issues arising.

Typical Standardisation methods might include (but are not limited to):

- **Agreement trials:** Assessors work together to consider examples of Candidates' evidence. By discussing discrepancies and coming to a shared understanding based on the evidence requirements, the Assessors reach a common understanding. Involving Internal Verifiers is very helpful in achieving consensus.
- **Dual assessment:** Two Assessors assess the same Candidates. Teaming an experienced Assessor with a new Assessor is not uncommon, but there are benefits for any Assessor in checking their judgement, particularly for new Standards or Qualifications. It also encourages cooperative working.
- **Cross assessment:** Assessors exchange Candidate evidence to check each other's interpretation of the Standard.
- **Evidence review:** Internal Verifier collates assessed Candidate evidence and asks a group of Assessors to discuss any discrepancies between their individual judgements. This allows professional development as well as ensuring a shared understanding.



## Internal Verification and Sampling Guidelines

The Internal Verifier is responsible for ensuring the validity of internal assessments and the reliability of Assessors' judgements. This responsibility has several parts:

- supporting Assessors
- checking assessment instruments to ensure validity
- arranging standardisation exercises
- sampling assessment decisions
- maintaining assessment and verification records.

Interim verification must be ongoing through the assessment process rather than just involve a review once all the Candidate evidence has been collected. This allows the Internal Verifier to review assessment judgements before final decisions are made. This identifies problems at an early stage and will allow support or training to be provided to Assessors if required. The outcomes of internal verification should be given as feedback to the Assessors and used to refine assessment.

The Internal Verifier should select a sample of Candidate evidence to check that each Assessor is making consistent decisions in line with national standards.

Internal Verification sampling must cover all Assessors, all Standards and all Candidates.

There are several key features that should be considered in selecting a sample. These include:

- first time delivery of a Standard or Qualification
- new Assessor
- previous issues or problems identified by internal or external verification/audit.

### **For example:**

The rate of internal verification sampling should be increased when delivering a new Standard. In most cases this should start at 100% for all Assessors.

Internal verification of safety standards should always be 100% for all Assessors.

100% of assessments carried out by new or inexperienced Assessors should be verified for the first 3 assessments carried out for each Standard being assessed. Assuming that verifications are acceptable, a sampling rate of 50% could be introduced for a further 3 assessments, reducing to 25% for all further assessments. Should any issues be identified during sampling, verification should return to 100%. This verification sampling plan should be applied to each new Standard being assessed by new or inexperienced Assessors.



## Expert Witness Guidelines

It is expected that observations will be carried out by a qualified Assessor. If an organisation identifies that it is not possible or practical to have a qualified Assessor in the same location as a Candidate for all required observations, it may be possible to use an Expert Witness to support the assessment process by carrying out required on-the-job observations.

The following minimum requirements must be met for Expert Witnesses:

- An Expert Witness must have demonstrable relevant experience in the discipline area in which the Candidate is being assessed;
- An Expert Witness must be registered and details of relevant experience must be available for review by External Verifiers/Auditors at External Verification Visits/Audits – see page 19 for an example of an experience record;
- An Expert Witness must participate in a briefing session to ensure that he/she is familiar with the Standard(s) being assessed and the role of an Expert Witness – evidence of the briefing processes must be available for review by External Verifiers/Auditors at External Verification Visits/Audits – guidance on what should be included in a briefing session is outlined on the next page.

An Expert Witness will carry out observation on behalf of and coordinated by a trained Assessor. An Expert Witness's main responsibilities are to:

- agree a time with the Candidate for the observation to take place and advise the Assessor, where possible;
- 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(s);
- authenticate any supporting documentation/job paperwork;
- record any questions asked during the observation to support or authenticate the Candidate's work
- 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.

Where on-the-job observations are carried out by an Expert Witness, a qualified Assessor must continue to be responsible for all other assessment activities, including assessment planning, providing feedback, review of product evidence and questioning to confirm that all knowledge requirements have been met.

The Assessor must 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. It is the responsibility of the Assessor to make sure that any testimony from an Expert Witness is reliable and technically valid.



## **Briefing Guidelines for Expert Witnesses**

All Expert Witnesses must participate in a face to face briefing/coaching session to ensure that they are familiar with the Standard(s) being assessed and that they understand their role to observe the Candidate and record observations and comments.

Briefings for Expert Witnesses should be conducted by an experienced Assessor or Internal Verifier.

As a minimum, the following key points must be covered in briefing/coaching sessions with Expert Witnesses.

### **Assessing competence against occupational standards**

- What does competence mean?
- What is a Standard?
- An overview of the specific standards against which the Expert Witness will conduct observations.
- How does assessment relate to the Standard?
- What are the specific requirements for observing on-the-job competences for the Standard(s) the Candidate is being assessed against?

### **Carrying out observations**

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

### **Recording observations and providing supporting evidence**

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



**Example of an Expert Witness Experience Record**

<b>Name</b>		
<b>Employer</b>		
<b>Approved Centre</b>		
<b>Assessor(s)</b>		
<b>Standards/Units to be witnesses</b>		
<b>Discipline relevant Qualification(s)/Training</b> Approved Centre to review relevant certificates		
<b>Details of Occupational Competence/Experience</b>		
<b>Details of briefing/coaching session carried out prior to acting as an Expert Witnesses</b> Approved Centre to provide evidence of session		
<b>Expert Witness signature/ date</b>		
<b>Approved Centre representative name and role</b>		
<b>Approved Centre representative signature and date</b>		