



Assessment Strategy for the National & Scottish Vocational Qualifications based on the National Occupational Standards for Advice and Guidance

1. Introduction

The aim of the assessment strategy is to provide guidance to awarding bodies to ensure that the assessment of these qualifications is valid, effective, consistent and has credibility across the sector.

The following sections outline ENTO's specific principles in regard to:

- External quality control
- Workplace assessment
- The use of simulation
- The required occupational competence of assessors and verifiers

These principles are in addition to the generic criteria that awarding bodies must meet for the delivery of NVQs as required by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA's) *NVQ Code of Practice (Revised 2006)* and SQA's *Awarding Body Criteria, 2007 (DA3676)* and *Guidance and Interpretation of SQA's Awarding Body Criteria, published October 2007*.

This Assessment Strategy does not describe these systems in detail. It only provides the overarching principles as these systems may vary from one awarding body to another. ENTO accepts this providing the overarching principles of this document are consistently put into practice.

2. External Quality Control

2.1 Risk Management

Awarding Bodies will evaluate all external verification reports and other data relating to a centre and address any risks relating to quality control.

2.2 A rigorous and robust system of Internal and External Verification

The monitoring and standardisation of assessment decisions will be achieved by a robust and strong internal and external verification system. The mechanisms required to achieve this are outlined in QCA's *NVQ Code of Practice (Revised 2006)* and SQA's *Awarding Body Criteria, 2007 (DA3676)* and *Guidance and Interpretation of SQA's Awarding Body Criteria, published October 2007*.



2.3 Awarding Body Meetings

ENTO runs an Awarding Body Forum for the awarding bodies delivering Advice and Guidance qualifications.

The Forum will:

- Build on the good relationships with Awarding Bodies
- Provide opportunities to identify and address particular issues of external quality control
- Contribute to improving quality and consistency
- Support Awarding Bodies to monitor centres' performance to identify areas and levels of risk
- Provide information and statistics about take up and completion, as well as trends and developments which can be used by ENTO and the Awarding Bodies to identify any potential problem areas and agree appropriate remedial action

The meetings will discuss matters concerning quality assurance, as well as providing the opportunity to identify issues arising from implementation of the National Occupational Standards and related vocational qualifications.

This exchange of information and the opportunity for sector specialists to update Awarding Body representatives is viewed as essential in maintaining the validity and reliability of the National Occupational Standards and the uptake of the vocational qualifications. The meetings will inform the continuous improvement of the National Occupational Standards and awards derived from them.

3. Workplace Assessment

All evidence of a candidate's performance must be generated in the workplace. This principle will apply to all Units.

4. Simulation

Simulations are not allowed for these qualifications.



5. Occupational Competence of Assessors and Verifiers

Awarding Bodies must ensure that Assessors and Verifiers:

- a. Have verifiable and relevant current industry experience and competence in the occupational working area at, or above, the level being assessed and evidence the quality of the occupational experience to ensure the credibility of the assessment judgements. Assessors' and Verifiers' experience and competence should be evidenced, by, for example:
 - Curriculum vitae and references
 - Possession of a relevant advice and guidance qualification
 - Appropriate membership of a relevant professional body
 - Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- b. Only assess or verify in their acknowledged area of professional competence
- c. Have sufficient time to carry out the role in accordance with the requirements of the qualifications regulators and awarding bodies
- d. Have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the current National Occupational Standards
- e. Verifiers must understand the nature and context of the assessors work and that of their candidates.
- f. Actively engage in relevant professional development, which may include activities offered by an awarding body, ENTO, sector networks or standardisation meetings held by other relevant providers to keep up to date with developments in the sector
- g. All assessors and verifiers must meet the required criteria in the qualifications regulators current regulation documentation, including holding or be working towards the appropriate assessor/verifier qualification(s). Achievement of the qualification(s) must be within the timescales laid down and in accordance with the requirements of the accrediting and awarding bodies

6. Review and Evaluation

This Assessment Strategy will be subject to periodic review.