

## Construction

### The Qualifications Team

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This update contains information and advice for staff delivering SQA construction qualifications. I hope you find it helpful.

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### New National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Construction at SCQF level 5

As we previously communicated in our August update, centres that are already approved for the current NPA in Construction at SCQF level 5 (GL35 45) are automatically approved to deliver the following additional NPAs at SCQF level 5:

Group Award Title	Code
Construction	GL35 45
Construction: Bricklaying	GN01 45
Construction: Carpentry and Joinery	GN02 45
Construction: Floorcovering	GN05 45
Construction: General Construction Operations	GN04 45
Construction: Multi Trade	GN03 45
Construction: Painting and Decorating	GN06 45
Construction: Plastering	GN07 45
Construction: Roofing	GN08 45
Construction: Stonemasonry	GN09 45
Construction: Wall and Floor Tiling	GN0A 45

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## Support visits for centres delivering SQA Construction Craft SVQs at SCQF level 6

By Friday 15 December, all centres delivering Construction Craft SVQs will have received their first support visit from SQA. The purpose of these visits is to provide training and support to centre staff who are responsible for the planning, delivery, assessing and internal verification of SQA Construction Craft SVQs. We encourage all construction staff to attend these events to ensure they receive training and support.

Following the first support visit, you will receive an individual report from your centre, plus a copy of the SQA presentation. We will also share these reports with the External Verifier appointed to your centre, prior to visiting verification of Construction Craft SVQs.

We are now planning the second support visits, which will take place between January and March 2018. For these visits, we encourage you to bring along your plans for the Skills Tests, your SVQ assessment plans, candidate portfolios and any evidence gathered from the workplace. These materials can be used in the workshops during the visits. It is therefore important that the appropriate construction staff are in attendance to ensure maximum benefit.

We will continue to invite CITB Apprenticeship Officers and other Construction Craft managing agents to attend these visits, as they provide an important link between centres, candidates and employers. CITB Sector Skills Council (SSC) has also offered to attend and provide specific support for the implementation of the new CITB Skills Tests. We will contact SQA Coordinators in advance of each visit to confirm the number of external people attending.

### Observations from support visits

I attended a number of the centre support visits with my colleague Donna Moore. I have provided some advice, below, based on our observations from these visits.

#### National Occupational Standards for SVQ units

If you are delivering new SQA Construction Craft SVQs, please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for each SVQ unit. You can access NOS documents for each unit from the [unit search](#) facility on our website.

The majority of staff that we spoke to indicated that they are still unfamiliar with the NOS. It is really important that all staff – including assessors and Internal Verifiers – read through these documents and familiarise themselves with the detail. Candidates should also be made familiar with the NOS for each unit. We will provide further support to staff on this area at future visits.

#### Assessment Plans

Please ensure you allocate the necessary time to plan and commit to the assessment of individual candidates at regular intervals throughout their SVQ. The CITB Managing Agent, and other Managing Agents, could assist with prompting candidates and employers to check the candidate's assessment plan and ensure that progress is made with gathering evidence from the workplace. We will provide further support on this at future centre visits and we encourage you to bring along any assessment plans that you would like to discuss.

#### Evidence from the workplace

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Candidates undertaking the new Construction Craft SVQs must provide evidence from the workplace (such as videos, photographs and expert witness testimonies etc), which will be supported by professional discussions with the assessor in the centre. The length of the professional discussion will depend on the evidence provided and the individual candidate. We would also encourage candidates to use 'site diaries' to note down any work they have been doing on site.

### **Candidate portfolio templates**

We have a wide range of templates available on our website, which can be used by candidates to develop their portfolios in Construction Craft SVQs. These are available from the 'Candidate Guidance and Portfolio' section of our construction web pages.

While the use of these templates is not mandatory, it can be helpful in demonstrating good practice. Centres and candidates are free to choose the most appropriate format, whether paper-based or e-portfolio, as long as the evidence is clearly mapped to the outcomes and performance criteria in the NOS (SVQ units).

### **CITB Skills Tests**

A number of centres are starting to plan and work on the CITB Skills Tests. As we previously advised, as of 1 January 2018 centres will have full responsibility in the planning, organising, delivery and assessing of CITB Skills Test units within the SVQ. We will provide further advice and guidance on this at future support visits.

Centres are also responsible for registering and resulting candidates with SQA. It is very important for centres to establish the numbers of candidates, across the various Construction Craft SVQs, who will be carrying out their Skills Tests between January and July 2018.

If you have any queries, or identify any errors or omissions with regard to the Skills Tests SVQ, and assessor and candidate documents, please submit the details to us using the [general feedback form](#) on our website by the end of January 2018. Your feedback will be considered by SQA and CITB SSC in early February 2018.

### **Expert Witness**

We recently met with CITB Sector Skills Council on Monday 4 December. They have reiterated that the Expert Witness has been requested by the industry and will therefore remain part of the Assessment Strategy for Construction Craft SVQs. The role of the Expert Witness is about industry supporting industry and does not require to be a paid position.

If your centre is struggling to source an Expert Witness, they must contact Gill Harkness ([gillian.harkness@citb.co.uk](mailto:gillian.harkness@citb.co.uk)) or Ian Shaw ([ian.shaw@citb.co.uk](mailto:ian.shaw@citb.co.uk)) as soon as possible for assistance.

### **Additional training for External Verifiers**

We are currently delivering additional training to External Verifiers on verifying candidate portfolios. Both of this year's training events have taken place and we are planning two additional events for 2018.

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