



Common questions about Construction Craft SVQs

Construction SVQ units

How do I access Construction SVQ units/National Occupational Standards (NOS)?

Construction SVQ units are the same as the CITB NOS. You can access them by following these six steps:

- ◆ Step 1: Using SQA APS/Navigator, go to the specific SVQ that you are looking for (eg GM7W 23 SVQ Painting & Decorating at SCQF level 6). All of the Craft SVQs have a start date of July 2017, so check that you have the correct one.
- ◆ Step 2: Find the SQA code for the unit/NOS that you are looking for (eg HL72 04 Prepare Surfaces for Painting/Decorating).
- ◆ Step 3: Go to www.sqa.org.uk/svq.
- ◆ Step 4: Click on 'Accredited qualification unit search'.
- ◆ Step 5: Insert the SVQ unit code you acquired from APS/Navigator (eg HL72 04) and click 'search'.
- ◆ Step 6: Select the SVQ unit/NOS that appears.

CITB Skills Tests

What materials should be used in the Skills Tests?

New building materials must be used for all Skills Tests.

Over how many days should the Skills Tests be completed?

Each Skills Test has a specified time limit, which is detailed in each of the individual Skills Test SVQ units/NOS. For example:

- ◆ Carpentry and Joinery — 8 hours (one day)
- ◆ Plastering — 12 hours (split over two days)
- ◆ Painting and decorating — 16 hours (split over two days)

If a centre is unable to comply with this, the test can be carried out over more days. For example, the Carpentry and Joinery Skills Test could be done over two days instead of one, eg 6 hours on day one and 2 hours on day two. As with the conduct of any other assessment arrangements, professional discretion should be used.

If a centre does choose to split the test over more than the specified number of days, this must be recorded, along with the reason behind the decision.

You can access Skills Test units/NOS by following the instructions above.

What if a candidate runs out of time and has not completed the Skills Test by the end of the specified assessment period?

If the candidate is very close to completing the Skills Test at the end of the specified time period (eg Carpentry and Joinery is 8 hours, while Plastering is 12 hours), they should be allowed to complete it within a reasonable period of time (eg an additional 30 minutes). Centres should use their professional judgement and record any additional time given, along with the reasoning behind the decision. This will be checked at external verification.

If a candidate fails the Skills Test, do they need to do a full resit?

No, they don't need to do a full resit. The candidate can resit the part of the Skills Test that they have failed. This is in line with SQA's policy on assessments. Two attempts are allowed, with a third in exceptional circumstances. Due to the varying nature of the tests across the construction crafts, a bit more scrutiny of each test is required to come up with a workable solution for each one. For example, it is relatively straightforward to arrange a resit for Carpentry and Joinery, as there are four elements and eight hours to carry out the test; therefore two hours per element. Other areas are a bit more complex, such as Stonemasonry and Roofing. Further instructions for these will be provided as soon as possible.

Expert Witness

Is it possible to amend or remove the Expert Witness section from Appendix D of the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy?

The Expert Witness section cannot be amended or removed from the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy without approval from the regulator (SQA Accreditation). Only CITB sector skills council (SSC) can request that the assessment strategy is amended, and must have the support of industry. The regulator will require robust evidence from industry prior to approving any changes.

As with the 'Assessors' and 'Internal Verifiers' sections of the assessment strategy, centres have a responsibility to comply with the Expert Witness section. This will be checked, as normal, by SQA external verifiers.

What is the criteria for the Expert Witness?

The Expert Witness must be an experienced and reputable tradesperson in the occupational area that is being assessed, as they are unlikely to have an in-depth knowledge of the NOS and the assessment strategy. You should use your professional judgement to select an appropriate Expert Witness and record the reasons for your decisions.

What do I do if I cannot find an Expert Witness?

If you are unable to find a suitable Expert Witness, please contact Gill Harkness@citb.co.uk or Ian Shaw@citb.co.uk for assistance and provide them with details of your search.

What should I do if the Expert Witness does not show up on the day of the Skills Test?

The Expert Witness must be in attendance to observe the marking of the Skills Tests in person. However, if they do not attend on the day, and you are unable to source a replacement at short notice, you should proceed with marking the Skills Test. The marking of the Skills Test should be filmed and a copy of the video sent to the Expert Witness for them to observe. The Expert Witness should be given a total of five days to observe the marking and reply to your centre (confirming receipt of the video within two days and responding to your centre within a further three days). You can then proceed as normal.

Can the Expert Witness appeal against the assessor's decision?

No, the Expert Witness cannot appeal against the assessor's decision. They can only appeal against the assessment *process*, for example if they consider that the assessment process was compromised in any way or was unfair to a particular candidate or group of candidates, eg the time allocated, the quality of materials, or the accommodation provided.

If an expert witness wishes to make an appeal to SQA they must inform the skills test assessor of this immediately. This will allow centres to ensure that sufficient evidence is retained for review during the appeal. The expert witness should then submit a formal request to SQA in writing stating the following:

- ◆ Title of the skills test
- ◆ Name of candidate(s)
- ◆ Candidate cohort
- ◆ Centre where skills test was taken
- ◆ Date on which the skills test was taken
- ◆ Name of the assessor involved in the skills test
- ◆ Detailed reason for the appeal, providing as much information and evidence as possible
- ◆ Expert Witness name, contact details and previous experience of Skills Tests

An online form will soon be available from our Construction web page but in the interim, please email diane.wilson@sqa.org.uk and donna.moore@sqa.org.uk with the above details.

Feedback

If you have any comments regarding the details of the CITB Skills Test units, SQA's Skills Test — Provider and Marking Instruction document, or SQA's Skills Test — Learner Instructions document, please contact Diane Wilson, Qualifications Manager (diane.wilson@sqa.org.uk) or Donna Moore, Qualifications Officer (donna.moore@sqa.org.uk).

Your comments will be discussed with CITB at the twice yearly meetings, as per the CITB assessment strategy criteria.