Assessor's guidelines for the SVQ in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3

First edition: May 2003
Second edition: May 2008
Publication code: DB1834/2

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow, G2 8DQ, and Ironmills Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 1LE

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About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3**. You might be able to think of other ways of assessing your candidates and recording your decisions about their competence.

Using assessments based on these examples does not guarantee successful verification — it is still your responsibility to ensure that internal quality assurance procedures are followed.

Introduction

This introduction provides a brief overview of SVQs and how they are assessed in the workplace. If you are already familiar with the concept of SVQs, go to the next section.

About SVQs

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications that set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy. The qualifications have been designed by standards-setting bodies — in most cases these bodies are also National Training Organisations (NTOs) — made up of experienced practitioners who represent employers, professional bodies, trade unions, education and voluntary organisations.

Each standards-setting body is responsible for developing national standards which define *what* employees (or potential employees) must be able to do, *how well*, and *in what circumstances*, to show that they are competent in their work.

Each SVQ has to fit into a broad framework which allows qualifications in the UK and throughout Europe to be compared. SVQs are specified at five levels that reflect the various technical and supervisory skills, knowledge and experience, which employees should have as they progress in their industry.

Explanation of levels

Level 1 Defines competent performance in a range of activities that are largely routine and predictable.

Level 2 Specifies that competent performance must be shown in a broader range of work activities that are less routine and predictable. The employee will have more autonomy and responsibility, and may have to work as part of a team.

Level 3 Specifies that competent performance must involve the employee in carrying out a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable autonomy and responsibility, including the possibility of controlling or guiding others.

Level 4 Specifies competence as complex technical or professional work activities that require a substantial degree of personal autonomy or responsibility. Managing staff and other resources is often involved.

Level 5 Specifies competent performance as involving the employee in carrying out a significant range of activities in a wide variety of situations that are often unpredictable. Substantial responsibility and autonomy is involved in the work, which requires decision-making in the allocation of resources and the work of others. This will require complex skills such as analysis, design and evaluation.

How are standards defined in SVQs?

All SVQs consist of standards that can be broken down into various parts.

Units define the broad functions carried out in the sector, and are made up of a number of Elements. These **Elements** describe the activities which employees have to perform, and will require candidates to demonstrate certain skills or knowledge and understanding.

The candidates' quality of performance is described by **Performance Criteria**. These are also called **statements of competence** or **what candidates should do**.

The section on **knowledge and understanding** says what candidates must know and understand, and how this knowledge applies to their jobs.

You might also come across standards containing statements on **scope**. These statements could, for example, list the equipment that candidates are expected to be familiar with and use in their occupational area.

Increasingly, you will see changes to this format as standards become more user-friendly and are written in plain English. For example, standards containing **range statements** or **Evidence Requirements**, will disappear over time. You will, however, find that information on the context, nature and amount of evidence which is required to prove competence (which used to be given in range statements and Evidence Requirements) is now defined in the **Assessment guidance** for the qualification. Assessment guidance is drawn up by the awarding body and is packaged along with the standards to form the SVQ.

Who is involved in SVQs?

There are several roles:

- **the candidate:** the person who wants to achieve the SVQ (eg an employee)
- **the assessor*:** the person who assesses the candidates and decides if they are competent (eg a supervisor)
- **the internal verifier*:** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg the supervisor's line manager)
- **the external verifier***: an individual appointed by SQA who ensures that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the SVQ

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by SQA to prove they have the occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. There is a definition of occupational competence in the assessment strategy for these SVQs see SQA's website (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

Assessors and verifiers are also expected to obtain an appropriate qualification in assessment and verification — this can be the Assessor and Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment and verification), either in their current format or as 'D-Units', or an alternative qualification which SQA also recognises.

The steps involved in assessing a candidate for an SVQ

In deciding whether a candidate should get an SVQ, you will go through these stages:

- planning for assessment
- generating and collecting evidence of the candidate's competence in the Units
- judging the evidence of the candidate's ability and making an assessment decision based on the evidence
- recording the assessment decision and the candidate's achievement

1 The SVQ in Fisheries Management

The SVQs in Fisheries Management have been developed by Lantra and are intended for people employed in the field of freshwater fisheries.

These people may be working as ghillies, bailiffs, field assistants, fishery and river managers, and also those interested in fisheries, eg angling club members. They will require skills and knowledge in the environmental requirements of fish, monitoring and managing the fishery habitat, assessing the fish stocks, health and safety, and interpersonal relations.

The SVQs are designed to be assessed in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. Examples of the settings or centres in which the SVQs are likely to be delivered include: still water or riverine fisheries, fish rearing sites, colleges and other specialist fisheries facilities. Partnerships between colleges and employers can provide an ideal combination of college-based knowledge development and practical skills training in a real work context.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQ in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3**.**

Fisheries Management — Endorsement Specification

Candidates must achieve all **four** mandatory Units plus **two** optional Units.

Level 2

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	NTO ref	
D9HD 04	FM2	Monitor the Condition of a Fishery
D9HE 04	FM3	Catch Fish
D9AJ 04	CU2	Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
D9HF 04	CU57	Manage Fisheries Habitat

Optional Units

D9HG 04	FM1	Stock Fish into a Fishery
D9HH 04	FM4	Catch Fish Using Electrofishing Techniques
D9HJ 04	CU13	Prepare and Operate Small Craft
D9AW 04	CU19	Construct and Maintain Boundaries and Paths
D9HL 04	CU25	Fabricate and Install Permanent Structures for the Water Environment
D9N7 04	CU47	Control Vertebrate Pests and Predators by Shooting
D6YN 04	CU52	Maintain the Aquatic Production Environment
D70D 04	CU53	Treat Health Problems in Fish
D6YW 04	CU54	Produce Eyed Fish Eggs
D6YX 04	CU55	Produce Juvenile Fish
D70B 04	CU56	Transport Live Fish
D9HM 04	CU58	Support Angling on a Fishery
D9HN 04	CU59	Implement Procedures to Protect Fisheries
D9HP 04	D43	Prepare for Coaching Sessions
D9HR 04	D44	Conduct Coaching Sessions

Level 3

Mandatory Units		
SQA ref	**NTO ref**	
D9HT 04	FM7	Manage the Collection of Fisheries Data
D9HV 04	FM8	Manage Fishing Operations
D9CG 04	CU3	Promote, Monitor and Maintain Health, Safety and Security
D9HX 04	CU60	Contribute to the Management of a Fishery
Optional Units		
D9HY 04	FM5	Manage Electrofishing Operations
D9J0 04	FM6	Manage Access and Fishing Activity on a Fishery
D9J1 04	FM9	Manage Fisheries Protection Activities
D6YM 04	CU103	Maintain Health of Fin Fish
D6YR 04	CU104	Organise Fish Hatchery Operations
B6G8 04	CU12	Lead the Work of Teams and Individuals to Achieve their Objectives

An assessment strategy for the SVQ

As part of its review of the SVQ in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3, Lantra has developed an assessment strategy which defines a range of requirements:

- the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers
- a definition of simulation
- a definition of the workplace
- information on a model of independent assessment or external quality control

Both SQA and centres must comply with these requirements.

Why would people be interested in the SVQ?

People will take SVQs for a variety of reasons: to gain promotion, to prove their job competence, or for personal development. There will be other reasons too. One of the first things to do is to find out why your candidates want to do the SVQ, and to advise them of the suitability of the qualification. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to your candidates, they might help you to do this.

How do candidates begin?

Choosing the SVQ

You should make sure that candidates get guidance before starting out on an SVQ — they need advice to ensure that their existing job remit, skills, experience, and their plans for progression, are matched to the SVQ selected. It does not have to be you who carries out the matching process, but whoever has responsibility for this should ensure that the assessment opportunities available to the candidate are also considered.

An example

Hamish had worked on the staff of the District Fishery Board for three years but did not possess any formal qualifications. He wanted to do a nationally-recognised qualification that would recognise the skills he already had and develop his skills and knowledge to the benefit of himself, his employer and the fishery. His duties include bailiffing (fishery protection) duties, monitoring and maintaining the river habitat, assessing the condition and level of fish stocks and assisting in the capture and spawning of broodstock, and incubation of the eggs. Because of his experience in these areas the Fishery Manager advised him to consider the SVQ in Fisheries Management at level 2 with a view to progressing to level 3.

When the fisheries manager matched Hamish's job remit, existing skills and experience with the SVQ, it emerged that Hamish should be able to generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of two of the optional Units:

- Stock Fish into a Fishery
- Implement Procedures to Protect Fisheries

The fisheries manager arranged for an assessor from the fisheries training centre to provide Hamish with guidance on how to collect evidence and construct a portfolio to achieve these Units.

Hamish also had some experience in relation to three mandatory Units, though there were some gaps in his knowledge and therefore some planning would be required to improve Hamish's knowledge and provide him with the opportunity to demonstrate competence in these areas. These Units were:

- Monitor the Condition of a Fishery
- Catch Fish
- Manage Fisheries Habitat

Hamish had very little experience of the fourth mandatory Unit:

- Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety

Hamish is also involved in electrofishing operations to assess juvenile fish abundance and monitoring the effects of stocking fish into the fishery, therefore he has chosen to pick up an extra optional Unit:

- Catch Fish using Electrofishing Techniques

It was arranged that a fisheries training provider, through either the provision of distance learning material and/or his attendance at short courses, would fill the gaps in Hamish's knowledge. Plans would then be made for an assessor to visit Hamish in his workplace to assess the Units through a combination of observation, questioning and assessment of work procedures.

All these arrangements were agreed by everyone involved and then written up in an assessment plan for Hamish.

2 Preparing to assess the SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to go about assessing your candidates for the SVQs in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3. This advice is offered as examples of good practice — you can also develop your own approaches to assessing your candidates.

Your role and your candidate's role

Assessing the SVQ will involve several stages. Both you and the candidate should be clear on your roles in the assessment process before you begin.

Your role

- ensure candidates understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- ensure the conditions and resources required for assessment are available
- help candidates to identify and gather evidence
- observe and record candidates carrying out the activities described in the standards — records should say what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what it demonstrates
- assess products of the candidate's own work
- question candidates and record results
- help candidates to present evidence
- authenticate the evidence candidates provide
- judge evidence and make assessment decisions
- identify gaps or shortfalls in candidates' competence
- provide feedback to candidates throughout the assessment process
- record achievement

Candidates' role

- prepare for assessment — become familiar with the standards, what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- help to identify sources of evidence and how these could be assessed
- carry out activities, and/or produce products of own work, and/or answer questions
- gather and present evidence
- receive and act on feedback from the assessor

Planning

In planning for assessment, you will find it helpful to meet with your candidate and plan what is to be assessed, in what way, and when and where the assessment is to take place. This discussion can be confirmed in the form of an agreed assessment plan between you and your candidate.

You should treat assessment plans as working documents — they can be updated and changed as you review progress with your candidate.

As you are planning assessment, don't forget to make the most of opportunities to *integrate* assessments. This means planning to assess an activity that draws on the contents of different Units or Elements. It can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing your candidate's competence.

If you are a new assessor working towards your A/V Units or 'D-Units', (the national standards in assessment and verification) you will need copies of completed assessment plans as part of your evidence.

To help you plan for assessment, we have produced an assessment plan for the SVQ in Fisheries Management at levels 2 and 3, which covers Units FM2 *Monitor the Condition of a Fishery* and FM1 *Stock Fish into a Fishery*. You will notice that we have included spaces to enter dates when the assessment plan has been reviewed. Any gaps identified during these reviews should be discussed with your candidates and noted for action in the assessment plan.

The integrated nature of Fisheries Management activities, which may be evident in several Units, increases the opportunity for multiple Element achievement in each assessment session, whether it is by observation or one of the other methods. The opportunities for multiple Element achievement should be identified in the planning stages, and the Assessment Plan below shows the links to Performance Criteria of another Unit, which can be assessed at the same time.

Assessment plan (example 1)

Units: FM2 Monitor the Condition of a Fishery FM1 Stock Fish into a Fishery **Elements: FM2.1 'Monitor fisheries habitat' FM1.1 'Prepare to stock fish'**					
Activities	**PCs**	**Method of assessment/Sources of evidence**	**Date of assessment**	**Evidence already available**	**Links to other Units (PCs and range)**
Carry out a habitat survey on a section of river to ascertain its suitability for stocking.	FM2.1 PC 1,2,3,4	Observation of carrying out and recording the details of a habitat survey.	4.6.2007	None	FM1.1 Prepare to stock fish PCs 1, 3
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review	What constitutes a good habitat for juvenile salmon?				

Assessor's signature: Donald Black **1st review due:** 23/07/07

Candidate's signature: Hamish Brown **2nd review due:** 23/08/07

Date of agreement: 03/06/07 **Date of completion:**

Selecting methods of assessment

The methods of assessment you use should be valid, reliable and practicable.

- by *valid* we mean that the method should be appropriate to the standards
- by *reliable* we mean that the method should ensure consistent results when used with different candidates, different assessors and on different occasions
- by *practicable* we mean that the method ensures that the assessment makes best use of available resources, equipment and time

Before you assess a candidate, you must make sure that the methods of assessment you have chosen to use, along with any assessment materials (such as questions and sample answers) have been agreed within your centre through its system of internal quality assurance. This system is called *internal verification*.

There are both benefits and challenges when you are assessing SVQs in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. When you select methods of assessment, you should try to offer the candidate the benefits of workplace assessment and minimise any potential difficulties.

The benefits might be:

- availability of suitable environment for assessment
- access to river or fishery to regularly monitor condition
- ready access, on-site, to a mentor experienced in fishery management practices
- assessment progresses at candidate's own pace of learning
- assessment can be based on candidate's actual duties
- choice of assessment method, therefore not reliant on examination
- exposure to most up-to-date techniques in fisheries management

The challenges might be:

- the difficulty in gaining the breadth of experience required to complete the SVQ
- difficulty in getting accurate judgements of competence by trained assessors and verification from trained verifiers
- chance of experiencing environmental factors such as weather and water conditions which do not equate to the criteria of the performance criteria being assessed

An example

You might agree with a candidate working on a river fishery, who has to demonstrate how to conduct a habitat survey prior to re-stocking, that this will be carried out by **observation** as and when the survey takes place. If you are an assessor who is working alongside the candidate you should be well placed to

observe the candidate's performance, perhaps using a prepared checklist, and to question the candidate about the situation afterwards.

Methods of assessment

Assessment can involve a range of methods. For SVQs, some of the most commonly used methods are observation, product evaluation, and questioning.

Observation

Observation by an assessor is considered to be the most valid and reliable method of assessment. It can be organised in a variety of ways:

- working alongside the candidate
- arranging to visit when naturally-occurring activities are carried out by the candidate
- arranging for activities to take place

The candidate could be observed from the bank side as he/she carries out sweep netting operations to catch fish for Unit FM3 to assess whether or not the candidate has satisfied the Performance Criteria.

Observation by the assessor can often be supplemented by other types of assessment methods such as questioning. For example, it may be appropriate to ask oral questions of candidates as they carry out naturally-occurring activities.

Examples

Observation of electrofishing a section of a nursery stream could be supplemented by questions on the precautions needed to satisfy health and safety requirements.

Observation of fish being stocked out into a river could be supplemented by questions on the legal requirements which need to be satisfied before stocking can proceed.

Product evaluation

As candidates work towards achieving the SVQ, they will produce evidence in the form of products of their work. The nature of this evidence can vary widely depending on what the candidate's job entails, but examples of product evidence may include:

- habitat survey data checked against the actual section of stream surveyed
- examination of stocking records to verify their accuracy with the actual stocking operation

Questioning

Candidates must show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the SVQs. For these SVQs, knowledge and understanding is specified for each Element. Much of the knowledge and understanding will be apparent from what candidates do or produce as part of their work. However, this will not always be the case, and questioning can be a useful way of confirming what candidates know and understand.

Questions can be asked in a variety of forms, such as oral questions, short answer written questions, and multiple choice.

You should be careful that the method of questioning does not go beyond the competence required for the SVQ and become a barrier to fair assessment. For example, some candidates will feel more comfortable with oral questions than written.

Examples

Unit FM1 *Stock Fish into a Fishery*
During a stocking exercise, the candidate could be asked why it is important to achieve the planned stocking density. A good answer would be: The number of fish needs to match the habitat and food available to maximise growth and survival to the overall benefit of the fishery.

Unit FM2 *Monitor the Condition of a Fishery*
During a habitat survey, the candidate could be asked what the relevance of canopy cover is to a fishery. An acceptable answer would be: It provides shade for the fish, protection against predatory birds, source of food from dropping insects, nutrients from fallen leaves, and it moderates the water temperature.

Other methods of assessment

These methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication. See section 3 for more about authenticating candidates' evidence.

Personal statements

You might find it helpful to ask a candidate to give an account of why they carried out an activity in a certain way or how they produced an example of their work. This is called a *personal statement*. You should ensure that by asking candidates to produce such statements, you are not asking them to demonstrate competence beyond what is required by the standards. You should also be selective in the use of personal statements, and make sure they have not been produced as a substitute to a more valid, reliable and practical method of assessment.

Personal statements could be used to cover activities that are difficult to assess by observation. For example, a candidate who is carrying out bailiffing duties could describe, either verbally or in writing, how he has dealt with an incidence of illegal fishing while carrying out a night patrol. Since the location and timing of

such an activity cannot be pre-determined, assessment by observation would not be possible.

For level 3 candidates, who will have a supervisory or management role, personal statements will form a major part of the evidence gathering process. Candidates can record information on tasks carried out as part of their work routine, thereby building up a portfolio of evidence for the supervisory Units.

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you might not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your candidates, but other people could be able to provide a statement on what your candidates have been doing or producing as part of their work. Statements of this kind are called *witness testimony*, and are often used to support other evidence produced by candidates. If witness testimony is used, you should, ideally, identify witnesses and opportunities for using their testimony as part of assessment planning.

You should bear in mind that the weight of the evidence will vary, depending on the knowledge and expertise of the person providing the witness testimony. You will have to take these factors into account as you make your judgement.

Strongest	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards. This person may also be an assessor or internal verifier qualified with the A/V Units or 'D-Units'.
	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards.
	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work, but with no knowledge of the standards.
	Someone who is a colleague of the candidate, but with no knowledge of the standards.
Weakest	Someone with little or no knowledge of the candidate's work or no knowledge of the standards.

Witness testimony is unlikely to be sufficient in itself for a decision about the candidate's competence, and would normally be supplemented by questioning candidates.

Witness testimony could be used on any occasion when a candidate is working with either an experienced colleague or a supervisor. While carrying out any fisheries task, following health and safety guidelines is important. Evidence of a candidate's ability to meet these guidelines during all work activities can be provided by witness testimony.

Simulation

Simulation is any structured assessment exercise involving a specific task that reproduces real-life situations.

On some occasions, it will not be practical to assess a candidate in real work. Examples might be where the standards require candidates to carry out emergency or contingency procedures, or where client confidentiality is an issue, or where a candidate's job role does not cover all aspects of the qualification.

Lantra has defined what it regards as simulation, and has specified in the standards when it is acceptable. The standards also state when candidates must demonstrate competence in the workplace.

For more details on simulation and what constitutes performance in the workplace, look at the assessment strategy in SQA's website (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

Examples of when it may be suitable to assess a candidate's competence through simulating an activity include:

- CU59.2 'Implement procedures to protect fisheries': Simulation can be used to assess the candidate's ability to deal with illegal fishing by setting up a poaching incident. This will test his ability to carry out procedures in line with legal requirements.
- D44.2 'Conduct coaching sessions': A coaching session for angling could be simulated by getting a candidate to provide instruction to an angling novice.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence may come from previous experience or learning, case studies or assignments.

The SQA *Guides to Assessment and Quality Assurance* (see section 5) have more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable and practicable.

3 Generating evidence

The methods of assessment you use should generate sufficient evidence to demonstrate the candidate's competence. This section gives you examples of forms which you can use to record and present evidence of:

- observation (by the assessor)
- questions and candidate responses
- personal statement (produced by the candidate)
- witness testimony

There are blank forms, which you can copy and use in assessment, in Appendix 1.

Observation

For observation, note that the form asks you to record the skills and activities observed. This helps you to make a judgement on how the activity was carried out and what it demonstrates.

Observation record

Unit/Element(s): FM4.2

Candidate: Hamish Brown **Date of observation:** 04/06/07

Evidence index number: 1

Skills/activities observed:	**PCs covered:**
The candidate set up stop nets with minimum disturbance to the fishing area. The electrofishing procedure was carried out slowly and methodically to effectively catch all the fish within the fishing area. The candidate communicated and worked efficiently with his colleague to net and remove the immobilised fish from the water. Care was taken throughout the operation to satisfy health and safety requirements.	1 – 9, 11

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:

The candidate was aware of the health and safety requirements associated with electrofishing and demonstrated a good knowledge of how to electrofish a nursery stream effectively.

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:

FM3.2 Catch fish

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:

The candidate carried out the electrofishing procedure efficiently, showing a good awareness of health and safety issues. The operation was carried out slowly and carefully with no apparent stress or damage to captured fish. Good communication and collaboration with colleagues were maintained throughout the operation.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: Donald Black Date: 04/06/07

Candidate's signature: Hamish Brown Date: 04/06/07

Questions and candidate responses

This form can be used to record any questions you ask the candidate to establish what they know and understand. You should note the candidate's responses on this form too.

Note that there is a space near the top of the form for you to record when, where, how and why you asked the questions.

Where you want to give the candidate written questions, this form could also be used.

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit: FM1 Stock Fish into a Fishery	**Element(s):** FM1.2 'Stock fish'
Evidence index number: 2	

Circumstances of assessment:

During a stocking exercise involving the release of salmon fry into a nursery stream.

List of questions and candidate's responses:

Q: Why is it important to achieve the planned stocking density?

A: The number of fish needs to match the habitat and food availability to maximise growth and survival to the overall benefit of the fishery.

Q: What water conditions would prevent the stocking operation from proceeding?

A: If the water level is too low there may be insufficient areas of suitable habitat for the fish with a greater danger of predation. If the water level is too high it will be difficult for the fish to acclimatise to their new surroundings. They may also be swept downstream by high flows.

Assessor's signature:	Donald Black	Date: 05/06/07
Candidate's signature:	Hamish Brown	Date: 05/06/07

Candidate’s personal statement

A personal statement should always be completed by the candidate and should record what they did, and how and why they chose to do it in that particular way. Where other people have been present during an activity and can provide witness testimony, the candidate should record how the statement links to other evidence in the column provided.

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, PCs covered
20/07/07	3	While carrying out a routine patrol with a colleague on a stretch of our salmon river, I came across an angler fishing a pool for which no permit had been issued. I approached the angler and enquired if he had a permit to fish this particular part of the river. He answered that he was unaware of the need for a permit. I pointed out that fishing was not available on this particular pool and advised him of other parts of the river where fishing was available and directed him to where permits could be obtained. Having asked him politely to leave, he apologised for his mistake and left without any confrontation.	N/A	CU59.2 PCs 1 – 6

Signed (candidate): Hamish Brown

Date: 20/06/07

Witness testimony

Witness testimony must be capable of being authenticated — even if the testimony itself is being used to authenticate a candidate's claim to competence.

To make sure the witness testimony is genuine, you must ensure that you have a record of who is acting as a witness, their relationship to the candidate (eg supervisor, client) address, telephone number and the date. There are spaces for this information in the form.

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level:	Fisheries Management level 2
Candidate's name:	Hamish Brown
Evidence index no:	4
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	3
Element(s):	CU59.2
Date of evidence:	20/06/07
Name of witness:	Norman Macdonald
Designation/relationship to candidate:	Head Bailiff

Details of testimony:

While carrying out a routine patrol with the candidate on our salmon river, it was necessary to deal with an angler who was fishing without a permit. Hamish dealt with the angler in an appropriate and courteous manner and although he requested that the angler should leave the river, he advised him where fishing was available and from where a permit could be purchased. The angler accepted the situation and no confrontation resulted from the incident.

I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate.

Signed by witness: Norman Macdonald

Date: 20/06/07

Please tick the appropriate box:

Witness:

☐ Holds D32/D33 Award

☑ Is familiar with the SVQ standards to which the candidate is working

Filling the gaps

It might be that your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you could find in assessing the candidate that certain situations have not arisen during assessment, such as handling contingencies. Often such contingencies relate to dealing with health and safety issues, or unexpected problems with workflow, like delays in receiving information from another part of the organisation.

In this SVQ, such gaps are likely to occur in generating evidence for CU59.2 'Deal with incidents of illegal fishing', as the candidate may undertake fisheries protection duties but has not yet been involved in an actual incidence of illegal fishing. There would therefore be no evidence for three of the Performance Criteria in this Element.

You will be able to overcome these by simulation and questioning.

Guidance and support to candidates

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — feedback should be on-going, clear and constructive. Feedback should be given against the national standards by relating it to the evidence provided, including the knowledge specifications.

Where there are any shortfalls in a candidate's competence, you should discuss these with your candidate and make plans for re-assessment.

Judging candidate evidence and making an assessment decision

In judging candidate evidence, you must be satisfied that your candidates can work consistently to the required standard, and that the evidence they have produced is their own. You must consider whether your candidate understands and applies the knowledge evidence and how this links to performance evidence.

Evidence must:

- be relevant to the SVQ
- be authentic
- show current competence
- be sufficient to help you form a decision about the candidate's competence

Insufficient evidence

You have to judge whether the candidate has produced enough evidence required by the standards for you to reach a decision about their evidence.

Where there is insufficient evidence, you should say this to your candidate. You should tell them that it is not that they are not yet competent — there is simply not enough evidence on which to make a decision.

In this situation, your feedback to your candidates must help them produce more evidence and/or plan for further assessment.

Authenticating candidates' evidence

Authentication is required where you have not observed candidates' performance at first hand.

You can check whether a candidate has produced evidence that shows their competence by questioning them, asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from other colleagues of the candidate.

An example

If the assessor is unable to observe the candidate undertaking certain activities because he is not present on that occasion, authentication would be needed to determine that the candidate had undertaken that activity. For example, in Unit FM4 *Catch Fish using Electrofishing Techniques* when conducting electrofishing operations, the team leader or supervisor, experienced in electrofishing techniques, could verify that the candidate carried out the activity in accordance with the requirements of the SVQ Unit, in the form of a witness testimony or peer report.

Other methods of authentication could include photographs of the candidate carrying out the activities. This can also be applied to the above example of electrofishing as photographs are often taken as a record of the location of the site.

4 Recording achievement

You should retain all evidence — clearly referenced — for internal and external verification.

The candidate's evidence is normally kept in a file called a *portfolio*. These documents help you and your candidates to collect, present and cross-reference the evidence to the national standards. They are also a means of recording your assessment decisions, and they tell an external verifier what stage a candidate has reached in achieving the SVQ.

With the Fisheries Management SVQs it is strongly recommended that assessors use the nationally devised recording documents. Should you choose to use your own recording material, this has to be approved by SQA or by the awarding partner (where this is a requirement).

Recording documents do not need to be paper-based — it is possible to use an electronic format for collecting and structuring the evidence. Whatever format you and your candidates choose to use, the documents must show what evidence was generated, the assessment decisions you made, how the evidence meets the standards, and where the evidence can be located. You should avoid photocopying items simply to put them in a portfolio — a clear explanation of where the evidence can be found (for example, in a filing cabinet) will be sufficient for the external verifier to follow it up and include it in the visit.

There are various reasons why record-keeping is so important:

- it provides a way of tracking a candidate's progress in achieving an SVQ
- it helps candidates to make claims for certification of their competence
- internal and external verifiers use the records to sample assessment decisions
- it helps us to monitor the quality assurance of our qualifications

If your candidates' evidence is incomplete, cannot be located, or if there is inaccurate cross-referencing to the standards, there is a risk that an internal or external verifier will be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

To help you and your candidate present evidence and record your assessment decision, we have provided examples of the forms which you can use to compile the portfolio.

- completing the Unit progress record
- using the evidence index
- completing the Element achievement record

These forms are also used in SQA's portfolio.

Completing the Unit progress record

You should complete this form each time your candidate achieves a Unit from the SVQ by adding your signature and the date next to the relevant Unit.

At this stage, candidates should make sure they have completed the recording documents correctly and that their evidence can be easily located. Only then should they circle the relevant Unit number at the top of the form. This enables both of you to see at a glance what stage the candidate is at in their SVQ.

Unit progress record

Qualification and level: **SVQ Fisheries Management Level 3**

Candidate: James Taylor

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in four **mandatory** Units and two **optional** Units.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory	FM7	FM8	CU3	CU60								
Optional	FM5	FM9										

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit Number	Title	Assessor's Signature	Date
FM7	Manage the Collection of Fisheries Data	Donald Black	09/08/07
FM8	Manage Fishing Operations	Donald Black	23/08/07
CU3	Promote, Monitor and Maintain Health, Safety and Security		
CU60	Contribute to the Management of a Fishery		

Optional Units achieved

FM5	Manage Electrofishing Operations	Donald Black	6/09/07
FM9	Manage Fisheries Protection Activities		

Using the index of evidence

The purpose of the index of evidence is to help you locate and work through the candidate's evidence. It should give you a summary of what evidence the candidate has collected, and where (eg in a portfolio) it can be found.

The index of evidence should be completed by entering:

- the index number for each piece of evidence
- a description of each piece of evidence
- the location where it can be found
- the initials of the internal verifier and the date (if they have sampled the candidate's evidence)

Ideally, it should be candidates themselves (with your support and encouragement) who complete the index.

You must make sure that the information in the evidence index is accurate when your candidates' portfolios are presented for assessment and verification — particularly the information about where the evidence can be located. This is important because we suggest that anything which has been produced as day-to-day work is kept in its normal location, but anything which has been produced through assessment for the SVQ, eg observation checklists, is filed in the candidate's portfolio. In this way, your candidate can avoid having to photocopy work products just for the sake of including them in a portfolio. It also means that evidence produced as a result of assessment is kept safely in a central file.

If the index of evidence is not completed with an accurate description and location of the evidence, there is a risk that an internal or external verifier might be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

Index of evidence

SVQ title and level: Fisheries Management level 3:
FM5 Manage Electrofishing Operations

Evidence number	Description of evidence	Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If no, state location	Sampled by the IV (initials and date)
1	Observation record. Activity observed: managing a team during electrofishing of a section of the River Carron.	Yes	*MS 13/09/07*
2	Record of questions and candidate's responses	Yes	*MS 13/09/07*
3	Plan of electrofishing operation	Yes	*MS 13/09/07*
4	Electrofishing data sheets	No. In filing cabinet under electrofishing records: Carron site 1	*MS 13/09/07*

Completing the Element achievement record

To help you and your candidates cross-reference the evidence to the standards of the SVQs, we have provided records similar to those produced in the SQA portfolio. Use one record for each Element. The grids should be completed by:

- entering the evidence index number in the first column
- giving a brief description of the evidence in the second
- ticking the relevant boxes for the Performance Criteria (or statements of competence as they are sometimes known)
- entering the areas of knowledge and understanding the piece of evidence covers

If integrated assessment is used (linking PCs or Elements across different Units) the evidence should be cross-referenced back to the relevant Units.

We have provided a completed example to show how to use the record.

Element achievement record

Unit: FM8 Manage Fishing Operations

Element: FM8.2 'Maintain fishing operations'

Evidence Index No	Description of Evidence	PCs/Areas of knowledge and understanding																				
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
1	Observation of electrofishing	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓													
2	Questioning				✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Plan of electrofishing operation		✓	✓								✓	✓									
4	Electrofishing data sheets							✓													✓	

Unit: FM8 Manage Fishing Operations

Element: FM8.2 'Maintain fishing operations'

Notes/Comments

James communicated well with his team and showed good managerial skills in conducting the electrofishing activity.

The candidate has satisfied the Assessor and Internal Verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate: Hamish Brown Date: 6/09/07

Assessor: Donald Black Date: 6/09/07

Internal Verifier: Murray Stark Date: 13/09/07

5 Further Information

What else should I read?

The publications listed here provide additional information on how to implement SVQs. Details of these and other SQA publications are available on our website at **www.sqa.org.uk** on the 'Publications, Sales and Downloads' section. They can be ordered from SQA's Customer Contact Centre — telephone 0845 279 1000. Please note that there may be a charge for some of these publications.

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

External Assessment Moderation in National Qualifications and Higher National Qualifications: a guide for centres

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Employers and Training Providers

Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs in Examinations and Assessments

Quality Assurance Principles, Elements and Criteria

Operational Help Centre

The Operational Guide for Centres has been replaced by the online Operational Help Centre on **www.sqa.org.uk**

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

Unit progress record

Qualification and level:

Candidate:

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in ___ **mandatory** Units and ___ **optional** Units.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory												
Optional												

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit Number	Title	Assessor's Signature	Date

Optional Units achieved

Index of evidence

SVQ title and level:

Evidence number	**Description of evidence**	**Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If no, state location**	**Sampled by the IV (initials and date)**

Element achievement record

Unit:

Element:

Evidence Index No	Description of Evidence	PCs						Areas of knowledge and understanding														

Unit:

Element:

Notes/Comments

The candidate has satisfied the Assessor and Internal Verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate: Date:

Assessor: Date:

Internal Verifier: Date:

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, PCs covered

Signed by candidate:

Date:

Observation record

Unit/Element(s):

Candidate: Date of observation:

Evidence index number:

Skills/activities observed:	**PCs covered:**

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: Date:

Candidate's signature: Date:

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level:	
Candidate's name:	
Evidence index no:	
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	
Element(s):	
Date of evidence:	
Name of witness:	
Designation/relationship to candidate:	
Details of testimony:	
I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate. Signed by witness: Date:	

Witness (please tick the appropriate box)**:**

☐ Holds A1 or D32/D33 qualifications

☐ Is familiar with the SVQ standards to which the candidate is working

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit:	**Element(s):**
Evidence index number:	
Circumstances of assessment:	
List of questions and candidate's responses:	
Assessor's signature:	**Date:**
Candidate's signature:	**Date:**