Assessor's guidelines for the SVQ in Offshore Deck Operations at level 2

Contents

About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ in Offshore Deck Operations at level 2**. You may 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, you may wish to go to the next section.

About SVQs

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications which set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy. The qualifications have been designed by standards-setting bodies 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 which a standards-setting body develops 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 which 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 which are largely routine and predictable.

Level 2 Specifies that competent performance must be shown in a broader range of work activities which 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 which 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 which 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 which 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 quality of performance in what people must be able to do — how well they have to perform — is described by **Performance Criteria**. These may also be 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 may 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 may see changes to this format as standards become more user-friendly and are written in plain English. For example, there may be some standards containing **Range Statements** or **Evidence Requirements**, but over time these should disappear. You may, 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 supervisor)

♦ **the internal verifier*:** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg 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 appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. Occupational

competence has been defined by the standards-setting body in the assessment strategy for this SVQ — 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/Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment and verification), 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 Offshore Deck Operations

The SVQ in Offshore Deck Operations has been developed by OPITO and is intended for people working in the offshore oil and gas industry.

These people may be working as deck crew or heli-deck crew on offshore platforms and installations. They will require skills and knowledge in the moving of loads, helicopter handling operations and general deck operations.

The SVQ is designed to be assessed in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. Examples of the settings or centres in which the SVQ is likely to be delivered include: employers' offshore sites including platforms and installations and the premises of training providers with facilities that replicate the workplace in terms of equipment and working environments (realistic working environments).

Structure of the SVQ

This section lists the Units which form the SVQ in Offshore Deck Operations.

The SVQ is made up of four mandatory Units plus any two of the three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA Ref	OPITO Ref	Title
F229 04	1	Establish and Maintain Effective Relationships With Others
B5K9 04	2	Contribute to the Health And Safety of the Working Environment
D9A6 04	3	Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement Of Loads
D7X0 04	4	Contribute to Safety, Health and Environmental Protection

Optional Units

SQA Ref	OPITO Ref	Title
F222 04	5	Contribute to Helicopter Handling Operations
F223 04	6	Contribute to Helicopter Refuelling Operations
F221 04	7	Carry Out General Cleaning Operations

An assessment strategy for the SVQ

As part of its review of the SVQ, the standards-setting body OPITO has developed an assessment strategy which defines a range of requirements:

♦   the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers

♦   a definition of simulation

♦   definition of the workplace

♦   information on a model of independent assessment or external quality control

The relevant parts of the assessment strategy are published on SQA's website (**www.sqa.org.uk**), and 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 appropriateness 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 as the assessor, who carried 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

John works as a deck crew member on an offshore oil installation. His duties also include being part of the heli-deck crew. Although John has worked on the installation for a few years and successfully completed the company's 'in-house' competence assurance scheme, he has now decided that he would like to obtain some national recognition for the skills he already has.

John consulted his supervisor who put him in touch with the company's Training and Competence Coordinator. As John expressed a willingness to achieve a formal qualification, the Coordinator advised him to consider the SVQ in Offshore Deck Operations at level 2.

When the Coordinator compared John's job role and existing skills and experience with the requirements of the SVQ, it emerged that John would be able to generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the following SVQ Units:

♦ Establish and Maintain Effective Relationships With Others
♦ Contribute to the Health and Safety of the Working Environment
♦ Contribute to Safety, Health and Environmental Protection
♦ Carry Out General Cleaning Operations

The Training and Competence Coordinator arranged for a qualified site assessor for deck operations to provide John with guidance on how to collect the required evidence. The assessor also explained how the portfolio of evidence should be presented and what it should contain in order to meet the Evidence Requirements of the Units. The assessor and John collaborated to produce assessment plans for the Units. The plans took into consideration the evidence John could produce, and the observations of the various tasks that would be needed to meet the Evidence Requirements of the Units.

John also had a lot of experience relating to the other two Units. It was evident, however, that careful assessment planning would be required to take advantage of the opportunities to demonstrate his competence to:

♦ Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads
♦ Contribute to Helicopter Handling Operations.

Assessment plans were also written for these Units and it was agreed that assessment would be carried out using a combination of observation and questioning, personal statements, witness testimony and documentary evidence.

2   Preparing to assess the SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to begin to go about assessing your candidates for the SVQ. This advice is offered as examples of good practice — you may develop your own approaches to assessing your candidates which also work well.

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 state what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what it demonstrated

♦ assess products of the candidates' 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* assessment. This means planning to assess an activity which 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 Units (the national standards in assessment) 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 which covers *Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads*. 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.

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Assessment plan

Units: 3: Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads
Elements: 3.1: Prepare and sling loads for lifting   3.2: Direct and control the movement and placing of loads

Activities	Performance Statements	Method of assessment/Sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (PCs and range)
Prepare containers and tubulars from workover activities for backloading onto next supply vessel (due 15/08/2007).	Element 3.1 Performance Statements 1 to 8	Observation & Questioning and Personal Statement for slinging, lifting and placement of loads.	14/08/2007	Lift plans and risk assessments from previous jobs.	There will also be substantive evidence provided for Contribute to the Health and Safety of The Working Environment and Contribute to Safety, Health and Environmental Protection.
Direct lifting and placing of loads (containers) from supply vessel onto the mezzanine deck. Direct lifting of backload materials onto supply vessel.	Element 3.2 Performance Statements 1 to 9	Witness Testimony for the handling of defects and faults. Documents: lift plans and risk assessments.	15/08/2007	Information on defects and faults experienced on previous jobs.	
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					

Assessor's signature: *Colin French*   1st review due: 27/10/07

Candidate's signature: **John Smith**   2nd review due: 27/01/08

Date of agreement: 27/07/2007   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 assessment method should be appropriate to the standards

♦ By *reliable* we mean that the assessment 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 often called *internal verification* — its purpose is to help to ensure that assessment methods are valid, reliable and practicable.

There are both benefits and challenges when you are assessing SVQs in the workplace, or in conditions in 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:

♦ feeling at ease due the the familiarity of the work site

♦ the evidence is naturally-occuring and does not take the candidate away from the workplace which, in this case, is a remote location

♦ knowing the candidate

♦ the assessment process progresses at the candidate's own pace

♦ the costly resources needed for assessment are readily available

The challenges might be:

♦ pressures of work associated with the site

♦ fitting the assessment process into shift patterns

♦ the work rota itself (eg two-on, two-off or two-on, three-off)

♦ changes in work priorities

♦ the offshore environment and safety considerations

An example

You might agree with a candidate working on the deck, who has to demonstrate how to handle defects and faults with lifting accessories, that this will be carried out by **observation** as and when such situations arise. 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 may involve a range of assessment 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

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.

Observation of the performance of the candidate would be used during the selection of accessories and slinging of loads. Questions asked could relate to why the equipment was chosen and the nature of defects and faults that might be encountered.

Observations of the candidate communicating orally and using signals during the movement and placement of loads would be a prime source of evidence. The opportunity to ask questions at this time may be limited and it may be necessary to ask these after the observation. 'What if' questions would be particularly relevant.

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 include:

♦ documentation such as lifting plans and risk assessments

♦ loads that have already been slung and are ready to be lifted

Questioning

Candidates have to show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the SVQ. For this SVQ, knowledge and understanding is specified for each Unit (Unit-wide knowledge) and Element. Much of a candidate's knowledge and understanding will be apparent from what they do or produce as part of their work, but 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.

Questioning, where knowledge can not be inferred, could relate to the nature of defects and faults that can occur in lifting equipment or the criteria for discarding equpment. Other questions could relate to the reasons for wearing clear-visibility clothing or to the handling of contingencies and hazardous situations.

Other methods of assessment

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

Personal statements

Sometimes, you might find it helpful to ask a candidate to give an account of why they did an activity in a certain way or how they produced a product of their work. This is referred to as a *personal statement*. You should take care to 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.

A *personal statement* written by the candidate provides a good insight into the tasks performed by the candidate, the difficulies experienced and how these were resolved. It is 'a-day-in-the-life' of the candidate. The assessor can advise the candidate about the content of the statement so that it is relevant to the occupational standards.

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you may not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your candidates, but might feel that other people may 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 may be a colleague of the candidate, but with no knowledge of the standards.

Weakest — Someone with no or little 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.

The assessor cannot always be present when the candidate performs an essential task. It could be, that in the absence of the assessor, the candidate comes across equipment that is defective or faulty and which needs to be reported to the responsible person. In this case a witness could write up what they saw as evidence. The assessor could then question the candidate, and indeed the witness to establish the relevance of the evidence presented. Witness testimonies are particularly relevant for Units 1 and 2, especially Unit 1, Element 1.1.

Simulation

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

On some occasions, it may 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.

OPITO has defined what it regards as simulation, and has specified in the standards when simulation is and is not 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 on SQA's website: **www.sqa.org.uk**.

Any simulation must be conducted using a realistic working environment. The slinging of oilfield equipment at an onshore location such as at a training provider's premises could provide adequate evidence for Element 3.1 'Prepare and sling loads for lifting'.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence can be previous experience or learning, case studies or assignments.

SQA's *Guides to Assessment and Quality Assurance* (see section 5) contains 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.

We described earlier the circumstances in which you might choose to use different methods of assessment. Starting on the next page, 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):   Element 3.1 Prepare and sling loads for lifting
Candidate: John Smith   **Date of observation:**   14/08/2007
Evidence index number: 5

Skills/activities observed:	PCs covered:
John obtained the work instructions from the Deck Supervisor, reviewed these and identified the items on the deck to be moved. He was satisfied with the information and instuctions which included the lift plan and risk assessment and fully understood them.	1, 2
John chose the lifting methods appropriate for the loads to be lifted and selected lifting accessories that were fit for purpose. No defects were apparent in the equipment used so John was questioned on defects and faults that could be encountered.	3, 4, 5
The loads (made up of containers and tubulars) were appropriately slung, having had their weights and centres of gravity accurately determined.	6, 7
John worked safely at all times and interacted well with the rest of the team.	8

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:
It was evident fom the observation and supplementary questions asked while the job was going on that John had all the necessary knowledge and understanding. Questions about the coding and identification systems reinforced this view.

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:
Evidence was also provided for Unit 2: Contribute to the Health and Safety of the Working Environment.

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:
The observation and questioning confirmed competence in the Element under consideration and for others that will be considered separately. All Performance Statements and the requirements of the Knowledge and Understanding descriptors were fully satisfied.

The Personal Statement and Witness Testimonies also provided supplementary evidence to support my judgement of competence. Well done.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: *Colin French*   Date: 16/08/2007

Candidate's signature: *John Smith*   Date: 16/08/2007

Questions and candidate responses

This form can be used to record any questions you might 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: 3 Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads	Element(s): 3.1 Prepare and sling loads for lifting

Evidence index number: 6

Circumstances of assessment:

The scope of the knowledge and understanding for the Element relating to the preparation and slinging of the loads was covered either by inference as the tasks were carried out or by asking questions during and immediately after the observation.

List of questions and candidate's responses:

Q: What are the prime regulations relating to lifting operations?

A: The Health and Safety at Work Act, LOLER which is the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations and PUWER which is the Provision and Use of Work Regulations.

Q: How do you access information from the regulations and how do you use it?

A: The regulations make it quite clear what my personal responsibilities are when working offshore and when slinging and moving loads. The regulations are kept in the admin. office and we are encouraged to access and use them. During toolbox talks, relevant parts of the regulations are brought to the attention of the team.

Q: So, what steps do you take prior to starting the actual slinging and lifting operations?

A: 1   The hazards and risks associated with the work need to be identified as do the methods of controlling these.
2   The load needs to be assessed for its weight and a safety factor added.
3   When necessary, a lift plan needs to be written up and understood. This plan and any emergency procedures need to be discussed with all people who may be affected.
4   The route the load is to take needs to be walked to ensure there is minimal risk to other people and the site.
5   The lift and move might well interrupt the work of others, so this needs to be evaluated and discussed with those affected.
6   The availability of the proposed resources needs to be confirmed.

Assessor's signature: *Colin French*	Date: 15/08/2007
Candidate's signature: *John Smith*	Date: 15/08/2007

Candidate's personal statement

If a personal statement is being used as evidence, it should be completed by the candidate. The statement should record what they did, how and why they chose to carry out an activity or produce work in a certain way. Where other people may have been present during an activity and they may be able to 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, PSs covered
14/08/07	7	On 14 August I was a member of the deck crew that prepared tubulars and containers left over from the workover operations ready for backloading onto a supply vessel. The assessment process was explained to me by Colin, the assessor. An assessment plan had been agreed for Elements 3.1: Prepare and sling loads for lifting and 3.2: Direct and control the movement and placing of loads so I knew exactly what was expected of me. I received instructions from the Deck Foreman and attended the toolbox talk (PS 1 and 2). I then carried out my duties as normal ensuring that the loads and their weights had been adequately assessed and the correct slinging method used (PS 3 and 6). I also checked that the route the loads were to take was a viable route and that all people involved and affected were fully aware of the consequences of the work. I personally selected the lifting accessories from the loft and ensured the codings were in date as was the certification (PS 4). There were no anomalies or faults in the equipment or paperwork. If there had been any problems I would have reported this to the Deck Foreman (PS 5). I worked as part of the team to sling the equipment ready to backload it onto the supply vessel. I ensured that centres of gravity of the loads were established and the loads were secure and balanced (PS 7). When I could not maintain visual contact with the deck crew then I used a radio. The deck foreman confirmed the operation had been carried out safely to his satisfaction (PS 8).	Colin informed me that evidence from this activity would support Unit 2: Contribute to the Health and Safety of the Working Environment.	Unit: 3 – Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads, Element 3.1: Prepare and Sling Loads for Lifting, Performance Statements 1 to 8.

Signed (candidate): *John Smith*

Date: *14/08/2007*

Witness testimony

Remember when you use a witness testimony that it 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:	Offshore Deck Operations level 2
Candidate's name:	John Smith
Evidence index no:	8
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	7
Element(s):	3.1 Prepare and sling loads for lifting
Date of evidence:	14 August 2007
Name of witness:	Dean Wilson
Designation/relationship to candidate:	Team Leader and responsible for deck operations.

Details of testimony:

John was asked to prepare and sling loads ready for backloading to a supply vessel. *(PS 3)*

He demonstrated his ability to interpret the written instructions and was proactive at the toolbox talk. As one of the platform Safety Reps he reinforced the team's responsibilty for ensuring safe operations. *(PS 1 & PS 2)*

He was diligent in his use of PPE and selected the correct lifting accessories ensuring they were all in date and certificated. *(PS 4)* He checked all the accessories and confirmed that he could not see any faults or defects. *(PS 5)* He completed the logs and paperwork in the rigging loft. *(PS 4)*

John is a dependable person who fully understands the importance of working to standards and complies with company rules regarding the requirements of relevant legislation. *(PS 8)*

I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate.
Signed by witness: *Dean Wilson*   Date: *14/08/2007*

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

☐   Holds A1 or D32/D33 qualifications

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

Filling the gaps

There may come a time when your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you may find that certain situations, such as handling contingencies, have not arisen during assessment. Often these will 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 emergency response following procedures .

You may be able to overcome these by:

♦ asking your candidate for a personal statement describing how a contingency situaution had been dealt with in the past or what defects and faults in equipment had been experienced and how these were dealt with
♦ personal statements from your candidate on how aspects of an unusual task would be covered, should it occur. This would be particularly beneficial in demonstrating how contingency situations would be handled such as, how the agreed procedures would be followed when responding to a fire, accident or other emergency (Unit 2, Element 1, Performance Statement 4)
♦ simulation of an event

You can use questioning in all these cases to support the assessment process.

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 which they claim shows their competence by questioning them or, if this is appropriate, asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from other colleagues of the candidate.

An example

Authentication will be necessary when a candidate produces a piece of evidence that could have been generated by anyone else in the team. Working as a member of the deck crew, the candidate could claim to have selected the lifting accessories and confirmed their suitability for that particular job. This claim could be confirmed by a witness or by questioning.

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, often 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.

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) may 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 verifiers 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, or cannot be located, or if there is inaccurate cross-referencing to the standards, there is a risk that an internal verifier 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 and your candidate might 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 in Offshore Deck Operations at level 2

Candidate: John Smith

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in 4 **mandatory** Units and
2 **optional** Units.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory	①	2	3	4								
Optional	⑤	6	⑦									

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit Number	Title	Assessor's Signature	Date
1	Establish and Maintain Effective Relationships with Others	Colin French	01 August 2007
2	Contribute to the Health and Safety of the Working Environment		
3	Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads		
4	Contribute to Safety, Health and Environmental Protection		

Optional Units achieved

5	Contribute to Helicopter Handling Operations	Colin French	14 May 2007
6	Contribute to Helicopter Refuelling Operations		
7	Carry Out General Cleaning Operations	Colin French	15 July 2007

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 place or 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 new 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 verifier or external verifier might be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

Index of evidence

Evidence number	Description of evidence	Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If no, state location	Sampled by the IV (initials and date)
1	Lifting plan	Yes	
2	Risk assessment	Yes	
3	Notes from toolbox talk	Yes	
4	Permit to work	Yes	
5	Observation report: slinging and lifting loads	Yes	SB 25.08.07
6	Record of questioning: slinging and lifting loads	Yes	SB 25.08.07
7	Personal statement: slinging and lifting loads	Yes	
8	Witness testimony: slinging and lifting loads	Yes	SB 25.08.07

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: Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads

Element: Prepare and sling loads for lifting

Evidence Index No	Description of Evidence	PCs						Areas of knowledge and understanding														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
5	Observation report: slinging and lifting loads	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔															
6	Questioning: slinging and lifting loads							✔		✔			✔									

Unit: Carry Out Slinging and Lifting for the Movement of Loads

Element: Prepare and Sling Loads for Lifting

Notes/Comments

John demonstrated his skills and knowledge when slinging loads ready for lifting and moving. John correctly answered the questions asked to establish the knowledge and understanding which was not apparent from his performance. Other knowledge and understanding was evident in the way John conducted himself during the observation of performance. The work was carried out in accordance with the performance statements. This included full compliance with relevant regulations and company policies, procedures and local site instructions.

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

Candidate: *John Smith*   Date: *16.08.2007*

Assessor: *Colin French*   Date: 16.08.2007

Internal Verifier: *Steve Barrett*   Date: *24.08.2007*

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

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Unit progress record

Qualification and level:

Candidate:

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

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)

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. Identify range also covered

Signed by candidate: _____

Date: _____

Observation record

Unit/Element(s):

Candidate: Date of observation:

Evidence index number:

Skills/activities observed:	PCs covered:	Range 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:	43
Candidate's name:	
Evidence index no:	
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	
Element(s):	
Range statement(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/A2 Units or D32/D33 Award

☐   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: