

Assessor's guidelines for the SVQs in Customer Service at levels two, three and four

Publication date: June 2008
Publication code: DB4083

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 **SVQs in Customer Service at levels two, three and four**. 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 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/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 Customer Service

The SVQs in Customer Service have been developed by The Institute of Customer Service and are intended for people who deal with customers.

These people may be working in a role which involves interacting with customers. They will require skills and knowledge in how to deal with customers.

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 in any workplace where staff have to interact with customers.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQs in Customer Service at level 2, 3 and 4.

Level 2 is made up of two mandatory Units and five optional Units (at least one from each theme).

Mandatory Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title
F04T 04	1	Prepare Yourself to Deliver Good Customer Service
F05E 04	2	Provide Customer Service within the Rules

Optional Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title
F049 04	9	Give Customers a Positive Impression of Yourself and Your Organisation
F05B 04	10	Promote Additional Services or Products to Customers
F04X 04	11	Process Customer Service Information
F04H 04	12	Live up to the Customer Service Promise
F04K 04	13	Make Customer Service Personal
F04B 04	14	Go the Extra Mile in Customer Service
F03T 04	15	Deal with Customers in Writing or Using ICT
F03S 04	16	Deal with Customers Face to face
F02S 04	17	Deal with Customers by Telephone
F03Y 04	21	Deliver Reliable Customer Service
F03W 04	22	Deliver Customer Service on Your Customers' Premises
F05M 04	23	Recognise Diversity when Delivering Customer Service
F05G 04	6	Recognise and Deal with Customer Queries, Requests and Problems
F05P 04	31	Resolve Customer Service Problems
F040 04	36	Develop Customer Relationships
F05S 04	37	Support Customer Service Improvements
F041 04	38	Develop Personal Performance Through Delivering Customer Service

Units 1, 5 and 6 can be undertaken at level 1 or level 2. The maximum imports from level 1 are 3, this means that 4 new Units must be completed to achieve level 2.

The Units consist of:

- ◆ **Customer Service Foundations:** **Units 1 and 5**
And themed Units as follows:
- ◆ **Impression and Image:** **Units 9-17**
- ◆ **Delivery:** **Units 21-23**
- ◆ **Handling Problems:** **Units 6 and 31**
- ◆ **Development and Improvement** **Units 36-38**

Level 3 is made up of two mandatory Units and six optional Units (at least one from each theme).

Mandatory Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title
F05T 04	7	Understand Customer Service to Improve Service Delivery
F04E 04	8	Know the Rules to Follow when Developing Customer Service

Optional Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title
F04K 04	13	Make Customer Service Personal
F04B 04	14	Go the Extra Mile in Customer Service
F03T 04	15	Deal with Customers in Writing or Using ICT
F05V 04	18	Use Customer Service as a Competitive Tool
F04R 04	19	Organise the Promotion of Services or Products to Customers
F03W 04	22	Deliver Customer Service on Your Customers' Premises
F05M 04	23	Recognise Diversity when Delivering Customer Service
F03X 04	24	Deliver Customer Service using Service Partnerships
F04N 04	25	Organise the Delivery of Reliable Customer Service
F04D 04	26	Improve the Customer Relationship
F04M 04	32	Monitor and Solve Customer Service Problems
F01S 04	33	Apply Risk Assessment to Customer Service
F04W 04	34	Process customer service complaints
F05Y 04	39	Work with Others to Improve Customer Service
F05D 04	40	Promote Continuous Improvement in Customer Service
F044 04	41	Develop Your Own and Others' Customer Service Skills
F04F 04	42	Lead a Team to Improve Customer Service
F046 04	43	Gather, Analyse and Interpret Customer Feedback

Units 13, 14, 15, 22, 23 can be used at level 2 or level 3. The maximum number of level 2 Units which can be used for a level three qualification is three, this means that five new Units must be completed to achieve the SVQ at level 3.

The Units consist of:

- ◆ **Customer Service Foundations:** **Units 7 and 8**
And themed Units as follows:
- ◆ **Impression and Image:** **Units 13-19**
- ◆ **Delivery:** **Units 22-26**
- ◆ **Handling Problems:** **Units 32-34**
- ◆ **Development and Improvement** **Units 39-43**

Level 4 is made up of two mandatory Units and seven optional Units (at least one from each theme).

Mandatory Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title (insert Unit title)
F05T 04	7	Understand Customer Service to Improve Service Delivery
F04E 04	8	Know the Rules to Follow when Developing Customer Service

Optional Units

SQA Ref	NTO Ref	Title
F05V 04	18	Use Customer Service as a Competitive Tool
F27P 04	20	Champion Customer Service
F27R 04	27	Maintain and Develop a Healthy and Safe Customer Service Environment
F27S 04	28	Plan, Organise and Control Customer Service Operations
F27T 04	29	Evaluate the Quality of Customer Service
F27V 04	30	Build and Maintain Effective Customer Relations
F01S 04	33	Apply Risk Assessment to Customer Service
F27W 04	35	Handle Referred Customer Complaints
F04F 04	42	Lead a Team to Improve Customer Service
F27X 04	44	Implement Quality Improvements to Customer Service
F27Y 04	45	Plan and Organise the Development of Customer Service Staff
F280 04	46	Develop a Customer Service Strategy for an Area
F281 04	47	Work as a Member of a Team to Deliver Seamless Customer Service
F282 04	48	Manage a Customer Service Award Programme

Units 7, 8, 18, 33, 42 can be used at level 3 or level 4. Maximum imports from level 3 are 5. Therefore 4 new Units must be completed to achieve SVQ at level 4.

The Units consist of:

- ◆ **Customer Service Foundations:** **Units 7, 8**
And themed Units as follows:
- ◆ **Impression and Image:** **Units 18 and 20**
- ◆ **Delivery:** **Units 27 – 30**
- ◆ **Handling Problems:** **Units 33 and 35**
- ◆ **Development and Improvement** **Units 44 – 48 plus 42**

An assessment strategy for the SVQ

As part of its review of the SVQs, the standards-setting body The Institute of Customer Service 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 given 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

Margaret had worked as a customer service representative for three years but had no formal qualifications. She wanted to gain a nationally-recognised qualification which gave her credit for the skills, knowledge and understanding she had gained whilst working in this sector. Margaret had a lot of experience in working with the public, assisting them in solving problems and queries, working with her colleagues to improve their customer service skills and delivery, and promoting products to customers. Margaret discussed her options for undertaking an SVQ with her line manager who advised her to consider undertaking an SVQ in Customer Service at level 3.

When the Training Manager and Line Manager matched Margaret's job remit and existing skills and experience with the SVQ, it emerged that Margaret should be able to generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the following SVQ Units.

- ◆ Understand Customer Service to Improve Service Delivery
- ◆ Know the Rules to Follow when Developing Customer Service
- ◆ Organise the Delivery of Reliable Customer Service
- ◆ Organise the Promotion of Services or Products to Customers
- ◆ Work with Others to Improve Customer Service

The Training Manager arranged for an assessor within the company to provide Margaret with guidance on how to collect evidence and construct a portfolio to achieve these Units.

Margaret also had some experience in relation to three further Units, however, some planning was required in order to provide her with the opportunity to demonstrate competence in these areas.

The Units were:

- ◆ Monitor and Solve Customer Service Problems
- ◆ Go the Extra Mile in Customer Service
- ◆ Process Customer Service Complaints

The Training Manager arranged for the assessor to visit Margaret to discuss the best areas to generate suitable evidence, to observe Margaret dealing directly with the public, and to answer relevant questions set by the assessor. A good variety of types of evidence to be submitted was agreed upon — direct observation of the candidate dealing with customer service issues, witness testimony from relevant people, personal statements, question and answers, and product evidence.

Much of the evidence generated for the first Units could be cross-referenced and used as evidence for the last three. Margaret's job remit would cover all the required areas of the SVQ.

In the event that Margaret's job remit would not cover all these areas of the SVQ, the Training Manager would have arranged for her to attend a local further education college and or to shadow a member of staff for observation and practice in relation to the company.

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

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 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* 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/V 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 which covers Unit 28. 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.

Assessment plan

Units: 28 Plan, Organise and Control Customer Service Operations					
Elements:					
Activities	PCs	Method of assessment/Sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units
Develop plans for a customer service strategy and present and discuss at manager's meeting and discuss staffing and implementation	28.1.2, 28.1.3, 28.1.4, 28.2.1, 28.2.2, 28.2.3,	Examination of minutes and testimony	15-12-06	strategy document	Unit 44 Implement quality improvements to customer service
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review	28d	Questioning	15-12-06		

Assessor's signature:

1st review due:

02/02/07

Candidate's signature: *Wendy Day*

2nd review due:

03/03/07

Date of agreement: 01/11/06

Date of completion:

15/06/07

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:

- ◆ evidence arising naturally from the candidate's normal work
- ◆ much of the evidence based on product outcomes both in hard and soft copy
- ◆ evidence from colleagues in the form of 'expert witnesses'
- ◆ opportunities for observation (could be a benefit or a challenge)
- ◆ familiarity between the candidate and the assessor (could be a benefit or a challenge)

The challenges might be:

- ◆ confidentiality of evidence content
- ◆ pressure of work
- ◆ shift working
- ◆ difficulties in arranging assessment of knowledge and understanding
- ◆ arranging for observation of infrequent activities

An example

You may arrange to visit a candidate at their workplace to observe how she/he deals with a customer. If the candidate provides an out-of-hours service you will have to visit the candidate at an appropriate time to do the observation, ie when the candidate is working, to ensure equality of access to assessment. You could use an observation template to carry out the observation or record the detail of what you observed on a voice recorder.

You could also use a list of questions to cover the knowledge and understanding requirements of the Unit component and the candidate's response might be recorded as evidence. You may also need to take into account data protection implications of the evidence; this may be a reason why the evidence is not kept within the portfolio but that it can be accessed in the workplace, pointing to the referencing to where it is kept. You could also arrange witness testimony to confirm competency in these areas.

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 can be used when the candidate is doing a task which involves face-to-face interaction with a customer and when no documentary product evidence is produced.

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 are listed below:

For the Unit *Deliver Reliable Customer Service* examples of evidence would be:

- ◆ Records of requests from customers and how these were dealt with.
- ◆ Pro formas used to check the preparation within the work area or service point.
- ◆ Records of customer information gathered in the workplace.

For the Unit *Organise the Promotion of Services or Products to Customers* examples of evidence would be.

- ◆ Materials the candidate has designed and produced to promote additional products or services.
- ◆ Revised service procedures or guidelines to aid the promotion of additional products or services.
- ◆ Observation reports demonstrating the candidate's ability to promote a product or service to a customer.

Questioning

Candidates have to show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the SVQs. For these SVQs, knowledge and understanding is specified for each Unit. 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.

For example, in the Unit, *Recognise and Deal with Customer Queries, Requests and Problems* you could question candidates on the knowledge and understanding needed for, 'who in the organisation is able to give help and information?' You could be carrying out a professional discussion on the roles of the people in the organisation and the following questions could be asked:

- ◆ If a customer asks a question you cannot answer, who within the organisation would you ask?
- ◆ How would you use this information?

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 sometimes 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 often 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 describes how the candidate has dealt with a specific situation, ie if customer has a complaint on the service received from the company, the candidate would give a full account of the situation explaining the steps he/she took to resolve the situation and who else, if anyone, was involved. A personal statement should not be used as a substitute for skills evidence.

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 ↑ ↓ Weakest	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.
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.

It is essential that the status of the expert witness is clearly defined and that records are maintained of the witnesses involved for a particular candidate. This information should be recorded and maintained for every person providing witness testimony. It is your responsibility to approve witnesses, and to determine their areas and degrees of expertise both in the candidate's area of work and in their knowledge of the standards. This process of approval will set the level of witness evidence that can be accepted, and, possibly, exclude witness evidence where it is not competent.

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.

The Institute of Customer Service 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.

For example, in Unit 6.2.3 where a level one candidate might not be expected to deal with difficult customers, a simulation could be used to show how the candidate would deal with the situation. Another example could be Unit 6.2.5.

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) 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.

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 — Level 2

Unit/Element(s): **Unit 9 Give Customers a Positive Image of Yourself and Your Organisation**
 Candidate: Keiran Now **Date of observation:** 23/04/07
 Evidence index number: 21

Skills/activities observed:	PCs covered:
<p>I conducted an observation on Keiran dealing with customers. Keiran greeted me in a friendly manner. She was dressed in the company uniform, dark blue trousers, light blue blouse and neck scarf . Keiran’s work area was tidy and organised.</p> <p>A customer approached Keiran’s desk. Keiran greeted the customer in a friendly, open manner and asked if she could be of any assistance. Keiran invited the customer to take a seat, using a friendly yet concerned tone she asked the customer what the problem was. The customer explained that she had booked a holiday with midday flights, but had now received a letter saying the flight had been changed to night flight (2.00am), she went on to explain that this was unsuitable as she had young children. At this point the customer was becoming upset and said she wanted the original flight times. Keiran comforted the customer (using a sympathetic yet respectful tone) stating she would try and do as much as she could to resolve the situation.</p> <p>Keiran logged onto the computer system, confirmed the customer’s name, asked her postcode and date of departure. Keiran quickly located the information, she explained to the customer that it is the holiday company who have changed the flight times and that it is outwith her control, she repeats the information ensuring that the customer understands the situation, the customer acknowledges her understanding of the situation.</p> <p>Keiran asks the customer to give her a minute to do some further checks on the system, then she offers the customer an alternative holiday resort with the same facilities and late morning flights.</p>	<p>9.1.2 9.1.1</p> <p>9.1.1</p> <p>9.1.2, 9.1.3, 9.2.2</p> <p>9.1.4 9.1.5 9.1.7</p> <p>5.1.1 9.3.1 11.2.2</p> <p>9.3.3 9.3.4 9.2.3</p> <p>9.3.1 9.1.6</p>

<p>The customer is delighted and accepts the new holiday, Keiran explained all the new terms and conditions, she speaks with her supervisor and manages to waiver the administration charge. Keiran updates the system with the new information. The customer thanks Keiran for her help, and Keiran once again appologies for the first holiday, she took the opportunity to promote the fact that the company can supply currency and travellers cheques. The customers states that she will come back nearer the time.</p>	<p>5.1.3 11.1.2 11.1.3</p>
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Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:
9a 9d 9e 11c

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute:
5 and 11

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:
Good evidence for showing ability to interact with and assist customers. You established the facts very quickly and accessed the relevant information , you were sympathetic to the customers needs and used the correct tone at all times, you were able to find an alternative holiday for the customer at no extra cost. You also took the opportunity to promote additional services your company could supply. Additonal evidence is still required for this Unit

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: *Annie More*

Date: *23/04/07*

Candidate's signature: *Keiran Now*

Date: *23/04/07*

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: 11	Element(s):
Evidence index number: 16	
Circumstances of assessment: Oral questioning at candidate's workplace to confirm knowledge and understanding.	
List of questions and candidate's responses: Q: Why is it important to pay attention to details when processing customer service information? A: If an error was made eg the wrong details being put on the system, it could mean problems with tickets, accommodation and flights. Information details on the wrong customer could be sent to the wrong person. Q: Why is it important to collect customer service information efficiently and effectively? A: To ensure that the customer details are correct at all times. It also allows for easy access to the customer records at a later date.	
Assessor's signature: <i>Annie More</i>	Date: <i>18/04/07</i>
Candidate's signature: <i>Keiran Now</i>	Date: <i>18/04/07</i>

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 — level 4

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, PCs covered
14/03/07	19	<p>Today I chaired a meeting with all staff to present and discuss the content and implementation of the new customer service strategy.</p> <p>I explained the detail of the strategy and the roles and responsibilities of the supervisors and staff.</p> <p>The document was well-received by staff and supervisors alike, they particularly liked the importance that customer feedback would have in the ongoing development of the plan.</p> <p>The supervisors agreed that the existing staff level would be adequate without putting pressure on the staff.</p> <p>After the meeting I had a one-to-one with each member of staff and set individual targets for time spent with customers, sales and return rate.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>17</p> <p>20</p>	<p>28.2.4</p> <p>44.1.1</p> <p>44.2.1</p> <p>28.1.4</p> <p>28.2.1</p> <p>28.2.3</p> <p>28.2.2</p> <p>44.1.3</p>

Signed (candidate): *Wendy Day*

Date: *14/03/07*

Witness testimony

Remember when you to use 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:	Customer Service at level 4
Candidate's name:	Wendy Day
Evidence index no:	25
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	19
Units(s):	28 and 44
Date of evidence:	24 December 2007
Name of witness:	Hilda McEvoy
Designation/relationship to candidate:	Department manager
Details of testimony:	
<p>Wendy called a meeting on 14 December to discuss the customer service plan she had developed. Before the meeting Wendy had given me the document and we had an in-depth discussion on the implementation, the projected cost, and how it would affect staff.</p> <p>Wendy had prepared a PowerPoint for the meeting and did an excellent presentation. The staff, supervisors and other managers at the meeting were all very impressed with the plans and all agreed that it would not cause any tremendous pressure on the staff and would have a great impact on the customers and help motivate the staff through the customer feedback.</p> <p>After the meeting Wendy had individual meetings with staff members to make sure each one understood how they fitted within the strategy and to set individual targets.</p>	
I can confirm the candidate's evidence is authentic and accurate.	
Signed by witness: <i>Hilda McEvoy</i> Date: <i>24/12/07</i>	

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 only likely to occur in generating evidence for Units in which the candidate has no exposure and cannot therefore generate the required evidence.

You may be able to overcome these by use of professional discussion, demonstration (walk me, talk me, show me) and questions and answers. Units should be chosen in which the candidate can generate suitable, relevant evidence without any great difficulty.

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

In the Unit *Process Customer Service Complaints*, it is possible that the observation of processing a customer service complaint may be difficult as there is no guarantee that a customer would complain during an assessment. This means that suitable evidence for the assessment of processing a complaint consistently and the knowledge and understanding for this area may be a record of complaints showing the action(s) taken by the candidate to deal with it within their own level of responsibility. Such records will be dependant on the culture of the organisation, it may be very formal and would be automatically authenticated by a member of management to confirm the resolution of the complaint met with organisational requirements. Alternatively, in a less formal organisation, the candidate might, for the purposes of the SVQ, produce a series of personal statements describing their handling of a particular complaint and the outcome. In such a situation, it would be essential to produce supporting evidence to ensure authenticity such as witness testimony and/or questioning by assessor.

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: Customer Service at level 4

Candidate: Wendy Day

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in 2 **mandatory** Units and 7 **optional** Units.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory	7	8												
Optional	18	28	35	44	42	20	45							

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit Number	Title	Assessor's Signature	Date
7	Understand Customer Service to Improve Service Delivery	Annie More	17/12/07
8	Know the Rules to Follow when Developing Customer Service	Annie More	17/12/07

Optional Units achieved

18	Use Customer Service as a Competitive Tool	Annie More	05/10/07
28	Plan, Organise and Control Customer Service Operations	Annie More	17/10/07
35	Handle Referred Customer Complaints	Annie More	21/11/07

44	Implement Quality Improvements to Customer Service		
42	Lead a Team to Improve Customer Service		
20	Champion Customer Service		
45	Plan and Organise the Development of Customer Service Staff		

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 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

SVQ title and level: Customer Service at level 4

Evidence number	Description of evidence	Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If no, state location	Sampled by the IV (initials and date)
17	Development Plan	Yes	
19	Personal statement on staff briefing	Yes	SS 4/4/06
20	Minutes from staff meeting	Yes	
25	Testimony	Yes	SS 24/04/06

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: Plan, Organise and Control Customer Service Operations

Element: Supervise customer service operations

Evidence Index No	Description of Evidence	PCs						Areas of knowledge and understanding															
		28.2.1	28.2.2	28.2.3	28.2.4	28.2.5	28.2.6	28.2.7	28.2.8	28.a	28.b	28.c	28.d	28.e	28.f	28.g	28.h	28.i	28.j				
17	PRODUCT EVIDENCE	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓									
19	PERSONAL STATEMENT	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓									
20	MINUTES FROM MEETING				✓	✓									✓								
25	WITNESS TESTIMONY					✓				✓													
32	PROGRESS REPORT						✓	✓	✓								✓		✓	✓			

Unit: 9

Element: 9.1

Notes/Comments

Wendy has proven that she has can produce and implement a successful customer service development plan.

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

Candidate: *Wendy Day* Date: *17/10/07*

Assessor: *Annie More* Date: *17/10/07*

Internal Verifier: *Senga Scott* Date: *30/10/07*

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:

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:

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: