Assessor's guidelines for the SVQs in Photo Imaging at levels 2, 3 and 4

Contents

About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQs in Photo Imaging at levels 2, 3 and 4**. You might be able to think of other ways of assessing your candidates and recording your decisions about their competence.

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

Introduction

This introduction provides a brief overview of SVQs and how they are assessed in the workplace. If you are already familiar with the concept of SVQs, go straight 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 — in most cases these bodies are Sector Skills Councils (SSC) — 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 occupational standards (NOS) which define *what* employees (or potential employees) must be able to do, *how well*, and *in what circumstances*, to show that they are competent in their work.

Each SVQ has to fit into a broad framework which allows qualifications in the UK and throughout Europe to be compared. SVQs are specified at five levels 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 might 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. A **Unit overview** gives an indication of the Unit's application. **Units** describe the activities which employees have to perform, and will require candidates to demonstrate certain skills or knowledge and understanding.

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

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

You will also come across standards containing statements on **awareness**. These statements could, for example, highlight best practice, procedures and relevant sources of information.

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 occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. Occupational competence has been defined by the standards-setting body in the assessment strategy for these SVQ(s).

Assessors and verifiers are also expected to obtain a qualification in assessment and verification — this can be the Assessor/Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment and verification) or an alternative qualification recognised by SQA.

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 SVQs in Photo Imaging

When Skillset took over responsibility of Photo Imaging from the Photo Imaging NTO, it committed to carry out a more thorough review of the framework once the Skills Strategy, research into the industry's training needs and new National Occupational Standards, had been developed.

Research into the industry's training and educational needs as well as new NOS has now been achieved. Skillset have developed new revised NOS in Photography and Digital Imaging and as a result SQA has been able to streamline the new Photography and Digital Imaging SVQs at levels 2, 3 and 4.

♦ The level 2 SVQ is designed for junior staff in photographic studios, digital imaging companies, processing laboratories and specialist imaging bureaux. Such staff carry out straightforward imaging and processing activities to a relatively tight brief supervised by senior colleagues.

♦ The level 3 SVQ is designed for photographers, technical and creative specialists working in photographic studios, digital imaging companies, processing laboratories and specialist imaging bureaux or operating as freelances. Imaging staff at this level have to contribute to the agreement brief, carry out complex imaging activities, resolve day-to-day processing and machine maintenance problems and produce the required image output.

♦ The level 4 SVQ is designed for people running photographic studios, digital imaging companies and departments and for freelances working at a high level of complexity. The creative, technical and management demands are considerable. Imaging personnel at this level are responsible for agreeing the brief and for producing high-quality work to meet that brief. They also have to manage the company, the department, or their freelance activities and will be responsible for the work of others and the allocation of resources.

Photo Imaging SVQs are designed to be assessed in the workplace or in conditions similar to the workplace. Examples of the settings or centres in which the SVQs are likely to be delivered include:

♦ Photographic studios including freelance operations

♦ Retail minilab processing laboratories

♦ Processing laboratories including photo finishing laboratories

♦ Digital imaging companies including freelance operations

♦ Digital imaging departments in photo imaging and photo processing companies

♦ Digital imaging departments in wider organisations in the public and private sector

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQs in Photo Imaging at levels 2, 3 and 4. The Photo Imaging standards are comprised of a number of Units — the majority of which have been specifically developed for the sector. However, a small number of generic Units, eg customer service Units have been imported from other sectors.

Photo Imaging level 2
Complete 8 Units

Mandatory Units — complete all three

SQA ref		Unit title
F2TA 04	Pi 1	Apply Copyright and Other Laws Relating to Usage and Licensing of Images
D8RF 04	X1	Contribute to Good Working Relationships
B7WE 04	X2	Ensure Your Own Actions Reduce Risks to Health and Safety

PLUS

Photography Route	**Non-photography Route**
↓	↓
Mandatory Unit **Pi 6** + **4 Units** from bank of optional Units below	Choose **5 Units** from bank of optional Units below

F2V2 04 (Pi 6) Take Standardised and Official Document Photographs

Optional Units

SQA ref		Unit title
F2TC 04	Pi 5	Check and Pack Client Orders
F2TY 04	Pi 8	Start Up and Shut Down Laboratory Equipment
F2V6 04	Pi 9	Use Minilab Equipment to Process and Print Images
F2TJ 04		Mix and Store Processing Chemistry
F2TD 04	Pi 10	Edit and Enhance Images Using a Digital Kiosk
F2JS 04	Pi 12	Process Exposed Films
F2TP 04	Pi 13	Print Photographic Images by Hand
F2TR 04	Pi 14	Print Photographic Images by Machine
F2TT 04	Pi 15	Produce Scanned Images
F2V5 04	Pi 16	Undertake Technical Adjustment of Images
F2TM 04	Pi 17	Prepare Image Output
F2TW 04	Pi 18	Send and Receive Data Digitally
F2TV 04	Pi 23	Research and Access Images
F2TX 04	Pi 24	Source and Acquire Images
F2TB 04	Pi 25	Carry Out the Process of Image Cataloguing
F2V0 04	Pi 26	Store, Conserve and Preserve Images

Retail

SQA ref		Unit title
F09A 04	Pi 30	Keep Stock on Sale at Required Levels in a Retail Environment
F08R 04	Pi 31	Display Stock to Promote Sales to Customers in a Retail Environment
F0AC 04	Pi 33	Provide Information and Advice to Customers in a Retail Environment
F09F 04	Pi 34	Maximise Product Sales in a Retail Environment
FOA7 04	Pi 35	Process Payments for Purchases in a Retail Environment

Customer Service

SQA ref		Unit title
F05B 04	Pi 37	Promote Additional Services or Products to Customers

Photo Imaging level 3

Complete 10 Units in total

Mandatory Units — complete all 5 Units

SQA ref		Unit title
F2TA 04	Pi 1	Apply Copyright and Other Laws Relating to Usage and Licensing of Images
D8RF 04	X1	Contribute to Good Working Relationships
B7WE 04	X2	Ensure Your Own Actions Reduce Risks to Health and Safety
F2T9 04	Pi 2	Agree the Photo Imaging Brief
F2V3 04	Pi 20	Undertake Colour Management Procedures

PLUS

Photography Route	**Non-photography Route**
↓	↓
Mandatory Unit **Pi 7 + 2 Units** from group 1 optional Units and **2 Units** from group 2 optional Units below	Choose **3 Units** from Group 1 optional Units and **2 Units** from Group 2 optional Units

F2V7 04   Pi 7 Undertake Photographic Assignments

Group 1 — Optional Units

SQA ref		Unit title
F2TK 04	Pi 3	Plan and Organise Photographic Assignments
F2VA 04	Pi 4	Evaluate and Select and/or Technology and Equipment
F2TG 04	Pi 19	Maintain the Imaging System
F2V4 04	Pi 21	Undertake Image Asset Management
F2TH 04	F1	Manage and Market Yourself as Freelancer
F2TF 04	F2	Facilitate and Manage Trainees
F2TY 04	Pi 8	Start Up and Shut Down Laboratory Equipment

Group 1 — Optional Units
Retail

SQA ref		Unit title
F0AJ 04	Pi 27	Source Goods and Services in a Retail Environment
D8CA 04	Pi 28	Monitor and Evaluate the Quality of Service Provided by External Suppliers
F09D 04	Pi 29	Maintain the Availability of Goods for Sale to Customers in a Retail Environment
F08E 04	Pi 32	Audit Stock Levels and Stock Inventories in a Retail Environment
F08T 04	Pi 36	Evaluate the Receipt of Payments from Customers

Customer Service

F04D 04	Pi 38	Improve the Customer Relationship
DR67 04	Pi 40	Manage Your Own Resources and Professional Development

Group 2 — Optional Units

SQA ref		
F2V6 04	Pi 9	Use Minilab Equipment to Process and Print Images
F2TD 04	Pi 10	Edit and Enhance Images Using a Digital Kiosk
F2TS 04	Pi 12	Process Exposed Films
F2TP 04	Pi 13	Print Photographic Images by Hand
F2TR 04	Pi 14	Print Photographic Images by Machine
F2TT 04	Pi 15	Produce Scanned Images
F2V5 04	Pi 16	Undertake Technical Adjustment of Images
F2TM 04	Pi 17	Prepare Image Output and Presentation
F2TW 04	Pi 18	Send and Receive Data Digitally
F2TL 04	Pi 22	Plan, Set Up and Control the Digital Workflow
F2TV 04	Pi 23	Research and Access Images
F2TX 04	Pi 24	Source and Acquire Images
F2TB 04	Pi 25	Carry Out the Process of Image Cataloguing
F2V0 04	Pi 26	Store, Conserve and Preserve Images

Photo Imaging at level 4

Complete 12 Units

Mandatory Units — complete all 7 Units

SQA ref		Unit title
F2TA 04	Pi 1	Apply Copyright and Other Laws Relating to Usage and Licensing of Images
D1VB 04	X3	Conduct an Assessment of Risks in the Workplace
F2T9 04	Pi 2	Agree the Photo Imaging Brief
F2V3 04	Pi 20	Undertake Colour Management Procedures
F2V4 04	Pi 21	Undertake Image Asset Management
F2TL 04	Pi 22	Plan, Set Up and Control the Digital Workflow
DR7C 04	Pi 42	Provide Learning Opportunities for Colleagues (Imported Management Unit)

PLUS

Photography Route	**Non-photography Route**
↓	↓
Mandatory Unit **Pi 7** + **1 Unit** from Group 1 optional Units and **3 Units** from Group 2 optional Units below	Take **2 Units** from Group 1 optional Units and **3 Units** from Group 2 optional Units below

F2V7 04   Pi 7 Undertake Photographic Assignments

Group 1 — optional Units

SQA ref		**Unit title**
F2V8 04	X4	Develop Procedures to Control Risks in the Workplace
DR4L 04	Pi 41	Develop Your Personal Networks
DT4K 04	Pi 43	Manage a Programme of Complementary Projects
F2V9 04	Pi 44	Sell Your Products and Services on the Internet
D8W4 04	Pi 45	Develop a Website for the Business
F04M 04	Pi 39	Monitor and Solve Customer Service Problems

Group 2 — optional Units

SQA ref		**Unit title**
F2TK 04	Pi 3	Plan and Organise Photographic Assignments
F2VA 04	Pi 4	Evaluate and Select Equipment and/or Technology
F2V5 04	Pi 16	Undertake Technical Adjustment of Images
F2TM 04	Pi 17	Prepare Image Output
F2TW 04	Pi 18	Send and Receive Data Digitally
F2TG 04	Pi 19	Maintain the Imaging System
F2TX 04	Pi 24	Source and Acquire Images
F2TH 04	F1	Manage and Market Yourself as Freelancer

An assessment strategy for the SVQs

As part of its review of the National Occupational Standards, Skillset has developed an assessment strategy which defines a range of requirements:

♦ the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers

♦ a definition of simulation

♦ a definition of the workplace

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

For the new SVQs at levels 2, 3 and 4, simulation is generally not acceptable.

Why would people be interested in the SVQs?

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 SVQs, and to advise them of the suitability of the qualifications. 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

People will take SVQs for a variety of reasons: to gain promotion, to prove their job competence, for personal development or to have a structured training plan giving them greater knowledge and skill in the work they do. There will be other reasons too. One of the first things to do is to find out why your candidates want o do SVQs and to advise them on the suitability of particular qualifications. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to your candidates they might help you to do this.

The next step is to make sure that the guidance the candidate receives is sound and job related. The candidate will need advice to ensure that their existing job remit, skills, experience and their plans for progression are matched to the SVQ they select. It does not have to be the assessor who carries out the matching process, but whoever has the responsibility should ensure that the assessment opportunities available to the candidate are also considered. For example, there should be time available for the assessment process to take place even if this means providing cover from other staff for the relatively short period involved.

An example

Donald worked as a designer in an imaging studio attached to a photo processing laboratory. He had joined the company after completing a degree in graphic design and was now in his third year with them. He had gained a lot of experience in a rapidly changing activity and had considerable autonomy in carrying out his assignments. He was involved in a lot of face-to-face discussions with customers and potential customers.

Donald had no formal qualifications in photo imaging and wanted to do something that would give him national recognition of the work-based skills he had developed. His employer was keen to see him pursuing qualifications both for his own sake and for the sake of the company's reputation. They were attracted by television advertisements about Modern Apprenticeships and obtained some details from Skillset. They were able to download the standards from their website and, after examining these they both felt that Donald should go for the SVQ in Photo Imaging: Non Photography at level 3 leading to a Modern Apprenticeship.

Because the company was small it did not have anyone with experience of SVQ assessment. On the Skillset website they found an approved centre and training provider who was able to help. At the first meeting between Donald, his employer and an assessor from the centre it was agreed that Donald's choice was the right one. He would need three additional Units for his MA which were easily found in the Optional Units. Donald also needed five Core Skills at level 2 in *Problem Solving, Working with Others, Communication, IT* and *Numeracy*. He found that his degree in Graphic Design covered these.

For assessors with limited experience of SVQs, it is worth reviewing a candidate's college record or accessing it from SQA's database via Navigator, using the candidate's Scottish Candidate Number. This may reveal useful evidence of prior achievement, for example in digital imaging and also Core Skills.

The assessor suggested that Donald would benefit by attending a nearby college offering a suitable course. Donald's employer allowed him day-release for this course but Donald would need to do some college work in his own time as well. The course could be completed within the two years the rest of the qualification would take.

It was clear that Donald could generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of four out of the five mandatory Units. The fifth Unit was *Undertake Colour Management Procedures*. This would require some planning in order to provide Donald with the opportunity to demonstrate competence. For his optional Units, Donald agreed that he could cover three Units from Group 1 and two Units from Group 2 as required.

The assessor then went through the Standards with Donald so that he could provide guidance on how to collect evidence and construct a portfolio to show that the required Units had been achieved. The assessor explained that the assessment process would start with the body of work already collected and that this would be examined to see to what extent it met the standards. He also explained that each assessment visit would cover a number of Units to make each visit as efficient and effective as possible.

The evidence for digital communication would take some time to collect and would require Donald to build up his skills in this area. It was agreed that Donald would send and receive images to and from his assessor for a three-month period. He would also keep in his portfolio a record of these images and a note of any difficulties and the way he had resolved them. The assessor would also observe Donald sending and receiving images during one of his assessment visits.

Donald was able to bring forward sufficient website design work to demonstrate competence in this area but he did not have the same depth of experience in colour management. It was agreed that he would attend a short course on colour management run by the suppliers of the programme they were using. He could then apply the principles involved in his day-to-day work. Several scanners, monitors, and printers need to be calibrated and Donald's employer agreed to make him responsible for the regular maintenance of this equipment. The assessor agreed to relay this to the colour management specialist who would handle this

part of Donald's assessment and ask him to discuss any additional work that needed to be done.

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

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 can 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 your candidate and plan what is to be assessed, in what way and when and where the assessment is to take place. Remember to take account of any work pressures and invite contributions from the employer if this is appropriate. These discussions can be confirmed in the form of an agreed Assessment Plan between you and the candidate. Note that the Assessment Plan can include all the Units to be completed along with proposed dates. That way you can plan to integrate more than one Unit when you see they have common areas.

You should treat Assessment Plans as working documents. They can be updated and changed as the programme progresses and as you review progress with your candidate.

As you are planning assessment, don't forget to make the most of opportunities to assess an activity that draws on the contents of different Units. This can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing your candidate's competence and does not involve generating the same evidence several times.

If you are a new assessor working towards your A or V Units (the national standards in assessment and verification) you will need copies of completed Assessment Plans as part of your evidence.

The Assessment Plan includes the following sections:

♦ Unit title
♦ Unit overview
♦ Performance Statements
♦ Method of assessment
♦ Description of Evidence
♦ Knowledge and Understanding needed
♦ Links to other Units
♦ Review dates and initials
♦ Assessor's signature
♦ Candidate's signature
♦ Date plan agreed
♦ Date of completion

Note: you will produce one Assessment Plan for each Unit in the programme but it is worth grouping together any that have common links. That way you can decide to have one assessment date for all within the common criteria.

Selecting methods of assessment

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

♦ By *valid* we mean that the method should be appropriate to the standards.

♦ By *reliable* we mean that the method should ensure consistent results when used with different candidates, different assessors and on different occasions.

♦ By *practicable* we mean that the method ensures that the assessment makes best use of available resources, equipment and time.

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

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

The benefits might be:

♦ the candidate is on familiar ground

♦ evidence — both images and supporting records — is readily available

♦ the candidate can organise portfolio assembly around work requirements

♦ assessment visits can be timed to avoid busy periods

♦ the candidate and the employer can both be involved in the process

The challenges might be:

♦ pressure of work in a small company

♦ possible tensions between candidate and employer

An example

Product evidence is crucial in digital imaging. Assessment in the workplace is likely to provide easy access to portfolios of images, probably stored in electronic form, and to supporting information such as records of orders and communication with customers. In addition, workplace assessment via observation of performance need not be unduly time-consuming as far as some areas of digital imaging are concerned.

Observation might cover the candidate's performance in the following:

♦ scanning

♦ editing

♦ use of systems and working practices generally

♦ discussions with customers and potential customers, eg on the imaging brief and on any problems arising from assignments

♦ the way in which the candidate deals with colleagues and external contacts

Assessment planning should determine how much direct observation of performance is actually needed, particularly where assessment is being carried out by an external assessor. This is often the case in photo imaging, where many organisations are very small, where there are a lot of freelances and where in-house experience of formal SVQ assessment is limited. Where product evidence needs to be supplemented, it may be more practicable to obtain witness statements on assignments from the candidate's employer, colleagues and customers. Provided that this sort of evidence is felt to be reliable, it can provide a useful supplement to direct observation.

Methods of assessment

Assessment can 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 methods, such as questioning. For example, it might be appropriate to ask oral questions of candidates as they carry out naturally-occurring activities.

Observation might be used to assess the following:

♦ the way in which candidates use imaging systems

♦ the way in which candidates deal with colleagues and external contacts

Product evaluation

As candidates work towards achieving the SVQ, they will produce evidence in the form of products of their work, eg:

♦ scanned images and the resulting image data files
♦ edited images
♦ samples of image output

You will want to ensure that the work produced is technically sound and that it is fit for its intended purpose. This can be a difficult judgement. It is not the assessor's job to 'second guess' the candidate, ie to judge that images do not meet the standards simply because the assessor might have taken a different approach. On the other hand, it is not enough to rely on the fact that the customer has accepted the images — the customer might well accept images that do not meet the requirements embodied in the standards.

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.

In assessing the SVQs in digital imaging, questioning might cover areas such as the following:

♦ decisions on whether or not to scan material
♦ decisions on how to scan material
♦ selection of hardware and software for image editing
♦ decisions on the imaging approach

Typical questions and answers might be:

Q: An image measuring 4 x 6 inches is scanned at 300 ppi. The image is not cropped and the file size is retained when the output resolution is changed to 150 ppi to meet the requirements of the output device. What will be the physical dimensions (in inches) of the image when printed?

A: The same size.

Q: Many computer printers use process colour (CMYK) inks. What colour is the ink known as 'K' and why is this colour needed in addition to Cyan, Magenta and Yellow?

A: The 'K' ink is black. It is needed because process inks are less pure than photographic dyes, so that pure black would not be produced by CMY alone.

Q: What does the term 'interpolated resolution' refer to?

A: Resolution achieved through software calculating values for missing pixels.

Other methods of assessment

The following methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication.

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 created a product of their work. This is often referred to as a *personal statement*. You should ensure that by asking candidates to produce such statements, you are not asking them to demonstrate competence beyond what is required by the standards. You should also be selective in the use of personal statements, and make sure they have not been produced as a substitute to a more valid, reliable and practical method of assessment.

Personal statements are particularly useful in small companies and in the assessment of freelances, where observation of performance may not be very practicable. Candidates can use personal statements to cover areas such as the following:

♦ why they adopted the scanning approach they did

♦ what issues, if any, were raised and how they were handled

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you might not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your candidates, but other people could 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 witness. You will have to take these factors into account as you make your judgement.

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

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

Witness testimony can be used in the same way as personal statements, with employers, colleagues and customers providing information to back up product evidence.

In the case of digital imaging, customers can also provide evidence, eg on the briefing and on the extent to which the eventual images meet the brief. This will not, in itself, be enough to confirm that a candidate has met the standards, but it can still prove a valuable addition to the overall pool of evidence.

Simulation

Generally simulation is not permitted in this SVQ. Centres should be required to advise the External Verifier in advance of their intention to use simulations and the design of the simulation should be approved by the External Verifier prior to use. Please note that simulation will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

See the assessment strategy on SQA's website (**www.sqa.org.uk**) for more details.

Other sources of evidence

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

Because assessment for SVQs is at its most efficient when candidates are at or near competence, an audit of the candidate's current competence is essential. However, since an assessor is unlikely to have access to sources of historical evidence, particular care must be taken to ensure:

♦   the evidence is authentic, ie it is the result of the candidate's own unaided work

♦   the competence is still current — and not one that was gained in the past and then lost

Personal statements and witness statements can help demonstrate authenticity and currency. However, if you are in any doubt, up-to-date evidence — eg via product evidence and observation — must be obtained.

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. 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

Appendix 1 contains blank forms which you can copy and use in assessment.

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: PI 15   Produce Scanned Images
Candidate: Donald MacKenzie
Evidence index number:

Date of observation: 19/03/07

Skills/activities observed:	PS covered:
I observed Donald carrying out the scanning of both black and white and colour originals; the digital files were intended to form part of an image for printing on a large-format inkjet printer. Donald checked the originals and decided that, to capture the full tonal range of two high-contrast black and white originals, he would have to go into the scanner program and adjust the histograms for each photograph. He decided that the others could be scanned satisfactorily without intervention. He discussed all of the issues fully with the customers; he also confirmed that there were no copyright or other legal problems with the images. Donald prepared the equipment and material correctly. He carried out the necessary low-res scanning and applied the correct software values for the material to be scanned and the output required. Donald's scanned images met all of the requirements of the standards. He had to make a number of corrections to obtain the required tonal range in the black and white images; he also carried out image sharpening without any unwanted side-effects.	**All (1-17)**
Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation: a to s inclusive.	

Other Units to which this evidence may contribute:
Unit PI 1 Apply Copyright and Other Laws Relating to Usage and Licensing of Images, PI 20 Undertake Colour Management Procedures, PI 21 Undertake Image Asset Management.

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:
All aspects of the scanning were carried out well and clearly met the required standards. We need to supplement this evidence with output evidence from your portfolio. We also need to discuss other ways of assessing discussions with customers and confidentiality, eg via records and witness statements.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: *Joe Benjamin*   Date: *19/03/07*

Candidate's signature: *Donald MacKenzie*   Date: *19/03/07*

Questions and candidate responses

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

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

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

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit: PI 15   Produce Scanned Images

Evidence index number:

Circumstances of assessment: Scanning conventional material into digital form is an important stage in digital imaging. Scanning has to take into account both the nature of the material to be scanned and the nature of the output required. The following questions were asked while Donald was carrying out the scanning described on the previous form. They complement output evidence already available on scanned material.

List of questions and candidate's responses:

Q: What is the purpose of creating a 'dummy file' in your image processing software prior to scanning?

A: To identify the appropriate file size.

Q: What is the maximum number of grey scale levels available from an eight bit digital image?

A: 256.

Q: You have been asked to scan a 3cm x 3cm image which, after tonal manipulation on screen, will be reproduced on a 300dpi printer to a size of 12cm x 12cm. At what resolution should the original image be scanned to retain maximum detail without producing a larger than necessary file size?

A: 1200dpi.

Q: How many colours can be reproduced in a 24 bit (3 x 8 bits) RGB image?

A: 16.7 million

Assessor's signature: *Joe Benjamin*   Date: *23/04/07*

Candidate's signature: *Donald MacKenzie*   Date: *23/04/07*

Candidate's personal statement

If a personal statement is being used as evidence, it should be completed by the candidate and should record what they did, how they did it, 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 can provide witness testimony, the candidate should record how the statement links to other evidence in the column provided.

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit and Performance Statements
23/04/07		For a composite image I had to produce for a brochure, I needed an image of a car in a specific setting. I was unable to find suitable images on any of our image databases so, with the client's agreement; I had to commission and brief a photographer to produce an original shot. I specified the make and model of the car and the setting. I briefed the photographer on the nature and purpose of the image I wanted. I also specified the digital attributes of the image — in terms of resolution, file size, file type and compression. The photographer produced the image required, and I incorporated it successfully in the final image. My portfolio includes digital copies of the photographic images and of the final digital image. It also contains a hard copy of the brochure.		PI 15 Produce Scanned Images

Signed (candidate): *Donald MacKenzie*

Date: *23/04/07*

Witness testimony

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

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

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level:	Photo Imaging: Non Photography at level 3
Candidate's name:	Donald MacKenzie
Evidence index no:	
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	
Units	PI 15 Produce Scanned Images
Date of evidence:	23/04/07
Contact details of witness:	John Barnstable
Designation/relationship to candidate:	Studio manager

Details of testimony:

Over a period of some six months, as an integral part of my job, I have observed Donald's planning and production of edited images.

I can confirm that he consistently meets the requirements of Unit PI 15. He has had the opportunity of briefing photographers to obtain original material, as well as carrying out a wide range of image editing.

He is familiar with all of the industry-standard hardware and software and of their relative merits. His photographic background means that he can combine units in an overall image without any visual clashes.

His edited images consistently meet customer requirements and our own standards, and are free of unwanted effects. He produces the final images in the required formats and uses the file storage system correctly.

He discusses things well with customers, and keeps them fully informed about the options available and his recommendations.

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

Signed by witness: *John Barnstable*   Date: *23/04/07*

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

☐ Holds D32/D33Award, or A1 Unit (incorporates D32 and D33 Units), or A2 (incorporates D32 Unit only)

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

Filling the gaps

There might come a time when your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you might 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.

Legal and ethical issues are, by their nature, difficult to predict and are unlikely to occur in many cases. However, candidates must be aware of the legal and ethical knowledge specified for each Unit so that they can make sure that their images are legally and ethically sound.

Assessment of knowledge will be carried out using questions designed to cover the key knowledge areas.

Guidance and support to candidates

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — your feedback to candidates 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, asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from colleagues of the candidate.

An example

Observation of some parts of digital imaging can be time-consuming, and it can be difficult to fit assessment visits into a busy working environment. In these circumstances, witness statements from colleagues and customers can be used to confirm that the candidate has carried out the necessary activities and that the images presented in the portfolio are authentic.

4   Recording achievement

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

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

Many centres will be happy to use the SQA's national recording material. Should you choose to use your own recording material, this has to be approved by us, normally after discussions with Skillset.

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 (eg in a filing cabinet) will be sufficient for the external verifier to follow it up and include it in the visit.

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

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

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

5   Further information

What else should I read?

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

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

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

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education

Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Employers and Training Providers

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

Quality Assurance Principles, Elements and Criteria

Operational Help Centre

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

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

Unit progress record

Qualification and level:

Candidate:

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

Unit Checklist

Mandatory											
Optional											

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit	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)

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit and Performance Statements

Signed by candidate:

Date:

Observation record

Unit(s):

Candidate: Date of observation:

Evidence index number:

Skills/activities observed:	Performance Statements covered:

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation:

Other Units which this evidence may contribute:

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate:

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature: Date:

Candidate's signature: Date:

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level:	
Candidate's name:	
Evidence index no:	
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any):	
Unit(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 D32/D33 Award, or A1 Unit (incorporates D32 and D33 Units), or A2 (incorporates D32 Unit only)

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

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit:
Evidence index number:
Circumstances of assessment:
List of questions and candidate's responses:

Assessor's signature:	**Date:**
Candidate's signature:	**Date:**