



Assessment Guidance for the SVQs in Furniture at levels 2 and 3

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About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQs in Furniture at levels 2 and 3**. 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 document has been provided to assist assessors and internal verifiers with the delivery of the SVQs in Furniture at levels 2 and 3.

It should be noted that this document will be updated throughout periodically in line with incremental change.

General Information

About SVQs and the SCQF

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications which set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy and are usually delivered in the workplace or in partnership with a college or other training provider. 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.

There are SVQs for nearly all occupations in Scotland and they are available at SVQ levels 1–5. SVQs are currently notionally placed in the SCQF as the individual SVQs may be at differing SCQF levels and have differing amount of credit points, depending on the structure and context of the SVQ. SVQs are a means of recognising the skills and knowledge people need in employment, ie job competence. Successful completion of an SVQ provides clear evidence that the learner works to nationally recognised occupational standards.

Each Unit defines one aspect of a job or work-role, and says what it is to be competent in that aspect of the job. To be awarded a full SVQ, learners must achieve each of the SVQ Units which make it up by demonstrating that they are competent in that aspect of the job. The Units which make up the SVQ can also be taken as freestanding awards. Some SVQs or SVQ Units are incorporated into other awards or programmes including HNCs and Modern Apprenticeships.

The Units making up the SVQ in Furniture have not been credit rated and levelled within the SCQF but this exercise will be undertaken in the future.

Explanation of levels

SVQ 1 (SCQF level 4)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable.
SVQ 2 (SCQF level 5)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. At this level, there will be activities, which are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement.
SVQ 3 (either SCQF level 6 or 7)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy, and control or guidance of others is often present.
SVQ 4 (either SCQF level 8 or 9)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.
SVQ 5 (SCQF level 11)	Competence involves the application of skills and a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountability.

For further information on SCQF go to www.scqf.org.uk.

Who is involved in SVQs?

A number of individuals and organisations are involved in SVQ delivery and assessment. Their roles have been designed to guarantee fair, accurate and consistent assessment.

- ◆ **the centre:** centres are approved by SQA to deliver and assess SVQs. Centres must meet the criteria set by SQA including the appointment of sufficient assessors and internal verifiers (see below)
- ◆ **the candidate:** the person who wants to achieve the SVQ (eg an employee)
- ◆ **the assessor*:** the person who assesses the candidates and decides if they are competent (eg supervisor)
- ◆ **the internal verifier*:** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg supervisor's line manager)
- ◆ **the External Verifier*:** an individual appointed by SQA who ensures that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the SVQ

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by SQA to prove they have the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. Occupational competence has been defined by the standards-setting body in the assessment strategy for this SVQ(s) — 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.

How are standards defined in SVQs?

All SVQs consist of Units 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 components. The introduction to the Furniture Units provides information on the content of the Unit. The other components of the Unit include:

- ◆ Elements
- ◆ Performance Standards
- ◆ Knowledge Statements
- ◆ Scope statement which defines the coverage of this Unit

See Appendix 2 for a sample Unit.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQs in Furniture.

The SVQs in Furniture have been developed by Proskills, the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the process and manufacturing sector.

SVQ in Furniture Making: Component Manufacture at level 2 (GA3D 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is five. Candidates must complete three mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE6H 04			228	Set Up and Operate Woodworking Machinery

Optional Units — two Units from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5L 04			206	Prepare to Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE41 04			207	Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE49 04			209	Assist With the Operation of Furniture Production Machinery
FE6D 04			216	Produce Workshop Equipment
FE59 04			217	Make and Assemble Wooden Components of Hand-Crafted Furniture
FE46 04			220	Apply Stains, Sealers and Primers
FE5J 04			221	Prepare Hand-crafted Furniture for Finishing
FE4Y 04			235	Finish Furniture by Hand Held Spray Gun
FE5K 04			237	Prepare Resources For Use in Making Hand-crafted Furniture
FE51 04			239	Finish Hand-crafted Furniture

SVQ in Furniture Making: Traditional at level 2 (GA3H 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE59 04			217	Make and Assemble Wooden Components of Hand-crafted Furniture
FE58 04			236	Maintain Tools and Equipment Used in Furniture Making And Installation

Optional Units — two Units from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4A 04			205	Attach Fittings to Furniture
FE5L 04			206	Prepare to Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE41 04			207	Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE6D 04			216	Produce Workshop Equipment
FE5J 04			221	Prepare Hand-crafted Furniture for Finishing
FE6H 04			228	Set Up and Operate Woodworking Machinery
FE5K 04			237	Prepare Resources For Use in Making Hand-crafted Furniture

SVQ in Furniture Making: Contemporary at level 2 (GA3G 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5E 04			201	Prepare and Assemble Furniture Using Mechanical Fixings
FE58 04			236	Maintain Tools and Equipment Used in Furniture Making And Installation

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE55 04			203	Join and Joint Veneers
FE56 04			204	Lay Veneers
FE4A 04			205	Attach Fittings to Furniture
FE59 04			217	Make and Assemble Wooden Components of Hand-crafted Furniture
FE5C 04			218	Match, Measure and Mark Out Veneers
FE57 04			219	Lay Veneers by Hand and Press Methods
FE6H 04			228	Set Up and Operate Woodworking Machinery
FE5K 04			237	Prepare Resources For Use in Making Hand-crafted Furniture

SVQ in Upholstery and Soft Furnishings: Modern Upholstery at level 2 (GA3E 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5M 04			210	Prepare to Upholster Standard Items of Modern Furniture
FE6J 04			211	Upholster Standard Items of Modern Furniture

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5H 04			212	Prepare Fabrics and Components For Use in Soft Furnishings and/or Upholstery
FE4P 04			213	Cut Fabrics and Components For Use in Soft Furnishings and/or Upholstery
FE65 04			214	Produce Simple Seamed Components by Hand and Machine
FE5F 04			229	Prepare and Construct Upholstery Foundations
FE5V 04			230	Produce Complex Seamed Components
FE6A 04			247	Produce Upholstery Templates
FE51 04			239	Finish Hand-crafted Furniture

**SVQ in Upholstery and Soft Furnishings: Traditional Upholstery at level 2
(GA3F 22)**

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5F 04			229	Prepare and Construct Upholstery Foundations
FE6K 04			240	Upholster Standard Items of Traditional Furniture

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5H 04			212	Prepare Fabrics and Components For Use in Soft Furnishings and/or Upholstery
FE4P 04			213	Cut Fabrics and Components For Use in Soft Furnishings and/or Upholstery
FE65 04			214	Produce Simple Seamed Components by Hand and Machine
FE5V 04			230	Produce Complex Seamed Components
FE51 04			239	Finish Hand-crafted Furniture
FE6A 04			247	Produce Upholstery Templates

SVQ in Upholstery and Soft Furnishings: Soft Furnishings at level 2 (GA3C 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE7A 04			255	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce Risks to Health and Safety within a Furniture/Interiors Related Workplace
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5G 04			253	Prepare Fabrics and Components for Use in Soft Furnishings
FE66 04			215	Produce Standard Window Treatments

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4N 04			256	Cut Fabrics and Components for Use in Soft Furnishings
FE65 04			214	Produce Simple Seamed Components by Hand and Machine
FE5V 04			230	Produce Complex Seamed Components
FE68 04			250	Produce Table Treatments
FE64 04			251	Produce Simple Bed Treatments
FE63 04			252	Produce Scatter and Bolster Cushions and Padded Items
FE62 04			258	Produce Loose Covers

SVQ in Finishing Furniture: Hand Finishing at level 2 (GA3J 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5J 04			221	Prepare Hand-crafted Furniture for Finishing
FE51 04			239	Finish Hand-crafted Furniture

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE56 04			204	Lay Veneers
FE4A 04			205	Attach Fittings to Furniture
FE46 04			220	Apply Stains, Sealers and Primers
FE4L 04			241	Create Decorative Effects on Hand-crafted Furniture
FE48 04			248	Assess and Repair Items of Furniture

SVQ in Finishing Furniture: Spray Finishing at level 2 (GA3A 22)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is six. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and two optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE5A 04			231	Make Sure Your Own Actions Reduce the Risks to Health and Safety (ENTO HSS1)
FE6L 04			249	Work Effectively in a Furniture-related Commercial Environment
FE5L 04			206	Prepare to Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE4Y 04			235	Finish Furniture by Hand Held Spray Gun

Optional Units — two from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE56 04			204	Lay Veneers
FE4A 04			205	Attach Fittings to Furniture
FE41 04			207	Apply Finishing Processes to Production Furniture
FE46 04			220	Apply Stains, Sealers and Primers
FE4L 04			241	Create Decorative Effects on Hand-crafted Furniture
FE48 04			248	Assess and Repair Items of Furniture

SVQ in Furniture Making: Contemporary at level 3 (GA3P 23)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is seven. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4T 04			301	Evaluate and Develop Own Skills and Expertise
FE53 04			351	Improve Process and Quality Control in a Commercial Environment
FE5D 04			380	Monitor and Maintain a Healthy and Safe Working Environment
FE4E 04			370	Complete Complex Production Furniture

Optional Units — three from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4V 04			302	Evaluate and Specify Requirements for Making Hand-crafted Furniture and/or Soft Furnishings
FE6G 04			304	Select, Prepare and Apply Decorative Veneers
FE4M 04			305	Cut and Assemble Hand-crafted Furniture
FE4G 04			307	Complete High Specification Hand-crafted Furniture
FE5T 04			355	Produce and Maintain Jigs and Templates
FE5Y 04			357	Produce Furniture Design Prototypes
FE61 04			358	Produce Furniture Production Specifications
FE50 04			373	Finish Furniture by Modern and Traditional Polishing

SVQ in Furniture Making: Traditional at level 3 (GA3K 23)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is seven. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4T 04			301	Evaluate and Develop Own Skills and Expertise
FE53 04			351	Improve Process and Quality Control in a Commercial Environment
FE5D 04			380	Monitor and Maintain a Healthy and Safe Working Environment
FE4G 04			307	Complete High Specification Hand-crafted Furniture

Optional Units — three from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4V 04			302	Evaluate and Specify Requirements for Making Hand-crafted Furniture and/or Soft Furnishings
FE4X 04			303	Evaluate and Specify Restoration Requirements
FE6G 04			304	Select, Prepare and Apply Decorative Veneers
FE4M 04			305	Cut and Assemble Hand-crafted Furniture
FE6F 04			319	Replicate/Restore Wooden Components of Furniture
FE5T 04			355	Produce and Maintain Jigs and Templates
FE4C 04			371	Collect and Research Information to Support Furniture Restoration and Repair Commissions
FE50 04			373	Finish Furniture by Modern and Traditional Polishing

SVQ in Upholstery and Soft Furnishings: Upholstery at level 3 (GA3M 23)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is seven. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4T 04			301	Evaluate and Develop Own Skills and Expertise
FE53 04			351	Improve Process and Quality Control in a Commercial Environment
FE5D 04			380	Monitor and Maintain a Healthy and Safe Working Environment
FE4K 04			367	Construct Upholstery Foundations

Optional Units — three from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4V 04			302	Evaluate and Specify Requirements for Making Hand-crafted Furniture and/or Soft Furnishings
FE47 04			310	Assemble Loose Covers
FE52 04			311	Fit and Finish Top Covers
FE5X 04			313	Produce Cushions and/or Bolsters and Padded Items
FE54 04			314	Install and Dress Soft Furnishings
FE5T 04			355	Produce and Maintain Jigs and Templates
FE4C 04			371	Collect and Research Information to Support Furniture Restoration and Repair Commissions
FE50 04			373	Finish Furniture by Modern and Traditional Polishing

SVQ in Upholstery and Soft Furnishings: Soft Furnishings at level 3 (GA3L 23)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is seven. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4T 04			301	Evaluate and Develop Own Skills and Expertise
FE53 04			351	Improve Process and Quality Control in a Commercial Environment
FE5D 04			380	Monitor and Maintain a Healthy and Safe Working Environment
FE4W 04			387	Evaluate and Specify Requirements for Making Soft Furnishings

Optional Units — three from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE54 04			314	Install and Dress Soft Furnishings
FE5N 04			381	Produce Advanced Bed Treatments to Include Producing a Fitted Balance and Decorative Bedspread
FE5W 04			382	Produce Complex Shaped Cushions and Padded Items
FE5P 04			383	Produce Advanced Loose Covers
FE5R 04			384	Produce and Install Advanced Window Treatments

SVQ in Finishing Furniture at level 3 (GA3N 23)

Total number of Units that the candidate needs to achieve for the qualification is seven. Candidates must complete four mandatory Units and three optional Units.

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4T 04			301	Evaluate and Develop Own Skills and Expertise
FE53 04			351	Improve Process and Quality Control in a Commercial Environment
FE5D 04			380	Monitor and Maintain a Healthy and Safe Working Environment
FE50 04			373	Finish Furniture by Modern and Traditional Polishing

Optional Units — three from the following:

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FE4X 04			303	Evaluate and Specify Restoration Requirements
FE6G 04			304	Select, Prepare and Apply Decorative Veneers
FE4G 04			307	Complete High Specification Hand-crafted Furniture
FE6F 04			319	Replicate/Restore Wooden Components of Furniture
FE4R 04			352	Define and Develop Standard Operating Procedures Within the Furniture, Furnishings and Interiors Industry
FE61 04			358	Produce Furniture Production Specifications

Assessment requirements

The assessment strategy for the SVQs in Furniture specifies the general principles for assessment and quality assurance of the qualifications and is essential reading for all assessors and verifiers for this SVQ.

The assessment strategy specifies:

- ◆ the recommended approach to external quality control of assessment
- ◆ the type and amount of evidence to be collected for assessment purposes, including mandatory requirements for evidence from performance in the workplace
- ◆ the extent to which simulated working conditions may be used in assessment, and any required characteristics of the simulations, including definitions of what might constitute realistic working environments
- ◆ the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers

The relevant parts of the assessment strategy are published on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk), and both SQA and centres must comply with these requirements. Appendix 3 of this document also provides an extract of the assessment strategy.

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.

The steps involved in assessing a candidate for an SVQ

These are the main stages in the assessment process:

- ◆ planning for assessment
- ◆ generation and collection of candidate evidence that shows competence in the selected Units
- ◆ judging the evidence of the candidate's competence and making an assessment decision based on this evidence
- ◆ recording the assessment decision and the candidate's achievement

The assessment process

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.

Roles in assessment

Candidate

The candidate is at the centre of the assessment process and has a key role in ensuring the process is effective. The candidate should:

- ◆ prepare for assessment — become familiar with the standards and understand what is to be assessed and how the assessment will be carried out
- ◆ 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/or signpost location of evidence, present evidence when required
- ◆ receive and act on feedback from the assessor

Assessors

Assessors support and assess candidates working towards the SVQ. They make sure that candidates meet the National Occupational Standards needed to achieve the SVQ.

The assessor's role is to:

- ◆ 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 appropriate evidence
- ◆ observe and record candidates carrying out the activities described in the standards — records should indicate what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what competence it demonstrates
- ◆ assess products of the candidate's own work
- ◆ question candidates and record results
- ◆ help candidates to present or signpost 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

Expert witnesses

A single assessor may not have the occupational expertise to make decisions on candidates' occupational competence for all the Units he/she chooses. Expert witnesses can be used to address any gaps in the technical and occupational competence of assessors.

Expert witnesses can be drawn from a wide range of people who can attest to performance in the workplace. A qualified assessor will make the final judgement about a candidate's competence based on testimony provided by the expert witness together with any other corroborating evidence.

Internal verifiers

Ultimately it is the internal verifier's job to ensure the integrity and quality of the SVQ. The internal verifier is responsible for:

- ◆ maintaining policies and procedures to enable delivery and assessment of the SVQ
- ◆ training and supporting assessors
- ◆ sampling the work of assessors and candidates
- ◆ checking and standardising assessment decisions made by assessors
- ◆ evaluating the effectiveness of assessment practice and procedures
- ◆ developing practice and procedures as a result of evaluation
- ◆ identifying assessors' training needs
- ◆ supporting assessors in implementing changes

Getting off to a good start

The quality of the advice and guidance received at the beginning of the assessment process is a key factor in ensuring candidates and workplaces achieve the best results from the SVQ.

SVQs are about competence in the workplace, therefore support within the workplace is essential. Effective assessment is facilitated by:

- ◆ building positive working relationships with the workplace
- ◆ working with the candidate to identify the appropriate level of SVQ and choice of optional Units
- ◆ making sure decisions reflect the needs and expectations of the employer as well as the candidate
- ◆ checking the candidate will be engaged in roles that allow them to meet the requirements of the appropriate Units of competence

Assessment planning

All candidates should have assessment plans that identify when and how assessment will be carried out, taking account of their prior learning and achievements, plans for addressing learning needs, and the assessment opportunities available to them.

Candidates need to have a clear understanding of what they are being assessed on, what methods will be used and what evidence they agree to produce. Proper assessment planning can help candidates to relate their everyday activities to the requirement of the SVQ.

In developing an assessment plan, assessors should:

- ◆ have a thorough knowledge of the SVQ and its assessment requirements
- ◆ get to know the candidate and their workplace
- ◆ find out when the candidate is available for assessment, eg what hours/days they work
- ◆ take account of the candidate's job role and circumstances
- ◆ identify opportunities for demonstrating competence
- ◆ make good use of the mentor, if available, to facilitate assessment opportunities (but keep them separate from the assessment process)
- ◆ ensure assessment planning takes account of the candidate's learning needs and agreed plans for addressing these

When planning assessment, it is often better to start off with the Units that link to the candidate's specialisms — usually the most important part of their work. Starting from their specialisms means candidates are starting from their area(s) of strength; there will be greater evidence and assessment opportunities; and there will be opportunities for generating evidence for the more generic mandatory Units at the same time.

The agreed assessment plan should:

- ◆ be candidate led rather than provider driven — organise and arrange assessment appropriate to each candidate rather than predetermined programmes or plans
- ◆ identify activities that will provide evidence towards a number of Units wherever possible
- ◆ use naturally-occurring evidence wherever possible
- ◆ use a range of assessment methods and evidence, driven by candidates' normal activities in the workplace
- ◆ use expertise within the workplace to support assessment, eg witness testimony
- ◆ make use of expert witnesses where appropriate
- ◆ recognise the contribution of learning logs, personal statements, professional discussions, tape, photographic and video evidence to the assessment process
- ◆ use questions to supplement, rather than duplicate, performance observation — there is no need to check knowledge that has been clearly demonstrated through practice

- ◆ where possible use the same evidence if the same Knowledge and Understanding is required for different Units
- ◆ be consistent with the agreed strategy for the use of simulation if required
- ◆ not overwhelm the candidate with evidence demands — use a sufficiency rather than surfeit approach
- ◆ avoid duplication of evidence and over assessment
- ◆ be consistent with the assessment strategy

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. 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:

- ◆ candidate's familiarity with own working environment
- ◆ familiarity between candidate and assessor (could be a benefit or a challenge)
- ◆ assessment progresses at candidate's own pace of learning
- ◆ proximity of resources in workplace
- ◆ ability to plan assessment around known working time peaks
- ◆ the assessor is familiar with internal documentation and company systems

The challenges might be:

- ◆ shiftwork
- ◆ confidentiality
- ◆ pressure of work, eg production schedules taking priority over assessments
- ◆ meeting the needs of customers

Methods of assessment

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

Remember workplace skills are expected to be assessed over a period of time, building up evidence and assessments.

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. For example:

- ◆ a candidate makes a visual inspection of the production machinery and equipment
- ◆ a candidate physically checks materials to be processed

Product evidence

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

- ◆ piece of furniture/annotated photo of furniture
- ◆ a shift change-over log is a means of communicating vital information about production processes, machinery problems, etc
- ◆ product specifications
- ◆ e-mails, notes and memos

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 Element. Much of a candidate's Knowledge and Understanding will be apparent from what they do or produce as part of their work, but this will not always be the case and questioning can be a useful way of confirming what candidates know and understand.

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

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

Other methods of assessment

These 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 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.

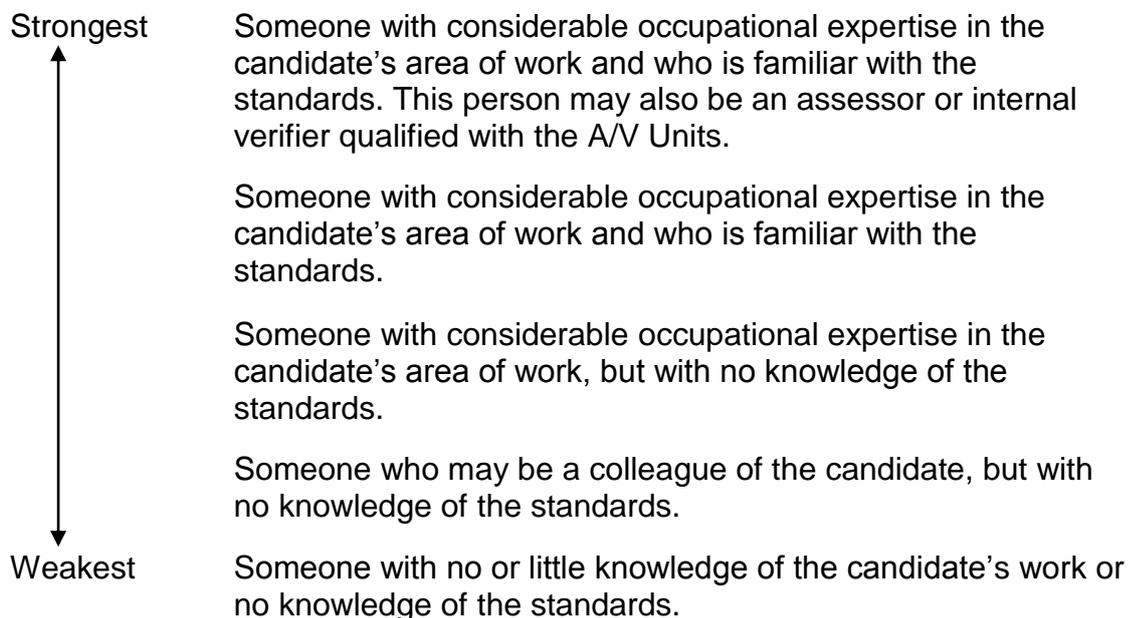
Example

A candidate may describe in his/her own words, a situation which has occurred at a time when the assessor was not present, such as changing a faulty machine part or reporting a problem to the supervisor. This also can be called a log book or diary of actions.

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.



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.

Example

When the assessor has been unable to observe a particular activity, a line manager or peer may supply a witness testimony describing what they have seen the candidate do.

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 a candidate's job role does not cover all aspects of the qualification.

Proskills has defined what it regards as simulation, and has specified in its assessment strategy when simulation is and is not acceptable. This also states 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.

Example

To cover a situation which is unlikely to happen frequently or which may be too disruptive to normal production routines, it is acceptable to use simulations (provided that the standards and assessment strategy allow it). In a furniture environment, it can be useful to carry out simulated fire drills or emergency evacuation procedures and to observe the candidate doing this.

Using emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers, is another area that could well be covered by simulation, as this rarely occurs in practice.

Other sources of evidence

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

- ◆ Photographic evidence
- ◆ Complete forms, reports and other documentation
- ◆ Taped evidence (video or audio)
- ◆ Case studies/Assignments
- ◆ Interview/Professional discussion

SQA's *Guides to Assessment*

(http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/GuideToAssessment.pdf) has more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable and practicable.

Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

Knowledge and Understanding is an integral aspect of competence. Assessment processes that only look at evidence of knowledge in isolation from performance threatens the validity of assessment of competence. Evidence of Knowledge and Understanding should come from, or be supported by, assessment of performance.

For assessment to be fair and reliable it is important to assess strictly:

- ◆ to the written knowledge specification
- ◆ within the context of the candidate's job role

There may be some Knowledge and Understanding that is common to different aspects of working practice. Taking a holistic approach to assessing Knowledge and Understanding will reduce unnecessary duplication.

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. There are blank forms in Appendix 2 which can be used to record:

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

Presenting evidence

It is not always necessary to keep copies of all the evidence produced in one place, ie in a portfolio. Assessors and verifiers need to know what evidence is available and where it is located.

This can be achieved by signposting where evidence can be found, rather than gathering it together in a portfolio.

In helping candidates to present evidence:

- ◆ focus on assessment against the standards rather than the candidate's ability to manage paperwork
- ◆ make use of awarding body forms and procedures, adapting these as appropriate to the needs and job role of candidates, and the way your centre operates
- ◆ strive for quality rather than quantity, and simplicity rather than complexity

Forms are available (Appendix 1) which you and your candidates might find helpful in presenting evidence and recording your assessment decisions.

Tracking progress

Regular reviews with candidates should be carried out to measure and maintain progress towards achievement of the qualification.

Reviews should take account of:

- ◆ actions agreed at the last review meeting
- ◆ progress made in relation to the agreed learning plan
- ◆ assessments undertaken
- ◆ any problems or obstacles encountered and how these will be addressed
- ◆ any changes in candidate or workplace circumstances, eg changed work role
- ◆ future learning needs and how they will be addressed
- ◆ any implications for the assessment plan and revising this as appropriate

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 Business Development and Customer Support Team — telephone 0303 333 0330. Please note that there may be a charge for some of these publications.

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

External Verification: A Guide for Centres

Guide to Assessment

Introduction to Assessment Arrangements for Schools and Colleges

SQA's Quality Framework: a guide for centres

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 xx **mandatory** Units and xx **optional** Units.

Unit Checklist

Mandatory										
Optional										

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date

Optional Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date

Unit

Element

Notes/Comments

The candidate has satisfied the assessor and internal verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate's signature _____

Date _____

Assessor's signature _____

Date _____

Internal verifier's signature _____

Date _____

Assessment plan

Units Elements					
Activities	Performance Criteria	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (Performance Criteria and Range)
Questioning for knowledge and understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					

Assessor's signature _____ **1st review due** _____
Candidate's signature _____ **2nd review due** _____
Date of agreement _____ **Date of completion** _____

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Units, Elements, Performance Criteria, and Scope covered

Candidate's signature _____ **Date** _____

Observation record

Unit/Element(s)

Candidate

Evidence index number

Date of observation

Skills/activities observed	Performance Criteria covered

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute

Assessor 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 name	
Evidence index no	
Where applicable, evidence number to which this testimony relates	
Element(s)	
Scope	
Date of evidence	
Witness name	
Designation/relationship to candidate	
Details of testimony	

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature _____ **Date** _____

Witness (please select the appropriate box):

- Holds A1/A2 or D32/D33 qualifications
- Is familiar with the SVQ standards to which the candidate is working

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit	
Element(s)	
Evidence index number	
Circumstances of assessment	
List of questions and candidate's responses	
Q	
A	
Q	
A	
Q	
A	
Q	
A	
Q	
A	
Q	
A	

Assessor's signature _____ **Date** _____

Candidate's signature _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 2: Sample Unit

Unit 249 Work effectively in a furniture-related commercial environment

This Unit addresses the competence required to work effectively within any commercial environment in the furniture, furnishings and interiors industry. This involves:

- ◆ planning and organising your own work
- ◆ improving your own skills and development

There are two Elements in this Unit, each of which has performance standards and a knowledge base associated with it.

249.1 Organise your work

249.2 Improve your performance

There is also a scope statement which defines the coverage of this Unit.

Scope statements

The following terms have a specific meaning in this Unit and are highlighted where they appear in the performance standards.

Procedures	Organisational specifications of how to carry out work activities in a manner that will ensure the required Outcomes if the procedure is followed accurately.
Resources	<p>A range of resources are used in any activity. These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ information, documentation and specifications◆ materials◆ tools◆ equipment
Work objectives	<p>This Unit is suitable for any aspect of work within the furniture, furnishings and interiors industry. Objectives are typically described in terms of the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ quantity◆ quality◆ cost◆ time◆ safety, health and environment
Others/appropriate person	People who are either working with the individual or are directly affected by his/her work. This includes colleagues and line management.
Feedback	Information that is given from others that could be used to assess progress/achievement of objectives.
Problems	Problems in working relations may be solved by you, or you may need to refer to others for additional help and support.
Work area	The work area is any area where the individual is working, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

ELEMENT 249.1 Organise your work

In carrying out this work you must:

- 1 check that you have all of the required **resources** before beginning your work
- 2 when necessary, work with **others** to achieve the **work objectives** that you have been set
- 3 work safely and efficiently at all times
- 4 fulfil your responsibilities on time and to quality standards
- 5 keep your **work area** in a tidy and organised state
- 6 take appropriate action to solve **problems**
- 7 report any **problems** that cannot be readily solved to the right person

To do this you need to know:

- a) the principles of sustainable furniture manufacture and good practice
- b) what procedures need to be followed to obtain resources that you will need to complete your work objectives
- c) what safety, health and environment hazards are associated with the resources you use and what risk control procedures are you required to follow
- d) why it is important to make sure you have a correct understanding of what you are to do
- e) when and why it may be necessary to work with others to achieve work objectives that have been set
- f) why it is important to work safely at all times
- g) why it is important to keep the work area clean and tidy
- h) how to solve typical problems and who to report unsolvable problems to
- i) how to dispose of waste in accordance with current legislation

ELEMENT 249.2 Improve your performance

In carrying out this work you must:

- 1 objectively assess your own skills, knowledge and expertise against an expected standard, and/or **work objectives**
- 2 respond appropriately to **feedback** from **others** on how well your own skills, knowledge and expertise match the expected standards/**work objectives** that are required
- 3 identify areas for development to maintain and/or increase your own skills, knowledge and expertise
- 4 inform the **appropriate person** about any areas of development that you have identified

To do this you need to know:

- a) what level/standard/objective you will be expected to work to
- b) ways of objectively assessing your own skills and expertise against an agreed standard/objective
- c) methods of seeking feedback from others on how well your skills, knowledge and expertise match the agreed standard/objective
- d) the appropriate response to feedback and appraisal of your performance at work
- e) how to identify areas for development and/or improvement in your skills, knowledge and expertise
- f) who to inform about any further development you might need

Appendix 3: Extract from Proskills Assessment Strategy

This Assessment Strategy is designed to **supplement** the guidance issued by the Regulatory Authorities, including the **SQA Awarding Body Criteria (2007)**, and guidance issued by awarding bodies. This document is designed to be a core set of assessment practices. There may be specific annexes that apply to certain of the above awards (see above).

Section 1: Simulation

- ◆ Simulation is generally not acceptable. The exceptions to this are:
 - dealing with emergencies
 - dealing with accidents
 - certain pre-approved real time simulators
 - limited other procedures that can not be practically performed in the workplace, and for which sufficient evidence can not be collected through other means
- ◆ Any simulation must be approved in advance by the External Verifier, and clear reasons must be given for its intended use.
- ◆ If approval is given, all awarding body guidance and requirements must be observed.
- ◆ Simulation should not be the primary source of a candidate's claim to competence.

Section 2: Expertise of witnesses, assessors and verifiers

Third party 'witnesses' must also be competent to make judgements about the activity(ies) for which they are providing the testimony. As the assessment decision lies with the assessor, it is their responsibility to verify this and, where challenged, to justify their acceptance of third party 'witness testimony' to the internal verifier.

Assessors must:

- ◆ be registered and recognised by an approved centre
- ◆ be competent to make qualitative judgements about the Units they are assessing. Illustrations of competence could include the assessor:
 - having achieved the award themselves
 - having substantial demonstrable experience in the job roles they are assessing
 - being in a day-to-day line management or quality assurance role with responsibility for the job roles they are assessing
- ◆ be in possession of or working towards the A1/A2 award or hold the D32/33 award, and supported by an appropriate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record
- ◆ carry out their duties in accordance with the current NOS for assessment, and in line with current guidance on assessment practice issued by the regulatory authorities and the appropriate awarding body
- ◆ maintain appropriate evidence of development activities to ensure their assessment skills and occupational understanding are current (CPD)
- ◆ have a working knowledge of awards and a full understanding of that part of the award for which they have responsibility. The awarding body will confirm this through examination of relevant CVs supported by relevant references.

- ◆ be approved by the awarding body's approved centre and must maintain records demonstrating how they meet the assessment strategy. The appointment of assessors may require the prior approval of the awarding body.
- ◆ meet any additional requirements as specified in the award specific annex
- ◆ meet any additional requirements as specified by the awarding body

Internal verifiers must:

- ◆ be registered and recognised by an approved centre
- ◆ be in possession of or working towards the V1 award or hold the D34 award, as recommended by SQA/QCA and supported by an appropriate CPD record
- ◆ carry out their duties in accordance with the current NOS for verification, and in line with current guidance on verification practice issued by the regulatory authorities and the appropriate awarding body
- ◆ maintain appropriate evidence of development activities to ensure their verification skills and occupational understanding are current (CPD)
- ◆ have expertise and knowledge of awards and a full understanding of that part of the award for which they have responsibility. The awarding body will confirm this through examination of relevant CVs supported by relevant references.
- ◆ be approved by the awarding body's approved centre and must maintain records demonstrating how they meet the assessment strategy. The appointment of internal verifiers may require the prior approval of the awarding body.
- ◆ meet any additional requirements as specified in the award specific annex
- ◆ meet any additional requirements as specified by the awarding body

Section 3: Evidence and location of assessment

Evidence

The majority of the candidate's evidence should come from direct observations of competence in the real workplace, unless specified in the award specific annex. Other types of acceptable evidence include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Witness testimony (Details of acceptable witnesses are found in 'Section 2: Expertise of verifiers, witnesses and assessors')
- ◆ Logs/Diaries kept by candidates
- ◆ Recorded answers to questions posed by the assessor
- ◆ Recorded/Transcribed Interviews with the candidate
- ◆ Recorded use of up-to-date commercial/industrial equipment
- ◆ e-portfolios and other forms of digital media
- ◆ Works documentation attributable to the candidate
- ◆ Both interim and final internal verification

Location of assessment

Although the majority of the candidate's evidence should come from direct observations of competence in the real work place, in exceptional circumstances simulation of the real workplace may be allowed. Occasions in which this may be approved are listed under 'Section 1: Simulation'.

Section 4: Enhanced quality control

The external quality control will be through enhanced external verification and enhanced internal verification the latter moderated or monitored by the External Verifier.

Enhanced internal verification strategy

All internal verifiers must provide evidence of having verified:

- ◆ Evidence supporting any key Units (where specified in the award specific guidance) and evidence supporting at least one other Unit from the award
- OR**
- ◆ The evidence supporting at least two distinct Units (or as documented in the Award Specific Guidance) for each award per annum.

As well as:

- ◆ All evidence from all simulations/simulators
- ◆ Over time, an example of each Unit the assessor is qualified to assess
- ◆ Over time, an example of each assessment method used in the centre
- ◆ Evidence of internal verification

Enhanced external verification strategy

External Verifiers must carry out regular risk assessments and subsequent statistical analysis for each of the centres for which they have verification responsibilities. Where problems are identified through this procedure, the External Verifier will take further measures to ensure that the centre is performing to an acceptable level.

This could include, but should not be limited to:

- ◆ verifying a representative sample of candidates' work from each assessor, covering all assessors in the centre over an agreed period of time, including:
 - evidence supporting any key Units from the award (where specified in the award specific guidance)
 - selected evidence supporting distinct Units identified by the External Verifier in response to issues raised through risk assessment
 - all evidence from all simulations
- ◆ verifying selected evidence of internal verification procedures identified by the External Verifier in response to issues raised through risk assessment
- ◆ externally-set banks of questions and answers that will test the presence of 'essential' Knowledge and Understanding for selected candidates