



Frequently asked questions on SCQF and QCF assessor/verifier provision

Topics	Page
General questions relevant to SCQF and QCF	2–3
SCQF specific questions	4–10

General

1 Why are there two sets of assessor/verifier qualifications, one for the QCF and one for the SCQF?

Each framework requires qualifications to be designed in a way that meets the specific requirements of that framework. The qualifications consulted upon and proposed to meet SCQF requirements did not meet the requirements of the QCF and vice versa.

2 Which assessor/verifier qualifications should centres offer their candidates — SCQF or QCF?

At the moment, centres already approved to offer QCF qualifications are free to choose. Considerations will include:

- how the qualifications will be delivered and the associated resource implications for centres
- the funding available to centres
- the geographic location of candidates.

However, centres in Scotland not currently approved to offer any QCF provision should not consider offering the QCF assessor/verifier qualifications at the moment. We will advise centres if this changes in the near future.

3 If I achieve QCF assessor/verifier qualifications, will they be recognised if I then went on to assess SVQs?

There is a strong possibility that a cross-border agreement will be developed by the regulatory bodies which will recognise QCF qualifications in lieu of SCQF qualifications and vice-versa.

SQA will inform centres if and when an agreement has been reached.

4 If you have the D and/or A and V Units, will these qualifications still allow me to continue to assess/verify S/NVQs?

Yes, as you are already qualified. However, you do need to show that you continue to practise to the revised standards contained in the SCQF or QCF assessor and verifier qualifications. A CPD Toolkit is available via SQA Secure to assist with this process.

5 Is there a requirement to independently assess the new Assessor/Verifier qualifications?

No, there is no requirement to independently assess either the SCQF or QCF assessor/verifier qualifications.

6 My centre has been offering the A and V Units for some time therefore can we gain approval for the SCQF and/or QCF qualifications without a visit?

Centres that have offered the A and V Units should remember to include this information when they complete the SQA SA1 Application Form.

The decision as to whether a centre will receive a visit or not will be confirmed by SQA Approval and Verification section.

7 Where can I find all the SQA guidance specifically for the new SCQF and QCF assessor and verifier qualifications?

General information and standards can be accessed via SQA's website:
www.sqa.org.uk/learninganddevelopment

Specific evidence requirements relating to SCQF and QCF Assessor/Verifier qualifications and can be accessed from the SQA Secure Site.

SCQF specific

8 When is the last date I can enrol my candidates for the A and V Units?

The 30th December 2010.

9 What is the end certification date for candidates undertaking the A and V Units?

The 30th December 2014.

10 Will the introduction of the new assessor/verifier qualifications affect SQA's policy regarding the acceptance of TQFE as an assessor qualification for SVQs?

SQA's position: TQFE plus CPD, remains a qualification option for assessing SVQs, as does D32/D33 or A1 plus CPD or L&D9D or L&D9DI. Internal verifiers of SVQs must hold D34 or V1 Unit plus CPD or L&D11.

11 Does it have to be the assessor who carries out the observation of the assessor-candidate?

Yes, this is featured in the Evidence Requirements. However, more than one assessor may be used to assess an assessor-candidate and appropriate technology is permissible where a physical assessor presence is impractical.

12 Is there still a requirement for the external verifier to sample the work of the internal verifier-candidate as there was with V1?

No, there are now a number of options to choose from to suit the internal verifier-candidate's situation. The only requirement is that the endorsing statement must come from a Quality Assurance practitioner. That practitioner may be a qualified internal verifier, centre co-ordinator or external verifier.

13 Have the new assessor and verifier Units replaced the A and V Units in other Group Awards, eg Learning and Development SVQs and Professional Development Awards?

In line with other awarding bodies, SQA is allowing A and V Units in existing awards to remain until those qualifications lapse.

The following PDA's are currently available:

Assessing in the Workplace using Direct Methods
Assessing in the Workplace using Direct and Indirect Methods
Internal Verification in the Workplace
External Verification in the Workplace

Candidates who have achieved the new assessor/verifier SCQF qualifications may apply retrospectively for the relevant PDA group award.

14 If you have an expert witness role, do you have to enrol for L&D9D?

This will normally be an option only. It is possible some sectors may stipulate the achievement of this Unit as a requirement in future Assessment Strategies.

15 Why has the term 'assessment' been used in the evidence requirements instead of a defined number of Units?

This term has been used as the new assessor and verifier qualifications will also be undertaken by those assessing/verifying in-company standards of performance that have not been unitised in the same way SVQs have. This term has also been used to accommodate holistic assessment.

16 How much evidence needs to be planned for and assessed. The term 'assessment' is all we have to go on?

Each assessment should cover the full assessment cycle to include planning, judging evidence, providing feedback and recording the decision.

As an approximation, each assessment should loosely be equivalent to an 'SVQ Unit's worth' of evidence.

17 Is TQFE still an acceptable qualification for assessors of SVQs?

TQFE plus CPD remains a qualification option for assessors of SVQs unless specific Assessment Strategies such as the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy stipulate otherwise.

18 Is it best to qualify as an assessor before you qualify as an internal verifier?

SQA would recommend this as good practice but it is not a mandatory requirement unless it is stipulated in an Assessment Strategy.

19 If a qualified member of staff has the A and V Units and lectures for example in Engineering, can he assess candidates from Hairdressing who are working towards their A and V units?

This would be acceptable if the member of staff also met all of the L&D Assessment Strategy requirements, ie he maintains best practice in assessment and maintains appropriate CPD.

Assessors of the assessor units (A Units or the new Assessor/Verifier Units) do not have to be qualified in the subject area being assessed by the assessor-candidate as they are assessing standards in assessment which are generic.

20 Is there an opportunity for 'accreditation of prior achievement or learning' against the L&D9 or L&D11 Units?

The acceptance of previous practice/experience/qualifications as recognition of achievement towards the Assessor/Verifier Units is really for the assessor of the L&D Units to determine.

In this situation, assessors have to consider if past evidence of practice mirrors the complete standard being claimed. Past performance evidence that only partially covers the current standard being claimed cannot simply be supplemented with other piecemeal performance evidence as this does not necessarily 'add up' to the practice required to meet the whole standard.

21 As part of the introduction to L&D9DI it says the assessor-candidates will be observed carrying out assessments. Does this mean observing the whole assessment process?

The evidence requirements give further clarification — as a minimum, review and feedback, as parts of the assessment process, should be observed. The assessor may if they feel it necessary observe other parts of the process.

22 What examples can you give to cover the authentication required by the IV in relation to L&D9DI.4?

This confirmation could be covered in monitoring reports or included in other quality assurance documentation completed by the internal quality assurer. The evidence could also be in the form of a quality assurer statement that makes a reference link to the records of assessment and progress maintained.

23 Why is there a need to have both categories of work product in L&D9DI?

The consultation carried out in Scotland prior to the accreditation of the SCQF Assessor and Verifier Units confirmed the need to include both categories. In line with the Unit title relating to direct and indirect methods, there was a consensus that assessors at times observed end products being produced as part of the assessment process whilst at other times were not present, thus requiring the assessor to take steps to authenticate the end products.

24 Can more than one assessor (ie two) be allocated to an assessor-candidate when he/she is being assessed for L&D9D or L&D9DI?

This is permissible as long as both assessors meet the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy requirements.

25 The A and V Units had a different emphasis re the assessment of knowledge. Can I still cross refer knowledge to performance evidence?

The evidence requirements require knowledge to be assessed through discussion, candidate statements or questioning. There are however opportunities for the knowledge contained in candidate statements and reports (asked for under performance evidence) to be cross-referenced.

26 If the Internal Verifier Candidate is monitoring in relation to at least three assessment decisions, does this mean that assessment decisions do not have to be looked at for one of the candidates?

The summary answer is yes, but more to satisfy a monitoring rationale rather than any other reason. To explain, the verifier-candidate will usually be monitoring assessors who work with candidates at different levels of progress. The evidence requirements allow for the fact that not all of those candidates will necessarily have reached the assessment stage. In this case, monitoring would still take place, and would not obviously include assessment decisions, but focus more on the initial stages of assessment preparation and perhaps planning.

27 Where it states at least three assessment decisions for at least one qualification, does this mean that the Internal Verifier Candidate could potentially provide evidence of verifying a different qualification for each of the four candidates?

This would be permissible. However, in terms of SVQs (and for the desired validity of judgement in relation to other work based qualifications/standards) internal verifiers, as well as assessors must have an appropriate degree of occupational experience (as set out in the Assessment Strategies for SVQs) to help them make appropriate quality assurance decisions.

28 How can the Internal Verifier-Candidate achieve the last element of L&D11 if they do not receive EV Visits from SQA?

The evidence requirements state, reports could, as an alternative, be provided by the qualified internal verifier or centre co-ordinator (these terms would also cover other appropriate internal quality assurance staff) in the Internal Verifier-Candidate's organisation. The reports should confirm that the Internal Verifier-Candidate's work conforms to external quality assurance requirements.

Where the internal assessment that the Internal Verifier-Candidate is quality assuring is in relation to in-company standards or awards that are not awarded by an Awarding Body such as SQA, the external quality assurance requirements could pertain to systems such as ISO or a specifically contracted external quality assurance service. The external quality assurance system identified must cover (at least as part of its function) the quality of internal assessment and quality assurance.

29 Element 3, L&D11. Where it says 'Observation of verifier-candidate', who can carry out this observation?

The observation can be conducted by the L&D11 Assessor. The observation could also be provided in the form of a Witness Testimony by another qualified internal verifier/person responsible for internal quality assurance.

30 If the total number of candidates being assessed by the assessors being monitored by the verifier-candidate is less than the number required ie a total of four, does this mean that the verifier-candidate cannot achieve L&D11?

SQA will continue to consider requests for special assessment arrangements which are dealt with on an individual case basis. In making a case for a special assessment arrangement, centres would be required to prove that they had exhausted all options in trying to fulfil the stated evidence requirements. This same principle applies to the 9D Units.

Centres that have these types of request should in the first instance contact qualificationsadmin@sqa.org.uk.

31 What do ‘the principles of quality assurance and risk management’ mean in L&D11?

The principles of quality assurance relate to validity, authenticity, reliability, currency and sufficiency (VARCS), quality assurance risk management and sampling. Risk management relates to the consideration of risk to your centre’s quality assurance. Those could be for example be new assessors, large candidate numbers, new/revised units etc The management of risk relates to (as an IV within your centre and conforming to internal policy/procedures on risk) the measures you put in place to manage it. Dependent on the risk, measures could include, ie increased support/interim verification, more frequent and/or timely standardisation, etc.