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| **Assessment Strategy** | |
| **Qualification Title(s)** | Business and Administration |
| **Developed by** | Instructus |
| **Approved by ACG** | 23/02/2022 |
| **Version** | 1 |

#### **Introduction:**

The purpose of an assessment strategy is to provide awarding bodies with a consistent approach to assessment that complies with SQA Accreditation’s regulatory requirements.

The key areas this assessment strategy will cover are:

* assessment requirements
* the extent to which simulation may be used
* the assessment environment, including what constitutes a realistic working environment when assessing competence
* the roles and requirements of assessor and quality assurers
* external quality assurance requirements for awarding bodies.

Awarding bodies must use the assessment strategy as the basis for developing and defining the evidence requirements and assessment methods their providers will use. This includes specifying how the qualification will be internally and externally quality assured.

This strategy should only be used for the assessment of the SVQ in Business and Administration.

**Assessment requirements**

This outlines specific requirements for how assessment must be approached or undertaken.

* Evidence of occupational competence for all SVQ Business and Administration units at all levels must be generated and collected through naturally occurring performance in a real work environment.
* Performance Evidence must be produced for all Performance Indicators in all units.
* Assessment of all Performance Criteria and Knowledge and Understanding should, wherever possible, be carried out during performance across all units to ensure integration of theory and practice. Evidence of Performance Criteria and Knowledge and Understanding should be clearly identified in the audit trail within the candidate’s portfolio of evidence.
* For situations where evidence cannot be stored in a candidate’s portfolio, the evidence may be kept in situ, when it is stored in its original location in the workplace rather than the candidate’s portfolio.

## Evidence in situ

For Business and Administration, this should be used only in situations where there is a compelling need for confidentiality, and where redaction of sensitive data would remove too much of the context of the evidence for robust assessment judgements to be made with confidence.

Such evidence should be referenced appropriately to provide a robust quality audit trail.

**Evidence held in situ must be made available to assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers as required to ensure the validity of the assessment process.**

**Simulation**

This outlines the extent to which simulation is permitted.

Simulation must be carried out in a Realistic Working Environment (RWE) and must be restricted to a small part of any unit. Simulation can only be used to fill small gaps where performance evidence does not occur naturally, but the unit is part of the candidate’s normal work duties. The use of simulation to support evidence should be agreed in advance by the assessor and candidate at the assessment planning stage.

**The assessment environment**

This outlines any requirements for the assessment environment.

Assessment of all units at any level of Business and Administration SVQs and competence-based qualifications should normally be based on candidate’s performance in a real work environment. In exceptional circumstances it can be carried out through simulation in a Realistic Working Environment (RWE) in accordance with the following criteria that must be met:

1. Candidates must be given workplace responsibilities to enable them to meet the requirements of the relevant Performance Indicators within the unit(s).

2. The RWE is managed as a real work situation (e.g. tasks allocated and completed in an office environment with colleagues and distractions present).

3. Assessment must be carried out under realistic business pressures (e.g. dealing with competing priorities and demands on time and attention).

4. All services/tasks that are carried out should be completed in a way, and to a timescale, that is acceptable in business organisations.

5. Candidates must be expected to achieve a volume of work comparable to normal business practices.

6. The range of services, products, tools, materials and equipment that the candidates use must be up to date and commonly available in business organisations.

7. Account must be taken of any legislation or regulations in relation to the type of work that is being carried out.

8. Customer perceptions of the RWE is similar to that found in the work situation being represented.

9. Candidates must show that their productivity reflects a level commensurate with the work situation being simulated.

**Requirements for roles in assessment and quality assurance**

This outlines the experience, qualifications, training and continuous professional development requirements for those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes.

## Assessors

The primary responsibility of an Assessor is to assess candidates’ performance in a range of tasks and to ensure the evidence submitted by the candidate meets the requirements of the assessment criteria.

It is important that an Assessor can recognise occupational competence as specified by the national standard. Assessors therefore need to have a thorough understanding of assessment and quality assurance practices, as well as have in-depth technical understanding related to the qualifications for which they are assessing candidates.

To assess SVQ Business and Administration candidates, Assessors must:

* be occupationally competent. Assessors must provide current evidence of competence, knowledge and understanding in the areas to be assessed. This must be demonstrated by relevant experience and continuing professional development (CPD) which may include the achievement of qualification(s) at a commensurate level, relevant to the areas being assessed.
* hold, or be working towards, an appropriate Assessor qualification as specified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator, confirming their competence to assess candidates undertaking competence-based units and qualifications. Assessors holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards through up-to-date CPD.

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| **Title** | **Acceptable alternatives** |
| L&D 9D - Assess workplace competence using direct methods | * A2 - Assess candidates' performance through observation * D32 - Assess candidate performance * TQFE - Teacher Qualification (Further Education) * Other qualifications that are based on L&D NOS, such as TAQA (Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance) |
| L&D 9DI - Assess workplace competences using direct and indirect methods | * A1 - Assess candidates using a range of methods * D33 - Assess candidates using differing sources of evidence * TQFE - Teacher Qualification (Further Education) * Other qualifications that are based on L&D NOS, such as TAQA (Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance) |

**Assessors working towards an appropriate qualification** must be supported by a qualified assessor throughout the period of completing the qualification. This support may be provided by a qualified assessor and/or qualified internal verifier. This must include monitoring of assessment decisions which may be achieved via the process of internal verification and/or sampling of assessment decisions by a qualified assessor.

Evidence of the support provided and monitoring of assessment decisions must be recorded and accessible to the awarding body.

## Internal Verifiers

The primary responsibility of Internal Verifiers is to assure the quality and consistency of assessments by Assessors. Internal Verifiers therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as sufficient technical understanding of the qualifications that they are internally verifying.

To internally verify SVQ Business and Administration assessment decisions, Internal Verifiers must:

* be occupationally competent. Internal Verifiers must demonstrate sufficient and current understanding of the qualifications to be internally verified and know how they are applied in business organisations. This must be demonstrated by relevant experience and CPD which may include the achievement of qualification(s) at a commensurate level, relevant to the areas being assessed.
* hold, or be working towards, an appropriate Internal Verifier qualification as specified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator, confirming their competence to internally verify assessment of competence-based units and qualifications. Internal verifiers holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards through up-to-date CPD.

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| **Title** | **Acceptable alternatives** |
| L&D 11 - Internally monitor and maintain the quality of workplace assessment | * V1 - Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process * D34 - Internally verify the assessment process * Other qualifications that are based on L&D NOS, such as TAQA (Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance) |

**Internal Verifiers working towards an appropriate qualification** must be supported by a qualified Internal Verifier throughout the period of completing the qualification. This must include monitoring of verification decisions which may be achieved by sampling of reports and evidence by a qualified Internal Verifier. Evidence of the support provided and monitoring of verification decisions must be recorded and made available to SQA on request.

Assessors and verifiers who currently hold D or A and V Units are still considered to be qualified Assessors and Internal/External Verifiers are not required to undertake the Learning and Development (L&D) qualifications and Units. However, they must be working to the same National Occupational Standards (NOS) and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.

Any new assessors and verifiers, who do not currently hold any of these predecessor qualifications, should undertake the current Learning and Development (L&D) qualifications.

## External Verifiers (EVs)

The primary responsibility of External Verifiers is to participate in verification of qualifications in the subject areas concerned to ensure that quality standards are maintained. An EV is required to demonstrate an up to date and sound knowledge of the occupational standards, qualifications and units to make judgements about the quality of assessment and the assessment processes.

To carry out external verification, EVs must:

* be occupationally knowledgeable and have gained their knowledge working within the business and administration occupational area or other associated professional sectors.
* have a thorough understanding of the qualifications they will be quality assuring.
* have a detailed knowledge of the Awarding Bodies’ systems, processes and relevant documentation.
* have a thorough understanding of the guidance produced by the awarding bodies describing assessment and quality assurance practice.
* maintain their occupational knowledge by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities to keep up to date with developments relating to the changes taking place in the business and administration occupational area or other associated professional sectors.
* hold or be working towards an appropriate External Verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator. External Verifiers holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards.

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| **Title** | **Acceptable alternatives** |
| L&D 12 - Externally monitor and maintain the quality of workplace assessment | * V2 - Conduct external quality assurance of the assessment process * D35 - Externally verify the assessment process * Other qualifications that are based on L&D NOS, such as TAQA (Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance) |

## Personal Development Plans (PDP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Records

The Assessment Strategy requires all Assessors, Internal and External Verifiers to maintain current competence in Business Administration, internal and external quality assurance and assessment practices to deliver these functions. This can be achieved in many ways. However, such information must be formally recorded in individual Personal Development Plans and CPD records that are accessible to the awarding body.

**External quality assurance**

This outlines the requirements for awarding bodies to monitor the quality of assessment.

The process of quality control should be ensured through robust and strong internal and external verification systems that meet the requirements of the qualification regulators’ documentation.

All assessment evidence must be checked and internally verified by qualified IQA. External quality control should be ensured through external verification by competent external verifiers. Awarding organisations must use risk management to determine the frequency and scope of external quality control of assessment.

**Additional**

This outlines any other relevant guidance or information necessary to give awarding bodies clear and consistent approach. It can include guidance on topics such as holistic assessment, recording evidence using ICT, remote assessment or remote quality assurance.

## Employer Direct Model

Where large employers have their own assessment centres, they may train their assessors according to their own standards rather than achieving the assessor and verifier qualifications.

Where this model is used, SQA Accreditation require the awarding body to:

* map the assessor and verifier training against the L&D NOS to ensure that there is a direct match
* identify any gaps and ensure that alternative evidence to demonstrate full competence is provided.

The mapping must be provided at the point of qualification accreditation and will be reviewed by SQA Accreditation during the awarding body audit activity. This will also be required if a new employer is approved as a centre wishing to use this model.