



Qualification Assessment Strategy

For awarding bodies

SVQ 3 in Outdoor Programmes at SCQF Level 6

January 2015

About SkillsActive

SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for active sport, leisure and wellbeing, including the sport, fitness, outdoor activities, play work, caravan and hair and beauty sectors. Our role is to create the standards that form the basis of all qualifications in the SkillsActive footprint including SVQs, Apprenticeships and Foundation degrees, as well as industry codes of practice.

Purpose of the Assessment Strategy

This Assessment Strategy has been produced by SkillsActive in partnership with industry partners and awarding body partners to ensure the SVQ 3 in Outdoor Programmes at SCQF Level 6, which has been developed after the approval of SkillsActive's review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Outdoor Programmes (2014), has credibility in the industry. It outlines the principles and requirements to be applied to the assessment of knowledge, understanding, performance and competence for this qualification and its associated units.

The following sections outline SkillsActive's industry specific principles in regard to:

- External quality control of assessment
- Workplace assessment, inclusive of the use of simulation
- Assessment of knowledge and understanding
- Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment process

These principles are in addition to the requirements that awarding bodies must adhere to for the delivery of qualifications, as required by the relevant qualification regulator for Scotland (SQA Accreditation). Awarding bodies may specify additional requirements for Centres, as they consider necessary in order to enhance the principles and quality of assessment.

This strategy supersedes and replaces all previous assessment strategies and supplementary guidance.

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1. About the qualification

The purpose of the SVQ 3 in Outdoor Programmes at SCQF Level 6 qualification is to confirm occupational competence and provide learners, with the knowledge, skills and understanding for Outdoor Education, Outdoor Development Training or Outdoor Recreation.

SCQF overall level	6
Learner entry requirements	There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification.

1.1 SVQ structure

SSC code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit
MANDATORY UNITS – all 5 units must be achieved from this group			
SKAOP1	Improve personal practice and contribute to organisational performance	6	6
SKAOP2	Organise resources and people for outdoor programmes	7	4
SKAOP3	Maintain the health, safety, welfare and security of participants and staff	6	5
SKAOP4	Promote environmental conservation	6	4
SKAOP5	Establish and sustain effective working relationships in the outdoors	6	7
CHOOSE ONE PATHWAY FROM THE FOLLOWING:			
OUTDOOR EDUCATION (both mandatory units must be achieved)			
SKAOP6	Develop outdoor education programmes	6	4
SKAOP7	Facilitate educational opportunities in the outdoors	7	13
OUTDOOR DEVELOPMENT (both mandatory units must be achieved)			
SKAOP8	Develop outdoor development training programmes	6	4
SKAOP9	Facilitate development training through outdoor learning	7	9
OUTDOOR RECREATION (both mandatory units must be achieved)			
SKAOP10	Develop outdoor recreation programmes	7	4
SKAOP11	Facilitate outdoor recreation	7	9
OPTIONAL UNITS -Choose 2 units to make a total of 9 units			
SKAOP13	Manage the efficient use of resources	8	3
SKAOP15	Arrange and supervise travel	7	4
SKAOP16	Respond to concerns about possible safeguarding issues	7	3
SKAOP17	Organise residential experiences	6	5
SKAOP18	Contribute to the prevention and management of abusive, aggressive and challenging behaviour	7	5

SKAOP19	Support participants with disabilities to take part in activities	7	4
SKAOP20	Facilitate and deliver adventurous experiences	8	6
SKAOP21	Facilitate participant's understanding and investigation of the environment	6	5

To be awarded the SVQ 3 in Outdoor Programmes at SCQF Level 6 qualification the learner must achieve 9 units; 5 mandatory units plus the 2 mandatory units from the specified pathway. A further 2 units should then be chosen from the optional units list to make a total of nine units.

2. External quality control of assessment

The monitoring and standardisation of assessment decisions must be achieved through robust assessment, internal and external quality assurance systems. These must be reliable, transparent and fit for purpose and, must comply with the requirements of the qualifications regulator.

2.1 Internal Verification

Centres must, in line with regulatory guidance, have an effective internal verification strategy and processes in place to ensure learners are assessed fairly and consistently, and that standards are being met.

To ensure all assessment activities are valid and effective and that Assessors decisions are accurate, a Centres internal verification process should:

- Identify effective Internal Verifiers who are responsible for implementing these processes. If necessary identify a coordinating Internal Verifier who manages the process.
- Produce an effective internal verification policy
- Produce and maintain a clear audit trail of decision making and action
- Produce an internal verification schedule of assessment activities and assessment decisions
- Produce a training and standardisation plan for all those involved in internal verification
- Produce an improvement plan.

Internal Verifiers should observe Assessors performing learner assessments at regular intervals according to awarding body guidelines, risk rating and experience of the Assessor. The reliability, validity and authenticity of evidence must be checked during these observations.

An Internal Verifier cannot internally verify either assessment activities they have produced or assessment decisions they have made.

2.2 External Verification

To ensure successful monitoring and standardisation of the assessment activities made by a Centre, the assessment decisions made by an Assessor, and the Centre's internal verification processes an awarding body must have in place a robust external verification system with clear and effective arrangements to ensure consistency in quality. The mechanisms required to achieve this are outlined by the qualification regulator.

In addition to the qualification regulator's requirements, all external quality assurance reports and other data relating to a Centre must be reviewed by the awarding body. Where any risks are identified relating to the quality control of assessment, the awarding body must have in place an effective risk management and rating system to determine, depending on a centres level for risk,

the appropriate external quality assurance, monitoring, support and control that should be put in place.

2.3 Risk Assessment

All awarding bodies are required to implement effective risk management and rating systems to help protect the integrity of the qualification, safeguard assessment and verification processes and ensure standards are maintained. These systems should also focus on:

- Conflict of interest
Any personal or professional relationship between learners, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers should be declared.
- Adherence to Centre approval criteria
Centres should be continually monitored in addition to its delivery to ensure that the integrity of the qualification is maintained.

Where risk is identified through these systems, awarding bodies will need to act accordingly to ensure the Centre is performing to an acceptable level. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Inspection/spot visit(s)
- Additional monitoring of assessment activities and/or internal verification processes
- Verifying a sample of learners work from each Assessor over an agreed period of time
- Appointment of Independent Verifiers
- Training and development
- Or other action appropriate to the risk.

Awarding bodies should be able to demonstrate a risk assessment has been carried out for each Centre and a strategy to minimise any risk identified has been implemented.

3. Workplace assessment

Learners are expected to demonstrate competence to the standards required over a period of time. Therefore, to ensure validity, evidence should be naturally occurring and collected through performance in the workplace. 'Workplace' in this context means a real environment in which the learner is training for and/or competing at the elite level in their sport.

It is acknowledged not all employers workplaces are the same, therefore assessment conditions may not be identical. However to safeguard the integrity of the qualification and ensure a robust and consistent approach to assessment the Assessor must ensure the assessment conditions reflect, as far as possible, those to which the learner is expected to work.

A holistic approach towards the collection of evidence for this qualification is encouraged. The focus should be assessing activities generated in the workplace, through naturally occurring evidence, rather than focusing on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show the learner meets all learning outcomes and assessment criteria across the scope/range consistently, over a period of time. It should be clear where each learning outcome/assessment criteria has been covered and achieved.

It is imperative the learner is not placed under more, or less, pressure than found normally in the workplace during assessment. It could be the case the learner may feel more pressure simply because he or she is being assessed.

3.1 Simulation

Learners should be assessed through performance in the workplace. Only in circumstances where it is difficult to collect evidence through a real work environment situation, and is deemed acceptable in specific unit guidance, may simulation be permitted.

Simulation, the imitation of a real life activity or situation, should only be undertaken:

- Where events either never or infrequently occur and yet a high degree of confidence is needed that the learner would act appropriately, for example: dealing with a fire, health and safety activities that fall outside, or are secondary to, normal practices; or
- Where events happen frequently but where there is risk of harm to the learner or client in a real situation, for example, dealing with relationship difficulties and conflicts (although evidence from direct observation should be used where possible).

Awarding bodies must issue sufficient guidance to their Centres which clearly states how simulations should be planned and organised. They must also provide guidance on how the demands placed on the learner are to be no more or less than what they would experience in a real work situation.

Where simulation is used to assess a unit it is good practice that the advice of an External Verifier is sought by a Centre to ensure the validity of the simulated activity.

When simulation is used to assess part of a unit, in the interests of assessment efficiency, Assessors and Internal Verifiers should agree the circumstances and conditions under which this assessment methodology is implemented.

3.2 Units where simulation is permitted

Simulation may be required for the unit

SKAOP3	Maintain the health, safety, welfare and security of participants and staff
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3.3 Witness Testimony

Typically it would be expected assessment of a learner's performance would be carried out by a qualified Assessor. However, where this is not possible or practical an Witness testimony, a statement made by someone present while the learner was performing an activity on-the-job, may be used to support the assessment process and where permitted by the awarding body.

Where Witnesses are used:

- Evidence must be available that demonstrates the individual has the necessary expertise in the area for which they are providing the testimony.
- Any relationship they have with a learner must be declared to the Assessor to determine the value of the testimony provided.
- They must be fully briefed and clear about the purpose of their testimony, it will only be regarded as supporting/supplementary evidence and the final decision regarding the learner's ability to meet the evidence requirements will be the responsibility of the Assessor.

4. Assessment of knowledge and understanding

It is acknowledged the assessment of knowledge and understanding may take place in a different environment, for example a college or another environment which is not the immediate workplace. However, the assessment of this knowledge and understanding should be linked directly to workplace performance.

The knowledge and understanding required by the learner to support performance in the workplace is detailed within the knowledge and understanding criteria of the Outdoor Programmes' NOS. It is the responsibility of awarding bodies to ensure Centres are aware of these and have sufficient resources and arrangements in place to support learners to achieve these requirements of this qualification.

4.1 Supporting evidence

Evidence produced by learners must be valid, sufficient, reliable, authentic and current and relate directly to specific assessment criteria. Types of acceptable evidence are valid, but are not limited to:

- Professional discussion
- Portfolio of evidence
- Reflective diary on own practice in an appropriate working environment
- Written assignments
- Projects/case studies
- Coursework
- Task based controlled assessment

4.2 E-Assessment

Where e-assessment is used, it must meet the requirements of the regulator and have prior approval from awarding bodies to ensure the criteria is assessed to the standard required and, the tool(s) utilised are reliable, sufficient, valid and current.

Awarding bodies must provide Centres with advice and guidance as to the hardware, operating systems and installation requirements and provide technical support to Centres upon request.

5. Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment process

The occupational expertise of Witnesses, Assessors and those responsible for the internal/external verification of this qualification is one of the key factors underpinning valid, fair and reliable assessment. Therefore, ensuring the integrity and professionalism of this workforce is of paramount importance and they must be given sufficient time to carry out their role effectively.

5.1 Witness

The role of the Witness is to submit evidence to the Assessor regarding the competence of the learner in meeting the standards identified in any given unit. This evidence must directly relate to the learners performance in the work place which has been observed first hand by the Witness. Therefore, those who could fulfil the role of a Witness for this qualification could include, but are not limited to:

- Centre Manager
- Area Manager
- Chief Instructor
- Professional Colleague
- Participant

It is not necessary for Witnesses to hold an assessor qualification as it is the responsibility of the Assessor to make the final assessment decision(s) about the acceptability of all evidence submitted, regardless of the source.

5.2 Assessor

The Assessor must hold, or be working towards; a valid assessor's qualification based on LSIS, formally LUK, Learning and Development National Occupational Standards (2010):

- Learning and Development Unit 9D - Assess workplace competence using direct methods; or
- Learning and Development Unit 9DI – Assess workplace competences using direct and indirect methods; or
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF); or
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (QCF)

or hold one of the following

- A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods; or
- D32/33 Assess candidate performance, using differing sources of evidence

NB: Holders of A1 and D32/33 qualifications must work to the reviewed National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

The assessor must also be:

Definition

Occupationally competent

The Assessor must hold:

- SVQ 3 in Outdoor Programmes at SCQF Level 6 or an equivalent professional qualification

Where individuals hold qualifications other than the above their Centre should contact their awarding body to determine the acceptability of their qualification(s).

The Assessor must have sufficient operational experience within the outdoor industry that can be evidenced, is current and relevant to the qualification. Experience could be gained through time in a role in the outdoor industry which may include, but is not limited to:

- Centre Manager
- Chief Inspector
- Area Manager
- Instructor

Familiar with the qualification

The Assessor must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.

Credible

The Assessor should have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is about how you use a variety of learning experiences to develop yourself professionally and personally. There is a common principle in how you approach CPD, whether you think in terms of self-development or lifelong learning. It is about the learning and development that you undertake and the method you use to reflect on and recall this learning. Your CPD should relate to your employee development plan.

CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary.

Assessors

Awarding bodies may approve individuals to assess this qualification who have not yet achieved their assessor's qualification. However, these individuals must be working towards and achieve this qualification and have an appropriate development plan. Should an unqualified Assessor be

used they must be fully supported and have their assessment decisions countersigned by a qualified Assessor to ensure the learner has achieved the required standard.

5.3 Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier must hold a valid assessor qualification or be working towards a verifier's qualification based on LSIS, formally LLUK, Learning and Development National Occupational Standards (2010):

Assessing qualifications:

- Learning and Development Unit 9D - Assess workplace competence using direct methods; or
- Learning and Development Unit 9DI – Assess workplace competences using direct and indirect methods; or
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF); or
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (QCF); or
- A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods; or
- D32/33 Assess candidate performance, using differing sources of evidence.

Verifying qualifications:

- Learning and Development Unit 11 – Internal Quality Assurance; or
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF); or
- V1 Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process; or
- D34 Internally Verify the Assessment Process.

NB: Holders of A1, D32/33, V1 and D34 qualifications must work to the reviewed National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

The Internal Verifier must also be:

	Definition
Occupationally competent	The Internal Verifier must have sufficient operational experience within the outdoor industry that can be evidenced, is current and relevant to the qualification at or above the level being verified. This must be of sufficient depth to be effective and reliable when verifying judgements about assessor's assessment processes and decisions.
Familiar with the qualification	The Internal Verifier must have an in-depth knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.
Credible	The Internal Verifier should have access to, and be engaging with,

continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is about how you use a variety of learning experiences to develop yourself professionally and personally. There is a common principle in how you approach CPD, whether you think in terms of self-development or lifelong learning. It is about the learning and development that you undertake and the method you use to reflect on and recall this learning. Your CPD should relate to your employee development plan.

CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary.

Internal Verifiers

Awarding bodies may approve individuals to assess this qualification who have not yet achieved their assessor's qualification. However, these individuals must be working towards and achieve this qualification and have an appropriate development plan. Should an unqualified Internal Verifier be used they must be fully supported and have their assessment decisions countersigned by a qualified Internal Verifier to ensure the learner has achieved the required standard.

5.4 External Verifier

The External Verifier must hold, or be working towards a valid assessor's and verifier's qualification based on LSIS, formally LLUK, Learning and Development National Occupational Standards (2010):

Assessing qualifications:

- Learning and Development Unit 9D - Assess workplace competence using direct methods; or
- Learning and Development Unit 9DI – Assess workplace competences using direct and indirect methods; or
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF); or
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (QCF); or
- A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods; or
- D32/33 Assess candidate performance, using differing sources of evidence.

Verifying qualifications:

- Learning and Development Unit 12 – External Quality Assurance; or

- Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF), or
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF); or
- V2 Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process; or
- D35 Externally Verify the Assessment Process or
- Externally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment.

NB: Holders of V2 and D35 qualifications must work to the reviewed National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

The External Verifier must also be:

Definition	
Occupationally competent	The External Verifier must have sufficient operational experience within the outdoor industry that can be evidenced, is current and relevant to the qualification at or above the level being verified. This must be of sufficient depth to be effective and reliable when verifying judgements about internal verification and assessment processes and decisions.
Familiar with the qualification	The External Verifier must have an in-depth knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.

Credible

The External Verifier should have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is about how you use a variety of learning experiences to develop yourself professionally and personally. There is a common principle in how you approach CPD, whether you think in terms of self-development or lifelong learning. It is about the learning and development that you undertake and the method you use to reflect on and recall this learning. Your CPD should relate to your employee development plan.

CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary.