Assessment Strategy

Sector	Security
Qualification Title(s)	SVQ Providing Electronic Fire and Security Systems at SCQF level 6
Developed by	Skills for Security
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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:

• how external quality control of assessment will be achieved
• which aspects must always be assessed through performance in the workplace
• the extent to which a realistic work environment and simulated working conditions may be used to assess competence
• the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers

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.

The aim of this assessment strategy is to provide a framework for Skills for Security, as the standards setting organisation (SSO) for the Security Business Sector, to work with awarding bodies to ensure robust, effective quality assurance arrangements for the qualifications based on Skills for Security's national occupational standards.

This strategy is the result of:

• review of good practice
• consultation with and agreement of Awarding Bodies
• industry feedback
• comments from regulators

EXTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

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

As the SSO for the Security Business Sector, Skills for Security support the process of robust quality control through internal and external verification. It is important that assessment evidence is checked and verified internally by someone other than the assessor. The verification process itself must then be verified by an external verifier appointed by the Awarding Body.

The requirements for the appointment of quality assurers: assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers, are set out later in this document.

Other approaches to external quality control are acceptable where it can be demonstrated that they are equally robust, have support from the centre and the Awarding Body and meet the statutory requirements of the Qualifications Regulator.

WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

This outlines which aspects must always be assessed through performance in the workplace

Assessment of all candidates in security related occupations, against the national occupational standards developed by Skills for Security, will be undertaken in accordance with the following criteria: -
- Evidence of occupational competence should be generated and collected through real work activities in a realistic work environment.
- Real work activities are those undertaken to provide a security product or service under typical business conditions.
- A realistic working environment is one that reflects typical employment conditions relevant to the work activities being assessed.
- The evidence collected under these conditions should also be as naturally occurring as possible.

Taking account of the above, it is not acceptable to undertake assessments in a classroom, or similar environment that has been set up specifically for training. Where opportunities for evidence collection are not available at the workplace, simulation is permitted, in accordance with the criteria listed below.

REALISTIC WORK ENVIRONMENT AND SIMULATION

This outlines the extent to which a realistic work environment and simulated working conditions may be used to assess competence.

Simulation should only be used where it is impractical to gather evidence through a real work environment or within an acceptable time frame. Such instances are specified within each suite of NOS.

Awarding Bodies must issue adequate guidance to their centres as to how these simulations should be planned and organised with guidance ensuring that the demands on the candidate are no more or less that they would be in a real environment. This may include:-

- activities which are contingency, emergency situations etc. and are relatively rare events; and
- activities where mistakes by candidates in the workplace would be too hazardous or expensive to accommodate.

The simulation should match the conditions of a realistic working environment. In other words, the conditions should match those found in the workplace, including facilities, equipment and material, as well as relationships, constraints and pressures.

Where simulation is to be used to assess a complete element, we would consider it to be good practice for external verifier advice to be sought on the validity of any simulation scenario, prior to its implementation and use within an Approved Centre.

When simulation is to be used to cover part of an element, in the interests of assessment efficiency, assessors and internal verifiers should agree the circumstances and conditions under which this process is implemented.

The primary source of evidence used in the assessment of occupational competence should always be naturally occurring workplace activities carried out by the employee or candidate. Evidence of occupational competence should therefore be generated and collected through real work activities in a realistic work environment. Simulation requirements for imported units are as stated by the originating SSO.

Real work activities are those undertaken to provide a security product or service under typical business conditions. A realistic working environment is one that reflects typical employment conditions relevant to the work activities being assessed.

However, it is recognised that some of the national occupational standards deal with contingency events, over which the employee or candidate has no control; as well as other activities where mistakes made in the workplace would be too hazardous or expensive to accommodate.

Simulation in the assessment process can only be used for those elements where it is stated as an acceptable method of assessment by Skills for Security as the SSO. The

following information is for centres and sets down the guidance for assessors in the use of simulation in the assessment process. The simulation should match the conditions of a realistic working environment. In other words, the conditions should match those found in the workplace, including facilities, equipment and material, as well as relationships, constraints and pressures.

Where simulation is to be used to assess a complete unit, we would consider it to be good practice for quality consultant advice to be sought on the validity of any simulation scenario, prior to its implementation and use within an Approved Centre. When simulation is to be used to cover part of a unit, in the interests of assessment efficiency, assessors and internal verifiers should agree the circumstances and conditions under which this process is implemented.

Simulation is not permitted	N		Simulation is permitted	Y

Electronic Security Systems NOS

SFS SYS 4	Survey sites to prepare specifications for electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 5	Prepare quotations for providing electronic security systems	Y
SFS SYS 6	Plan the installation of electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 7	Audit electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 8	Make preparations and arrangements to install electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 10	Install electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 11	Test and confirm operation of integrated systems and communications	N
SFS SYS 12	Commission electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 13	Maintain the performance of electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 14	Diagnose and rectify faults on electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 15	Make presentations to sell electronic security systems	Y
SFS SYS 16	Negotiate sales of electronic security systems	Y
SFS SYS 17	Handover electronic security systems	N
SFS SYS 19	Control contract work	N
SFS SYS 20	Implement works to meet installation requirements	N
SFS SYS 21	Review drawings to prepare specifications of electronic security systems	Y

SFS 1	Protect yourself from the risk of violence at work	Y
SFS 2	Make sure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety	N
SFS 3	Promote a healthy and safe culture in the workplace	N
SFS 4	Communicate effectively with others	N
SFS 5	Give a positive image of yourself	N

SFS 6	Work effectively with other agencies	N
SFS 8	Develop productive working relationships with colleagues	N
SFS 10	Provide leadership for your team	N
SFS 11	Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements	N
SFS 13	Manage your own resources and professional development	N
SFS 16	Assess and address risk to the environment	N
SFS 17	Use radio communications effectively	Y

It is emphasised that simulation, where permitted, should only be used when no naturally occurring evidence is available.

OCCUPATIONAL EXPERTISE OF QUALITY ASSURERS

This outlines the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers

Criteria for the Appointment of Assessors

The gathering and judging of evidence should be entrusted to personnel who are not only trained and qualified as assessors (appropriate to the qualification being assessed) but who are occupationally competent in the tasks that they are assessing.

To this end, Awarding Bodies, through their QA processes, must ensure that assessors are occupationally competent, and are suitably qualified, in accordance with all of the criteria specified below: -

a) hold verifiable, relevant, current industry experience and knowledge of the occupational working area at or above the level being assessed. This experience and knowledge must be of sufficient standing to be effective and reliable when judging candidates' competence. Assessors experience and knowledge may be verified by among other things:
- Curriculum vitae and references
- Possession of a relevant qualification e.g. a SCQF Level 6 SVQ/CBQ or NVQ/Diploma at Level 3 in Electronic Security Systems
- Corporate membership of a relevant professional institution such as BSIA
b) demonstrate their ability and commitment to maintain their occupational competence by providing up-to-date records of CPD;
c) be able to relate the national occupational standards against which they

will be
assessing candidates, to activities in the workplace;

d) provide evidence that they,
- understand the structure of national occupational standards and qualifications;
- can interpret the standards in accordance with awarding body requirements;
- recognise acceptable sources of evidence for the qualification; and
- can implement the recording procedures required by the awarding body.
- can implement the awarding body quality assurance and administration procedures.

e) be in regular contact with the candidates and the internal verifier; and

f) hold or be working towards the appropriate assessor award (as defined by the regulatory authorities)

Evidence of individuals meeting all of the above criteria must be confirmed by the awarding body and ratified through external verifiers. Evidence of meeting criteria c and d above may be provided as a result of successfully completing relevant training such as BSIA CPD courses on which attendance is not mandatory but is strongly recommended. Evidence must be retained for three years.

Criteria for the Appointment of Internal Verifiers

Awarding Bodies, through their Quality Assurance processes, must ensure that internal verification is undertaken by persons who are able to make valid judgements on assessment decisions made by assessors.

To this end, Awarding Bodies, through their Quality Assurance processes, must ensure that internal verifiers are occupationally competent and are suitably qualified, in accordance with all of the criteria specified below: -

a) hold verifiable, relevant, current industry experience and knowledge of the occupational working area at or above the level being assessed. This experience and knowledge must be of sufficient standing to be effective and reliable when judging candidates competence. Internal verifiers experience and knowledge may be verified by among other things:
- Curriculum vitae and references
- Possession of a relevant qualification e.g. a SCQF Level 6 SVQ/CBQ or NVQ/Diploma at Level 3 in Electronic Security Systems
- Corporate membership of a relevant professional institution e.g. BSIA

b) demonstrate their ability and commitment to maintain their occupational competence through up-to-date CPD records;

c) be able to relate the national occupational standards against which they will be

assessing candidates, to activities in the workplace;

   d)   provide evidence that they,

- understand the structure of national occupational standards and qualifications;
- can interpret the standards in accordance with awarding body requirements;
- recognise acceptable sources of evidence for the qualification; and
- can implement the recording procedures required by the awarding body.
- can implement the awarding body quality assurance and administration procedures.

   e)   be in regular contact with the assessor and

   f)   hold or be working towards the appropriate verifier award (as defined by the regulatory authorities)

Evidence of individuals meeting all of the above criteria must be confirmed by the awarding body and ratified through external verifiers. Evidence of meeting criteria c and d above may be provided as a result of successfully completing a relevant training course, e.g. BSIA CPD courses, on which attendance is not mandatory but is strongly recommended. Evidence must be retained for three years.

Criteria for the Appointment of External Verifiers

Awarding Bodies must appoint suitably qualified external verifiers who are able to ensure that standards of assessment and verification are applied consistently across all Approved Centres.

To this end, Awarding Bodies must ensure that external verifiers are occupationally competent and are suitably qualified, in accordance with the criteria specified below: -

   a)   have a good knowledge and understanding of the sector and of current working practices, for example by having completed relevant BSIA CPD courses or an SVQ/NVQ/CBQ at the same level or above.

   b)   be independent of the assessment centres;

   c)   hold or be working towards the appropriate external verifier qualification (as defined by the regulatory authorities)

   d)   demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of the occupational standards they will be externally verifying; and

   e)   demonstrate their commitment to continuous personal professional development, through up-to-date CPD records.

Evidence of individuals meeting all of these criteria must be held and confirmed by the awarding body for a minimum of three years.