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| **Assessment Strategy** |  |
| **Sector: Justice** |  |
| **Qualification Title Certificate in Policing at**  **SCQF Level 7** |  |
| **Developed by Skills for Justice** |  |
| **Approved by ACG: 08 August 2018** |  |
| **Version 1** |  |



**Skills for Justice**

**Assessment Strategy for**

**Competency Based Qualifications in Policing**

1. **Background**

Skills for Justice is the sector skills council for employers, employees and volunteers in the Criminal Justice, Community Safety and Legal sectors throughout the United Kingdom. This includes:

* Police Forces
* Custodial Care including the public and private sector establishments
* Community Justice
* Courts and Tribunals Services
* Forensic Science
* Fire and Rescue Sector
* Legal Services
* Prosecution Services
* Law Enforcement Agencies including SOCA, HMRC, UK Border Agency
* Youth Justice

The purpose of this document is to ensure that Competency Based Qualifications (CBQ) are subject to both consistently rigorous and fair assessment. It is also designed to ensure that individuals who make judgments about competence are both qualified and competent to do so.

* Provides a framework for partnership between Skills for Justice, awarding bodies and centers / providers offering competence based qualifications within Police Scotland.
* Promotes robust quality assurance and quality control arrangements for competence based qualifications within Police Scotland;
* Assures employers that assessment of competence is consistently in line with the NOS and qualification units;
* Promotes continuing professional development amongst assessors and professionals engaged in moderating or verifying the quality of assessment.

**This assessment strategy applies to any Competency Based Qualifications in Policing.**

1. **Introduction and Scope**

This document sets out the requirements for the assessment and quality assurance of CBQs within Skills for Justice footprint. The following sections outline Skills for Justice specific principles in relations to:

* Fitness for purpose;
* ~~A~~ssessment (including workplace assessment and simulation)
* Quality assurance and quality control;
* The occupational expertise and competence of assessors, expert witnesses and

verifiers.

These principles are in addition to the generic criteria/requirements that awarding bodies must meet for the delivery of qualifications as required by the qualification regulator, SQA Accreditation.

**A: Fitness for Purpose**

* NOS define the knowledge and performance requirements for occupations within the sector.
* Qualification units are derived from NOS and specify learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
* Qualification structures for competence based provision will be developed by experts within the sector in conjunction with Skills for Justice;
* For each accredited qualification, awarding bodies must ensure that appropriate / fit for purpose assessment arrangements are developed, implemented and quality assured

#### B: Assessment

Qualification units specify assessment criteria but not the method by which assessment should be carried out. The assessment methods may include:

1. Observation of practice or simulated activity (by assessor / expert witness testimony)
2. Reflective Accounts
3. Written tests, including multiple choice papers
4. Oral Presentation, questioning or professional discussion
5. Assessment of work products

The above methods of assessment are not exhaustive and several methods may contribute to the assessment of the qualification

#### C: Workplace Assessment

1. Assessment through observation of candidate performance on tasks naturally undertaken in the workplace should contribute towards qualifications wherever appropriate and practicable. **Workplace assessment** may take various forms, but the methods adopted must allow candidates fully to demonstrate their competence against the assessment criteria.
2. **Work-based assessment / Simulation**

**Work-based assessment** may be required in some instances to replicate, as closely as possible, the performance expected in employment. The simulation of tasks and activities normally undertaken in the workplace may be required to enable candidates to generate the quality of evidence that is required. Simulation is acceptable in Units 1, 2 and 8. However, simulation will only be permissible in other units in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the Inspector in charge of Probationer Training.

All **simulations** should be planned and organised and follow these basic principles:

1. The nature of the contingency and the physical environment for the simulation must be realistic and should resemble the up to date workplace as closely as practicable.
2. Attention should be paid to relevant legal requirements; the realism of the setting and any associated equipment; workplace and customer relationships; and the pace and intensity of work-related activity.
3. Where simulations are used, they must reflect the requirements of the qualification units

**Assessment of knowledge and understanding**

Knowledge and understanding are key components of competent performance, but performance evidence alone will not provide enough evidence in this area. It is therefore acknowledged that the assessment of knowledge and understanding will take various forms and some may take place in a different environment which is not the workplace. However, there should also be evidence of knowledge and understanding from workplace performance evidence (for example from reflective accounts and questioning).

**D: Quality Assurance - a rigorous and robust system of internal and external quality control**

To ensure that qualifications have both public and professional credibility they must be accompanied by effective and convincing quality assurance and control mechanisms.

The standard external verification model will apply to the qualifications. Awarding Bodies are responsible for the competence of external verifiers and must require them to monitor Centres’ performance in accordance with regulatory requirements, sampling all aspects of the qualification delivery. External verification will include both assuring the quality of the Centre that is responsible for making the assessment and sampling from the judgments made on a number of candidates to ensure they are of consistent quality.

These principles are in addition to the generic criteria/requirements that Awarding Bodies must meet for the delivery of Qualifications as required by the qualification regulator, SQA Accreditation.

1. **Requirements of Assessors, Expert Witnesses and Verifiers**

Skills for Justice believes that the occupational expertise of assessors, expert witnesses and those responsible for internal/external quality assurance is one of the key factors underpinning valid, fair and reliable assessment. The integrity and professionalism of assessors, expert witnesses and those responsible for quality assurance are of paramount importance. Centres must ensure that staff whose role is assessment or quality assurance are given sufficient time to carry out their role effectively.

**6.1 Assessors**

All assessors must:

1. be occupationally competent. This means that each assessor must be an experienced practitioner with current knowledge and skills.
2. be familiar with the qualification units; and must be able to interpret and make judgements on current working practices within the area of work
3. maintain their occupational competence by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities to keep up to date with developments within the sector
4. hold or be working towards the appropriate assessor module as specified in the Police Scotland National Framework for Quality Assurance in Training and Education.  Or alternatively, an appropriate assessor qualification as identified by the qualification regulator, SQA Accreditation.

**6.2 Expert Witnesses**

The use of expert witnesses is encouraged as a contribution to the provision of performance evidence presented for assessment. The role of the expert witness is to submit evidence to the assessor as to the competence of the candidate in any given unit. This evidence must directly relate to candidate’s performance in the workplace which has been seen by the expert witness.

All Expert Witnesses must:

1. be occupationally competent in the area being assessed. This means that each expert witness must be an experienced practitioner with current knowledge and skills.
2. maintain their occupational competence by regularly deploying as an operational Police Officer and undertaking such courses as are required to maintain their operational status.
3. be familiar with the qualification unit; and must be able to interpret current working practices within the area of work.
4. be inducted by the centre so that they are familiar with the standards for those units for which they are to provide expert witness evidence. They must also understand the centre’s recording requirements and will need guidance on the skills required to provide evidence for the units.

**6.3 Internal Quality Assurance**

Those responsible for the internal quality assurance must:

1. be occupationally knowledgeable across the range of units for which they are responsible for. Due to the risk critical nature of the work and the legal implications of the assessment process, they must understand the nature and context of the assessors’ work and that of their candidates. This means that they have sufficient knowledge of these functions to be able to offer credible advice on the interpretation of the standards. Those conducting internal quality assurance must also sample the assessment process and resolve differences and conflicts on assessment decisions.
2. understand the content, structure and assessment requirements for the qualification they are verifying
3. maintain their occupational knowledge by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities to keep up to date with developments within the sector
4. hold or be working towards the appropriate verifier module as specified in the Police Scotland National Framework for Quality Assurance in Training and Education. Or alternatively, an appropriate verifier qualification as identified by the qualification regulator, SQA Accreditation.
   1. **External Quality Assurance**

Those persons conducting external quality assurance must:

1. be occupationally knowledgeable and have gained their knowledge working within the sector or associated professional/occupational area.
2. have a thorough understanding of the qualifications they will be quality assuring
3. have a detailed knowledge of the Awarding Bodies’ systems and documentation
4. have a thorough understanding of the guidance produced by the Awarding Bodies describing assessment and quality assurance practice
5. maintain their occupational knowledge by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities to keep up to date with developments within the sector~~.~~
6. hold, or be working towards, the appropriate external verifier qualification as approved and specified by the qualification regulator, SQA Accreditation.