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| **Assessment Strategy** | |
| **Sector** | **Hospitality** |
| **Qualification Titles** | **SVQ in Hospitality Management Skills at SCQF Level 8** |
| **Developed by** | **People 1st International** |
| **Approved by ACG** | **26 May 2020** |
| **Version** | **2** |

**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 purpose of this assessment strategy is for People 1st International and awarding bodies to work in partnership to:

* maximise the quality assurance arrangements for the hospitality sector’s SVQ units and qualifications and maintain standardisation across assessment practice
* assure employers and candidates that the sector’s competence SVQ units and qualifications are consistently assessed to the national occupational standard
* promote continuous professional development amongst assessors and verifiers.

The content of the assessment strategy has been reviewed in close consultation with employers, awarding bodies, training providers and other sector stakeholders. While many of these stakeholders have an interest in the assessment strategy, its primary audience is awarding bodies that offer SVQ units and qualifications for the hospitality industry.

The assessment strategy should be used alongside the generic principles that awarding bodies must meet for the delivery of SVQs, as required by the relevant sections of the current SQA Accreditation’s Regulatory Requirements.

External quality control

External quality control is achieved through rigorous monitoring and standardisation of assessment decisions. Awarding bodies achieve this by operating their existing systems for quality monitoring, risk assessment and management of their approved centres, following guidance issued by the regulatory authorities.

As part of this process People 1st International requires awarding bodies to:

* ensure that external verification, monitoring and support provided to centres takes into account their level of risk. For example, new assessment centres, and those that are experiencing difficulty in meeting the assessment requirements, should be given additional support by their awarding body
* report annually on the outcomes of, and any issues arising from, external verification and quality control arrangements
* highlight specific issues relating to the assessment of the sector’s SVQ units and qualifications that require immediate attention, as and when they arise
* contribute to reviews and discussions on matters relating to the assessment of hospitality SVQ units and qualifications.
* resolve issues relating to the assessment and verification of the sector’s SVQ units and qualifications with the action(s), and in the timeframe, agreed.

Workplace assessment

People 1st International advocate the integration of national occupational standards within employers’ organisations in order to achieve a national level of competence across the sector’s labour market. As such, assessment of the sector’s competence-based units and qualifications will, ideally, take place within the workplace. People 1st International recognise, however, that it is not always feasible for candidates to be assessed in the workplace and as such it permits the use of assessment within Realistic Working Environments (RWE). Additionally, where sector employers do not have the infrastructure to manage assessment independently, it values the role of peripatetic assessors to support the assessment process.

Within these parameters, People 1st International expects that:

* the majority of assessment of the sector’s SVQ units and qualifications will be based on **performance evidence**, i.e. direct observation, outputs of work and witness testimony within the workplace or a RWE approved by an awarding body. Simulation is allowed only where:
* the assessment criteria require the learner to respond to an emergency;
* a unit covers a limited selection of basic functions which need not involve interacting with customers; a unit originates from another SSO and the originator expressly allows simulation to be used for that unit.

A list of those units for which simulation is allowed can be found in **Annex A** at the end of this document. Evidence generated from simulated activities will not be acceptable for any other unit

* opportunities to ascertain candidate’s **accreditation of prior learning** is maximised by early contact between the assessor and candidate and during initial assessment / induction period.

*Please note: External tests do not form part of People 1stInternational’s assessment strategy.*

**Witness Testimony**

People 1st International recognise the use of ***witness testimony*** and ***expert witness testimony*** as appropriate methods for assessors to collect evidence of candidates’ performance.

**Witness testimonies** can be obtained from people who are occupationally competent and who may be familiar with the national occupational standards, such as the candidate’s line manager. They may also be obtained from people who are not occupationally competent, and do not have a knowledge of the national occupational standards, such as other people within the candidate’s workplace, e.g. customers and suppliers. The assessor must judge the validity of the witness testimony and this may vary depending on the source.

Witness testimonies can support the assessment process but should not be used as the main form of evidence, (e.g. witness testimony may be useful to authenticate a candidate’s work, confirm consistency over time or confirm that a candidate has covered all of the required scope / range for a unit). In all cases the awarding body’s minimum evidence requirements must be met.

**Expert witnesses** may be used where additional support relating to the assessment of technical competence is required. Expert witnesses may be:

* approved assessors for other sectors who are also familiar with the relevant occupational standards
* line managers, other managers or experienced colleagues that are not approved assessors, but who the awarding body agrees has current occupational competence, knowledge and expertise to make a judgement of a candidate’s competence.

Expert witnesses must be able to demonstrate through relevant qualifications and/or practical experience and knowledge that they are qualified to provide an expert opinion on a candidate’s performance in relation to the unit being assessed. People 1st International believe that it is unlikely for an expert witness to be fully expert within any of the sector’s occupational areas in less than 12 months. The final judgement on the validity of the expert witness testimony rests with the assessor and such testimonies may only be used in line with awarding body’s requirements.

**Professional Discussion**

Professional discussion could be used in addition to performance evidence to confirm a candidate’s overall competence. Professional discussion could also be used as a form of evidence for assessing underpinning knowledge; such discussions should enable the assessor to gather relevant evidence to ensure the candidate has a firm understanding of the standard being assessed, rather than using a prescribed list of questions.

Realistic work environment and simulation

**Simulation** can only be used to assess candidates for the sector’s SVQ units and qualifications where the opportunity to assess naturally occurring evidence is unlikely or not possible, for example assessment relating to health and safety, fire and emergency procedures. It should not include routine activities that must be covered by performance evidence.

There are no People 1st International units that can be solely achieved by simulation. Where simulation is acceptable in the evidence requirements, it should only be used when performance evidence is unlikely to be generated through normal working practices. Partial simulation would be accepted as long as it meets the set requirements.

See **Annex A** SVQ units which permit the use of simulation.

Awarding bodies must issue adequate guidance which informs centres how simulation should be planned and organised, ensuring that demands on candidates are neither more nor less than they would encounter in a real work situation. In particular:

* a centre’s overall strategy for simulation must be examined and approved by the external verifier
* all simulations must be planned, developed and documented by the centre in a way that ensures the simulation correctly reflects what the unit seeks to assess
* ideally, there should be a range of simulations to cover the same aspect of the standard
* the physical environment for the simulation, and the nature of the contingency, must be realistic
* the candidate should be given no indication as to what the simulation will present.

**Providing a Realistic Working Environment (RWE)**

Assessment of the sector’s competence-based units and qualifications should ideally be carried out within the workplace, however, where this is not possible candidates can be assessed within an approved Realistic Working Environment (RWE) that replicates a real work setting. The criteria for RWE can be found at **Annex B**.

Occupational expertise of quality assurers

The requirements relating to the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers is set out in **Annex C**. Guidance on additional qualifications and / or training relevant to assessors and verifiers can be found in **Annex D**.

To maintain high standards of quality and standardisation within assessment, and achieve best practice People 1st International require all external verifiers, internal verifiers and assessors to maintain a record of their **continuous professional development** – see guidance at **Annex E**.

**Annex A**

**SVQ units in Hospitality that permit simulation**

There are no People 1st International units that may be achieved solely by the use of simulation. However, partial simulation is permissible in the units listed in the table below.

The overarching principle to be applied to units identified as suitable for simulation is that it should only be undertaken in a minority of cases where:

* there is a high risk to the security or safety
* the opportunity to present evidence from work-based practice happens infrequently and therefore insisting that candidates wait for such an occurrence would be unreasonable or create blockages in the assessment system and might carry the risk of de-motivating candidates
* there would otherwise be a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

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| **People 1st Unit Number** | **Unit Title** | **SVQ**  **qualifications that the unit is used in** |
| PPL1Gen1 | Maintain health and safety in hospitality | SVQ Professional Cookery at SCQF 4  SVQ Hospitality Services at SCQF 4  SVQ Hospitality Services at SCQF 5  SVQ in Food and Beverage Service at SCQF 5  SVQ Beverage Service at SCQF 5  SVQ Kitchen Services at SCQF 5  SVQ Food Production at SCQF 5  SVQ Professional Cookery at SCQF 5 |
| PPLHSL4 | Maintain the health, hygiene, safety and security of the working environment | SVQ in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership at SCQF 7 |
| PPLHSL23 | Improve the customer relationship | SVQ in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership at SCQF 7 |
| PPLHSL19 | Monitor and solve customer service  problems | SVQ in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership at SCQF 7 |
| PPLHSL5 | Lead a team to improve customer service | SVQ in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership at SCQF 7 |

**Annex B**

**Criteria for Realistic Working Environments**

It is essential for organisations operating a Realistic Working Environment (RWE) to ensure it reflects current and real work settings. By doing so, sector employers can be confident that competence achieved in a RWE will be continued into employment. RWEs can offer many opportunities to employers and individuals that have limited access to assessment.

The number of hours candidates work and their input is not prescribed, as it is acknowledged that RWEs cannot operate without some flexibility. However, centres must provide evidence that the following criteria are being met as well as fulfilling the awarding body’s criteria for this purpose. External verifiers (EV) are expected to ensure RWEs meet the criteria set out below on at least one visit.

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| **1** | **The work situation**  **being represented is relevant to the**  **competence based**  **units and qualifications being assessed** | • The type of work situation being represented mirrors the relevant setting, e.g. quick service takeaway, restaurant, brasserie, café/snack bar, cafeteria, housekeeping department, front office, reception or reservations.  • Appropriate industrial equipment, furnishings and resources (e.g. ingredients and technology) that replicate the work situation are used, ensuring that assessment requirements can be covered.  • Industry trends are considered in the product and service offer. |
| **2** | **The candidate’s work**  **activities reflect those found in the situation**  **being represented** | • Candidates operate in a professional capacity with corresponding job schedules and/or descriptions.  • Candidates are clear on their work activities and responsibilities. |
| **3** | **The RWE is operated**  **in the same manner as a real work**  **situation** | • Customers are not prompted to behave in a particular manner.  • Customer feedback is maintained and acted upon. |
| **4** | **The RWE is**  **underpinned by commercial principles and responsibilities.** | • Organisational charts indicate the anticipated job roles in the RWE and their hierarchical structure, taking into account supervisory requirements.  • There is evidence of business planning, e.g. product / service plans, staffing / rotas, costing, promotions.  • Candidates are encouraged to carry out their function in line with business expectations, e.g. within timescales and budget, minimising wastage.  • Legislative regulations are adhered to, e.g. food safety, health and safety, equal opportunities, trade description.  • Consumer information is provided on products and services, e.g. allergy advice on food products. |

**Annex C**

**Occupational Expertise of Assessors and Verifiers**

The requirements set out below relates to all assessors and verifiers.

✓ **= mandatory**

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| **Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers**  **must:** | **A** | **IV** | **EV** |
| Have a good knowledge and understanding of the national occupational standard and competence-based units and qualifications which are being assessed or verified. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Hold or be working towards relevant assessment and/or verification qualification(s) as identified by SQA Accreditation, qualifications regulator, confirming their competence to assess or verify SVQ units and qualifications assessment as follows: |  | | |
| * Assessors and verifiers who hold current assessor and/or verifier units and undertake appropriate continuous professional development (CPD) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| * Assessors and verifiers who hold previous versions of assessor and/or verifier units, who work to the current Learning and Development (L&D) National Occupational Standards (NOS) and undertake appropriate continuous professional development (CPD) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| * Any new assessors or verifiers who do not currently hold any assessor or verifier units must undertake the relevant current unit(s). * In the case that an assessor or verifier is working towards their assessor/verifier unit, a representative sample of their assessment/verification decisions must be counter-signed by a colleague who has achieved an appropriate assessor/verifier unit. This colleague should have the same occupational expertise | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Have relevant occupational expertise and knowledge, at the appropriate level of the occupational area(s) they are assessing and/or verifying which has been gained through ‘hands on’ experience in the industry. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adhere to the awarding body’s assessment requirements and practice standardised assessment principles | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Have sufficient resources to carry out the role of assessor or verifier, i.e. time and budget | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Have supervisory / management, interpersonal and investigative skills; including the ability to analyse information, hold meetings, guide, advise, plan and make recommendations at all levels, taking into account the nature and size of the organisation in which assessment is taking place. High standards of administration and record keeping are also essential. |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Hold qualifications, or have undertaken training, that has legislative relevance to the competence-based units and qualifications being assessed (See Annex D). | ✓ | Good  practice | Good  Practice |
| Update their occupational expertise and industry knowledge in the areas being assessed and verified through planned Continuous  Professional Development (see Annex E). | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

**Annex D**

**Qualifications and Training relevant to Assessors and Verifiers**

The following sets out areas in which assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers should either receive training or achieve qualifications. People 1st International is **not** stipulating that assessors, internal verifiers or external verifiers must achieve specific qualifications, there is the option to either undertake appropriate training or an accredited qualification.

√ **= mandatory**

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| **Qualification / Training** | **SVQ** **unit / qualification** | **A** | **IV** | **EV** |
| **Health and Safety** | All sector units and  qualifications | ✓ | Good  Practice | Good  Practice |
| **Food Safety** | Kitchen Services  Hospitality Services  Professional Cookery  Food and Beverage Service  Beverage service  Unit PPLHSL30  Unit PPL4GEN1 | ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓ | Good  Practice | Good  Practice |
| **Licensing** | Food and Beverage Service  Beverage Service  Hospitality Supervision and Leadership *(with food and beverage units)* | ✓  ✓  ✓ | Good  Practice |  |

**Annex E**

**Continuous Professional Development for Assessors and Verifiers**

It is necessary for assessors and verifiers to maintain a record of evidence of their continuous professional development (CPD). This is necessary to maintain currency of skills and understanding of the occupational area(s) being assessed, and can be achieved in a variety of ways. It should be a planned process, reviewed on an annual basis, for example as part of an individual’s performance review.

Assessors and verifiers should select CPD methods that are appropriate to meeting their development needs. The following provides examples of a variety of methods that could be used for CPD purposes.

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| **Updating**  **occupational expertise** | • Internal and external work placements  • Work experience and shadowing (e.g. within associated departments)  • External visits to other organisations  • Updated and new training and qualifications  • Training sessions to update skills  • Visits to educational establishments  • Trade fairs |
| **Keeping up to date with sector developments and**  **new legislation** | • Relevant sector websites  • Membership of professional bodies  • Papers and documents on legislative change  • Networking events  • Seminars, conferences, workshops, membership of committees / working parties (e.g. People 1st International events), webinars, social media  • Staff development days |
| **Standardising and best practice in assessment** | • Regular standardisation meetings with colleagues  • Sharing best practice through internal meetings, newsletters, email circulars  • Comparison of assessment and verification in other sectors  • Attending awarding body meetings/seminars |