



Common questions about Construction Craft SVQs

Construction SVQ units

How do I access Construction SVQ units/National Occupational Standards (NOS)?

Construction SVQ units are the same as the CITB NOS. You can access them by following these six steps:

- ◆ Step 1: Using SQA APS/Navigator, go to the specific SVQ that you are looking for (eg GM7W 23 SVQ Painting & Decorating at SCQF level 6). All of the Craft SVQs have a start date of July 2017, so check that you have the correct one.
- ◆ Step 2: Find the SQA code for the unit/NOS that you are looking for (eg HL72 04 Prepare Surfaces for Painting/Decorating).
- ◆ Step 3: Go to www.sqa.org.uk/svg.
- ◆ Step 4: Click on 'Accredited qualification unit search'.
- ◆ Step 5: Insert the SVQ unit code you acquired from APS/Navigator (eg HL72 04) and click 'search'.
- ◆ Step 6: Select the SVQ unit/NOS that appears.

CITB Skills Tests

What materials should be used in the skills tests?

New building materials must be used for all skills tests.

Over how many days should the skills tests be completed?

Each skills test has a specified time limit, which is detailed in each of the individual skills test SVQ units/NOS. For example:

- ◆ Carpentry and Joinery — 8 hours (one day)
- ◆ Plastering — 12 hours (split over two days)
- ◆ Painting and decorating — 16 hours (split over two days)

If a centre is unable to comply with this, the test can be carried out over more days. For example, the Carpentry and Joinery Skills Test could be done over two days instead of one; eg six hours on day one and two hours on day two. As with the conduct of any other assessment arrangements, professional discretion should be used.

If a centre does choose to split the test over more than the specified number of days, this must be recorded, along with the reason behind the decision.

You can access skills test units/NOS by following the instructions above.

Must the assessor be present for the full duration of the skills test?

Yes. The assessor must be present throughout the skills test, to assess if the candidate has carried out the test in a safe and sustainable manner.

As stated in the Industry Skills Test — Provider and Marking Instructions, 'Achievement of the skills test will not be awarded unless all elements are carried out in a safe and sustainable manner — even if the other standards have been met'.

The instructions for conducting the skills test state that 'It is the responsibility of the candidate to work safely without danger to themselves or to others and therefore must complete a risk assessment and method statement, covering all parts of the skills test, prior to starting work. Candidates must work safely and keep a clean and tidy workstation at all times'.

Where can I access risk assessment and method statement forms?

These are available from the SQA secure [website](#).

Is an invigilator required?

No. There is no requirement for an invigilator to be present.

What if a candidate runs out of time and has not completed the skills test by the end of the specified assessment period?

If the candidate is very close to completing the skills test at the end of the specified time period (eg Carpentry and Joinery is 8 hours, while Plastering is 12 hours), they should be allowed to complete it within a reasonable period of time (eg an additional 30 minutes). Centres should use their professional judgement and record any additional time given, along with the reasoning behind the decision. This will be checked at external verification.

If a candidate fails the skills test, do they need to do a full resit?

A candidate who fails the skills test is not required to do a full resit. The candidate can resit the part of the skills test that they have failed. This is in line with SQA's policy on assessments. Two attempts are allowed, with a third in exceptional circumstances. Due to the varying nature of the tests across the construction crafts, a little more scrutiny of each test is required to come up with a workable solution for each one. Further instructions for these will be provided in the *Provider and Marking Instructions*, which are currently being updated and planned for publication in August 2018.

Where can I access the new Construction Crafts — Skills Test Annual Report form?

We will send the new Construction Crafts — Skills Test Annual Report form to centres every year, and you must complete it for all Construction Craft skills tests. In 2018 only, the form will apply to candidates sitting their skills test from 1 January to 31 July 2018. In future years, the form will be valid from 1 August to 31 July of the following year.

We have created the Construction Crafts — Skills Test Annual Report form in response to the following requirement set by the regulator — SQA Accreditation:

'SQA Awarding Body to provide annual statistical monitoring report of pass rates, resit rates and trends for each craft. Reports to include analysis of change, including historical pass rates from previous accreditation period.'

The details in the completed form will provide SQA with valuable information, which will contribute to the ongoing improvement of the skills tests.

Which skills test should I result candidates against?

Current SVQs:

From 1 January 2018 until 31 August 2021, centres delivering the current SVQs must use the new CITB Skills Test SVQ unit, along with SQA's *Candidate Assessment Instructions* and *Provider and Marking Instructions*, to provide the evidence required for successful achievement of the SVQ unit B664 04. This was agreed with the regulator — SQA Accreditation — in June 2017.

Centres should use this evidence to result the candidate for SVQ unit B664 04 until the lapsing period for the current SVQs has ended. The evidence from the new CITB Skills Test will be externally verified by SQA and regulated by SQA Accreditation.

New SVQs:

Candidates who are doing the new Construction Craft SVQs at SCQF level 6 must also use the new CITB Skills Test but please note that the new SVQs have specific unit numbers for each skills test.

Expert witness

Is it possible to amend or remove the expert witness section from Appendix D of the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy?

The expert witness section cannot be amended or removed from the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy without approval from the regulator (SQA Accreditation). Only CITB Sector Skills Council can request that the assessment strategy be amended, and it must have the support of industry. The regulator will require robust evidence from industry prior to approving any changes.

As with the Assessors and Internal Verifiers sections of the assessment strategy, centres have a responsibility to comply with the expert witness section. This will be checked, as normal, by SQA external verifiers.

What are the criteria for the expert witness?

The expert witness must be an experienced and reputable tradesperson in the occupational area that is being assessed, as they are unlikely to have an in-depth knowledge of the NOS and the assessment strategy. You should use your professional judgement to select an appropriate expert witness and record the reasons for your decisions.

Can the expert witness be a centre employee, if they meet all of the requirements of Appendix D of the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy?

No. The expert witness must also be an independent and impartial witness. CITB Sector Skills Council has stipulated that an individual employed by the centre, in any role or capacity, is not independent and therefore will not be able to carry out the expert witness role for that centre. However, it would be possible to arrange for a member of staff from a different centre to take on the role of expert witness, where appropriate.

What do I do if I cannot find an expert witness?

If you are unable to find a suitable expert witness, please contact [Gill Harkness@citb.co.uk](mailto:Gill.Harkness@citb.co.uk) or [Ian Shaw@citb.co.uk](mailto:Ian.Shaw@citb.co.uk) for assistance and provide them with details of your search.

What if no expert witness can be sourced?

If a centre is still unable to source an expert witness for the Craft Skills Tests, after contacting Ian Shaw and Gill Harkness at CITB (Scotland) for assistance, and the centre proceeds with a Craft skills test, without an expert witness arranged, SQA will deem that skills test to be invalid, as the centre has not complied with the CITB Consolidated Assessment Strategy — May 2017 and additional information from SQA and CITB Sector Skills Council.

What should I do if the expert witness does not show up on the day of the skills test?

The expert witness must be in attendance to observe the marking of the skills tests in person. However, if they do not attend on the day, and you are unable to source a replacement at short notice, you should proceed with marking the skills test. The marking of the skills test should be filmed and a copy of the video sent to the expert witness for them to observe. The expert witness should be given a total of five days to observe the marking and reply to your centre (confirming receipt of the video within two days and responding to your centre within a further three days). You can then proceed as normal.

Can the expert witness appeal against the assessor's decision?

No, the expert witness cannot appeal against the assessor's decision. They can only appeal against the assessment *process*. For example, if they consider that the assessment process was compromised in any way or was unfair to a particular candidate or group of candidates; eg, the time allocated, the quality of materials, or the accommodation provided.

How does the expert witness go about appealing against the skills test assessment process?

If an expert witness wishes to make an appeal to SQA, they must inform the skills test assessor of this immediately. This will allow centres to ensure that sufficient evidence is retained for review during the appeal. The expert witness should then submit a formal request to SQA in writing stating the following:

- ◆ Title of the skills test
- ◆ Name of candidate(s)
- ◆ Candidate cohort
- ◆ Centre where skills test was taken
- ◆ Date on which the skills test was taken
- ◆ Name of the assessor involved in the skills test
- ◆ Detailed reason for the appeal, providing as much information and evidence as possible
- ◆ Expert witness name, contact details and previous experience of skills tests

We have published online forms for each of the nine Construction Craft SVQs at SCQF level 6. You can access them from each of the Construction Craft SVQ web pages on our [website](#), in the Assessment Strategy section.

An employer has told me that they are having difficulty providing opportunities for the candidate to gather evidence of competence for certain parts of the Construction Craft SVQs at SCQF level 6. What should I tell them?

CITB Sector Skills Council is planning to review the following Construction Craft NOS and structures in the coming months:

- ◆ Wood Occupations
- ◆ Trowel Occupations

- ◆ Decorative Finishing and Industrial Painting
- ◆ Wall and Floor Tiling

Further reviews are also planned for the following subjects:

- ◆ Construction Site Management and Construction Site Supervision
- ◆ Associated Industrial Services
- ◆ Fitted Interiors
- ◆ Construction and Civil Engineering Operations

CITB Sector Skills Council will identify and contact employers to take part in the review but they would also welcome any involvement from employers in your local area. If any of the employers you currently work with would be interested in taking part in this review, or have comments regarding any other Construction Craft SVQ, please ask them to contact CITB Sector Skills Council as soon as possible by e-mailing standards.qualifications@citb.co.uk.

Feedback

If you have any comments regarding the details of the CITB Skills Test units, SQA's Skills Test — Provider and Marking Instruction document, or SQA's Skills Test — Learner Instructions document, please contact Diane Wilson, Qualifications Manager (diane.wilson@sqa.org.uk) or Donna Moore, Qualifications Officer (donna.moore@sqa.org.uk).

Your comments will be discussed with CITB at the twice yearly meetings, in line with CITB assessment strategy criteria.