



Assessor's Guidelines for the SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5

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Contents

About SVQs and the SCQF	2
How are standards defined in SVQs?	4
Who is involved in SVQs?	4
The steps involved in assessing a candidate for an SVQ	5
1 The SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5	6
Structure of the SVQs	6
An Assessment Strategy for the SVQ.....	11
Why would people be interested in the SVQ?	11
How do candidates begin?	12
Choosing the SVQ.....	12
2 Preparing to assess the SVQ	14
Your role and your candidate's role	14
Planning.....	15
Assessment plan	16
Selecting methods of assessment	18
Methods of assessment	19
Observation	19
Product evidence.....	19
Questioning	20
Other methods of assessment.....	21
Personal statements.....	21
Witness testimony	21
Simulation.....	22
Other sources of evidence.....	23
3 Generating evidence	24
Observation.....	25
Questions and candidate responses	28
Candidate's personal statement.....	30
Witness testimony	32
Filling the gaps.....	34
Guidance and support to candidates	34
Judging candidate evidence and making an assessment decision	34
Insufficient evidence	34
Authenticating candidates' evidence	35
4 Recording achievement.....	36
Completing the Unit progress record.....	37
Unit progress record.....	38
Using the index of evidence	39
Index of evidence	40
Completing the Element achievement record.....	41
Element achievement record.....	42
5 Further information	45
What else should I read?.....	45
Appendix 1: Blank recording forms	46

About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5**. You may be able to think of other ways of assessing your candidates and recording your decisions about their competence.

Using assessments based on these examples does not guarantee successful verification — it is still your responsibility to ensure that internal quality assurance procedures are followed.

Introduction

This introduction provides a brief overview of SVQs and how they are assessed in the workplace. If you are already familiar with the concept of SVQs, you may wish to go to the next section.

About SVQs and the SCQF

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications which set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy and are usually delivered in the workplace or in partnership with a college or other training provider. The qualifications have been designed by standards-setting bodies made up of experienced practitioners who represent employers, professional bodies, trade unions, education and voluntary organisations.

Each standards-setting body is responsible for developing national standards which define *what* employees (or potential employees) must be able to do, *how well*, and *in what circumstances*, to show that they are competent in their work.

Each SVQ which a standards-setting body develops has to fit into a broad framework which allows qualifications in the UK and throughout Europe to be compared.

There are SVQs for nearly all occupations in Scotland and they are available at SVQ levels 1–5. SVQs are currently notionally placed in the SCQF as the individual SVQs may be at differing SCQF levels and have differing amount of credit points, depending on the structure and context of the SVQ. SVQs are a means of recognising the skills and knowledge people need in employment, ie job competence. Successful completion of an SVQ provides clear evidence that the learner works to nationally recognised occupational standards.

Each Unit defines one aspect of a job or work-role, and says what it is to be competent in that aspect of the job. To be awarded a full SVQ, learners must achieve each of the SVQ Units which make it up by demonstrating that they are competent in that aspect of the job. The Units which make up the SVQ can also be taken as freestanding awards. Some SVQs or SVQ Units are incorporated into other awards or programmes including HNCs and Modern Apprenticeships.

Explanation of levels

SVQ1 (SCQF level 4)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable.
SVQ2 (SCQF level 5)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. At this level, there will be activities, which are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement.
SVQ3 (either SCQF level 6 or 7)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy, and control or guidance of others is often present.
SVQ4 (either SCQF level 8 or 9)	Competence involves the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.
SVQ5 (SCQF level 11)	Competence involves the application of skills and a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountability.

For further information on SCQF go to www.scqf.org.uk.

How are standards defined in SVQs?

All SVQs consist of standards which can be broken down into various parts.

Units define the broad functions carried out in the sector, and are made up of a number of **Elements**. These **Elements** describe the activities which employees have to perform, and will require candidates to demonstrate certain skills or Knowledge and Understanding.

The quality of performance in what people must be able to do — how well they have to perform — is described by **Performance Criteria**. These may also be called **statements of competence** or **what candidates should do**.

The section on **Knowledge and Understanding** says what candidates must know and understand, and how this knowledge applies to their jobs.

You may also come across standards containing statements on **scope**. These statements could, for example, list the equipment that candidates are expected to be familiar with and use in their occupational area.

Increasingly, you may see changes to this format as standards become more user-friendly and are written in plain English. For example, there may be some standards containing **Range Statements** or **Evidence Requirements**, but over time these should disappear. You may, however, find that information on the context, nature and amount of evidence which is required to prove competence (which used to be given in Range Statements and Evidence Requirements) is now defined in the **assessment guidance** for the qualification. Assessment guidance is drawn up by the awarding body and is packaged along with the standards to form the SVQ.

Who is involved in SVQs?

There are several roles:

- ◆ **the candidate** the person who wants to achieve the SVQ (eg an employee)
- ◆ **the assessor*** the person who assesses the candidates and decides if they are competent (eg supervisor)
- ◆ **the internal verifier*** an individual nominated by the centre (eg a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (eg supervisor's line manager)
- ◆ **the External Verifier*** an individual appointed by SQA who ensures that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the SVQ

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by SQA to prove they have the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. Occupational competence has been defined by the standards-setting body in the Assessment Strategy for this SVQ(s) — see SQA’s website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Assessors and verifiers are also expected to obtain an appropriate qualification in assessment and verification — this can be the Learning and Development Units (the national standards for assessment and verification), or an alternative qualification which SQA also recognises.

The steps involved in assessing a candidate for an SVQ

In deciding whether a candidate should achieve an SVQ, you will go through these stages:

- ◆ planning for assessment
- ◆ generating and collecting evidence of the candidate’s competence in the Units
- ◆ judging the evidence of the candidate’s ability and making an assessment decision based on the evidence
- ◆ recording the assessment decision and the candidate’s achievement

1 The SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5

The SVQs in Piling Operations (Construction) have been developed by ConstructionSkills and are intended for people in the craft sector of the construction industry.

These people may be already working within the construction industry. They will require skills and knowledge in, among other things, practical ability, health and safety, interpreting information and working to timescales.

The SVQs are designed to be assessed in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. Examples of the settings or centres in which the SVQs are likely to be delivered include construction sites and training centres.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQs in Piling Operations (Construction).

SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction): Piling Rig Operator SCQF level 5 (GF5H 22)

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FN2J 04	6	12	VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
FW0J 04	5	5	VR 642	Conform to Productive Work Practices
FN2V 04	5	5	VR 643	Move, Handle or Store Resources
H1PB 04	5	24	VR 235	Contribute to the Piling Operation
F00Y 04	5	8	VR 402	Slinging and Signalling the Movement of Loads
H1PL 04	5	8	VR 299	Plant or Machinery Operator Maintenance
H1RB 04	5	37	VR 390	Operate Plant or Machinery to Construct and Form

Additional Units (not compulsory)

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FW1V 04	5	44	VR 387	Operate Plant or Machinery to Lift and Transfer Loads
FW1P 04	5	37	VR 389	Operate Plant or Machinery to Excavate
FW1X 04	5	29	VR 391	Operate Plant or Machinery to Receive and Transport Loads
H1RE 04	5	36	VR 404	Erect and Dismantle Plant (cranes and rigs)

SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction): Piling Operative SCQF level 5 (GF5G 22)

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FN2J 04	6	12	VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
FW0J 04	5	5	VR 642	Conform to Productive Work Practices
FN2V 04	5	5	VR 643	Move, Handle or Store Resources
H1PB 04	5	24	VR 235	Contribute to the Piling Operation
F00Y 04	5	8	VR 402	Slinging and Signalling the Movement of Loads

Optional Units — One Unit required

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
H1P2 04	6	9	VR 214	Allocate and Monitor the Use of Plant, Machinery or Equipment
H1PA 04	5	26	VR 233	Carry Out Mud, Slurry or Fluid Plant Operations
H1PC 04	5	26	VR 236	Carry Out Tremie Operations
H1PD 04	5	22	VR 239	Guide Formation of Piles
FW1R 04	5	37	VR 388	Operate Plant or Machinery to Extract
DY6R 04	5	7	VR 400	Operate Specialised Powered Tools and Equipment

Additional Units (not compulsory)

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
FW1V 04	5	44	VR 387	Operate Plant or Machinery to Lift and Transfer Loads
FW1P 04	5	37	VR 389	Operate Plant or Machinery to Excavate
FW1X 04	5	29	VR 391	Operate Plant or Machinery to Receive and Transport Loads
H1RE 04	5	36	VR 404	Erect and Dismantle Plant (cranes and rigs)

Unit endorsements for SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction)

Listed below are the endorsements that can apply for the following Units:

Unit No.	Endorsement
VR 214	Own area of work (ie Piling operative) Mobile crane Crawler crane Piling rig
VR 233	Own area of work (ie Piling operations)
VR 235	Sheet piling Driven piling Rotary bored kelly bar piling Driven cast-in-situ piling Sectional auger piling (mini piling) Continuous flight auger piling Displacement flight auger Slurry walling Tripod piling Vibro piling Diaphragm walling
VR 239	Sheet piling Driven piling Rotary bored kelly bar piling Driven cast-in-situ piling Sectional auger piling (mini piling) Continuous flight auger piling Displacement flight auger Slurry walling Tripod piling Vibro piling Diaphragm walling
VR 299	Own area of work (ie Piling operations)

VR 387	<p>Own area of work (ie Piling operations)</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>Truck mounted crane</p> <p>Crawler crane sizes</p> <p>Wheeled crane</p> <p>Truck mounted boom concrete pump</p> <p>Trailer mounted concrete pump</p> <p>Rough terrain forklift/masted truck</p> <p>Telescopic handler industrial telescopic</p> <p>Telescopic handler up to 9 metres</p> <p>Telescopic handler all sizes</p> <p>Telescopic handler all sizes excluding 360 degrees</p> <p>Telescopic handler including 360 degrees</p> <p>Lorry loader</p> <p>Skip handler</p> <p>Mobile crane blocked duties</p> <p>Mobile crane pick and carry duties only</p> <p>Mobile crane all duties</p>
VR 388	<p>Own area of work (ie Piling operative)</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>Excavator 180 degrees crawler & wheeled below 5 tonne</p> <p>Excavator 180 degrees crawler & wheeled above 5 tonne</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees below 10 tonne tracked</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees below 10 tonne wheeled</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees above 10 tonne tracked</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees above 10 tonne wheeled</p> <p>Wheeled loading shovel</p> <p>Tracked loading shovel</p> <p>Skid steer loader</p>
VR 389	<p>Own area of work (ie Piling operations)</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>Excavator 180 degrees crawler & wheeled below 5 tonne</p> <p>Excavator 180 degrees crawler & wheeler above 10 tonne</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees below 10 tonne tracked</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees below 10 tonne wheeled</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees above 10 tonne tracked</p> <p>Excavator 360 degrees above 10 tonne wheeled</p>
VR 390	<p>Own area of work (ie Piling rig operator)</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>Sheet piling</p> <p>Driven piling</p> <p>Continuous flight auger piling</p> <p>Rotary piling</p> <p>Tripod piling</p> <p>Vibro piling</p> <p>Diaphragm walling</p> <p>Mini piling</p>

VR 391	Own area of work (ie Piling operative) Plus Truck mounted boom concrete pump Dump truck — articulated chassis up to 15 tonne Dump truck — articulated chassis all sizes Dump truck — rigid chassis up to 15 tonne Dump truck — rigid chassis up to 50 tonne Dump truck — rigid chassis all sizes wheeled Dump truck — rigid chassis tracked Forward tipping dumper wheeled Forward tipping dumper tracked Trailer mounted concrete pump
VR 400	Own area of work (ie Piling operative) Plus Generators Pumps Pedestrian operated plant or machines Mixers Compressors Self powered tools Oscillators Extractors
VR 402	Own area of work (ie Piling operative)
VR 404	Own area of work (ie Piling operative) Plus Mobile crane Crawler crane Piling rig

Note — Where industry requests an Awarding Body to further endorse a Unit, the Awarding Body must first seek approval from the Standards Setting Body to ensure the endorsement is appropriate to the Unit.

An Assessment Strategy for the SVQ

As part of its review of the SVQs, the standards-setting body ConstructionSkills has developed an Assessment Strategy which defines a range of requirements:

- ◆ the occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers
- ◆ a definition of simulation
- ◆ definition of the workplace
- ◆ information on a model of independent assessment or external quality control

The relevant parts of the Assessment Strategy are published on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk), and both SQA and centres must comply with these requirements.

Why would people be interested in the SVQ?

People will take SVQs for a variety of reasons: to gain promotion, to prove their job competence, or for personal development. There will be other reasons too. One of the first things to do is to find out why your candidates want to do the SVQ, and to advise them of the appropriateness of the qualification. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to your candidates, they might help you to do this.

How do candidates begin?

Choosing the SVQ

You should make sure that candidates get guidance before starting out on an SVQ — they need advice to ensure that their existing job remit, skills, experience, and their plans for progression, are matched to the SVQ selected. It does not have to be you as the assessor, who carried out the matching process, but whoever has responsibility for this should ensure that the assessment opportunities available to the candidate are also considered.

New entrant

Candidates must be employed in the construction industry. They will receive training and assessment in both the workplace and off the job where necessary. In addition to this, candidates may be required to sit and pass the ConstructionSkills health and safety test, dependent on the SVQ they undertake.

Example

Ian had left school and was deciding which career to follow. He had taken qualifications at school and studied the Scottish Progression Awards in Construction. Therefore, Ian felt he would be suited to a hands-on type of role. With this in mind, he contacted ConstructionSkills and completed an application form. Ian was invited to sit the ConstructionSkills learning exercise which he passed at a level suitable for him to pursue a career in piling operations. After contacting some local companies Ian secured a Modern Apprenticeship. He worked with this company gaining relevant training, experience and assessment on-site and also attended off-the-job training at the local training school. During his four year apprenticeship Ian also sat and passed his health and safety test, which allowed him to successfully complete his SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5.

Experienced worker route

This route is available to candidates who have been employed as a labourer for several years, but hold no formal qualifications giving them national recognition for their existing skills.

A skills matching exercise would be undertaken, recording the candidate's skills, knowledge, and expertise against the SVQ Units. The candidate would then, under guidance from the assessor, construct a portfolio of evidence to achieve these Units.

Where candidates are unable to generate sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the Units, some planning would be required in order to provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate competence in these areas.

All these arrangements would be agreed by everyone involved and written up into an assessment plan for the candidate.

Example

Angus had served his apprenticeship with a small company but had not had the opportunity to attend college to gain certification for his training. He had a vast knowledge of his trade, and many years practical experience, but no formal qualifications. To enable Angus to apply for work on more sites, he had to have a Construction Operative Registration Card which was only issued on proof of relevant qualifications such as SVQs. To enable him to be eligible for a card he enrolled for the SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5 with a local training provider. The training provider allocated an assessor to Angus, who completed a skills match against the Units to see what expertise Angus already had and to identify any training needs. As a result of this, an assessment plan was drawn up for Angus and agreed by all the parties involved.

With the assistance from his assessor, Angus proceeded to gather evidence to satisfy the Performance Criteria of the Units using observations, witness testimonies, personal statements and practical evidence. He was questioned by his assessor to ensure he had the knowledge and understanding of the performance evidence which was recorded in his portfolio.

After gathering sufficient evidence for all the Units required, Angus could expect to be awarded the SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5.

2 Preparing to assess the SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to begin to go about assessing your candidates for the SVQ. This advice is offered as examples of good practice — you may develop your own approaches to assessing your candidates which also work well.

Your role and your candidate's role

Assessing the SVQ will involve several stages. Both you and the candidate should be clear on your roles in the assessment process before you begin.

Your role

- ◆ ensure candidates understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- ◆ ensure the conditions and resources required for assessment are available
- ◆ help candidates to identify and gather evidence
- ◆ observe and record candidates carrying out the activities described in the standards — records should say what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what it demonstrates
- ◆ assess products of the candidate's own work
- ◆ question candidates and record results
- ◆ help candidates to present evidence
- ◆ authenticate the evidence candidates provide
- ◆ judge evidence and make assessment decisions
- ◆ identify gaps or shortfalls in candidates' competence
- ◆ provide feedback to candidates throughout the assessment process
- ◆ record achievement

Candidates' role

- ◆ prepare for assessment — become familiar with the standards, what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
- ◆ help to identify sources of evidence and how these could be assessed
- ◆ carry out activities, and/or produce products of own work, and/or answer questions
- ◆ gather and present evidence
- ◆ receive and act on feedback from the assessor

Planning

In planning for assessment, you will find it helpful to meet with your candidate and plan what is to be assessed, in what way, and when and where the assessment is to take place. This discussion can be confirmed in the form of an agreed assessment plan between you and your candidate.

You should treat assessment plans as working documents — they can be updated and changed as you review progress with your candidate.

As you are planning assessment, don't forget to make the most of opportunities to *integrate* assessment. This means planning to assess an activity which draws on the contents of different Units or Elements. It can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing your candidate's competence.

If you are a new assessor working towards your Learning and Development Units (the national standards in assessment and verification) you will need copies of completed assessment plans as part of your evidence.

To help you plan for assessment, we have produced an assessment plan which covers Unit VR 235 *Contribute to the Piling Operation*.

You will notice that we have included spaces to enter dates when the assessment plan has been reviewed. Any gaps identified during these reviews should be discussed with your candidates and noted for action in the assessment plan.

Assessment plan

Units	VR 235 Contribute to the Piling Operation				
Activities	Performance Criteria (PC)	Method of assessment/ sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (PC and range)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Interpretation of method statements and drawings related to the work to be carried out. ◆ Work skills to measure, mark out, fit, finish, position and secure. ◆ Use and maintain safely: hand tools, portable power tools and ancillary equipment. ◆ Install or contribute to the installation of bored and/or driven piles and or specialist works to given working instructions using one or more of the following piling methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — sheet — driven — continuous flight auger — rotary — tripod — vibro — diaphragm walling 	<p>PC 1</p> <p>PC 5</p> <p>PC 5</p> <p>PC 5</p>	<p>Observation, witness testimony, product evidence and questions</p>	<p>10/02/12</p>	<p>Witness testimony</p>	<p>VR 643 PC 5</p>

Questioning for Knowledge and Understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					
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Assessor's signature	<u>Robert Watson</u>	1st review due	<u>22/02/12</u>
Candidate's signature	<u>Ian Rogers</u>	2nd review due	<u>22/02/12</u>
Date of agreement	<u>07/01/12</u>	Date of completion	<u>tbc</u>

Selecting methods of assessment

The methods of assessment you use should be valid, reliable and practicable.

- ◆ By *valid* we mean that the assessment method should be appropriate to the standards.
- ◆ By *reliable* we mean that the assessment method should ensure consistent results when used with different candidates, different assessors and on different occasions.
- ◆ By *practicable* we mean that the method ensures that the assessment makes best use of available resources, equipment and time.

Before you assess a candidate, you must make sure that the methods of assessment you have chosen to use, along with any assessment materials (such as questions and sample answers) have been agreed within your centre through its system of internal quality assurance. This system is often called *internal verification* — its purpose is to help to ensure that assessment methods are valid, reliable and practicable.

There are both benefits and challenges when you are assessing SVQs in the workplace, or in conditions of the workplace. When you select methods of assessment, you should try to offer the candidate the benefits of workplace assessment and minimise any potential difficulties.

The benefits might be:

- ◆ performance and product evidence will be valid and can be authenticated
- ◆ resources to be used are readily available
- ◆ familiarity of the work area and equipment, so the candidate is comfortable during the assessment
- ◆ candidate can progress at his/her own pace

The challenges might be:

- ◆ pressure of work
- ◆ location of workplace
- ◆ all criteria not met during the assessment

Example

Agreement might be made to observe a candidate who has to demonstrate how to install piling. If the assessor is working alongside the candidate they would be well placed to observe the candidate's performance, perhaps using a prepared checklist, and to question the candidate afterwards.

Methods of assessment

Assessment may involve a range of assessment methods. For SVQs, some of the most commonly used methods are observation, product evidence, and questioning.

Observation

Observation by an assessor is considered to be the most valid and reliable method of assessment. It can be organised in a variety of ways:

- ◆ working alongside the candidate
- ◆ arranging to visit when naturally-occurring activities are carried out by the candidate
- ◆ arranging for activities to take place

Observation by the assessor can often be supplemented by other types of assessment methods such as questioning. It may be appropriate to ask oral questions of candidates as they carry out naturally-occurring activities. For example:

- ◆ observation of candidate producing product evidence, eg erecting stud partitions supplemented by questions regarding terminology and regulations
- ◆ observation of candidate taking instructions, interpreting information, working as part of a team
- ◆ direct observation of candidate preparing the work area and storing of tools and equipment on completion to cover as many Units and PC as possible

Product evidence

As candidates work towards achieving the SVQ, they will produce evidence in the form of products of their work. The nature of this evidence can vary widely depending on what the candidate's job entails, but examples of product evidence include:

- ◆ a product of work completed by the candidate
- ◆ written evidence in the form of an assessment
- ◆ authenticated photographic evidence

Questioning

Candidates have to show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the SVQs. For these SVQs, Knowledge and Understanding is specified for each Unit. Much of a candidate's knowledge and understanding will be apparent from what they do or produce as part of their work, but this will not always be the case, and questioning can be a useful way of confirming what candidates know and understand.

Questions can be asked in a variety of forms, such as oral questions, short answer written questions, and multiple choice.

You should be careful that the method of questioning does not go beyond the competence required for the SVQ and become a barrier to fair assessment. For example, some candidates will feel more comfortable with oral questions than written.

Q State the most appropriate fire extinguisher to be used on **each** of the following fires:

- (a) natural gas
- (b) electrical
- (c) solid fuel
- (d) flammable liquid

A (a) natural gas — dry powder
(b) electrical — CO₂ or dry powder
(c) solid fuel — water or foam
(d) flammable liquid — foam or CO₂

Q Why is it important to liaise with other occupation personnel?

A To avoid hold-ups and delays, confrontation.

Other methods of assessment

These methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication. See Section 3 for more about authenticating candidates' evidence.

Personal statements

You might sometimes find it helpful to ask a candidate to give an account of why they did an activity in a certain way or how they produced a product of their work. This is often referred to as a *personal statement*. You should take care to ensure that by asking candidates to produce such statements, you are not asking them to demonstrate competence beyond what is required by the standards. You should also be selective in the use of personal statements, and make sure they have not been produced as a substitute to a more valid, reliable and practical method of assessment.

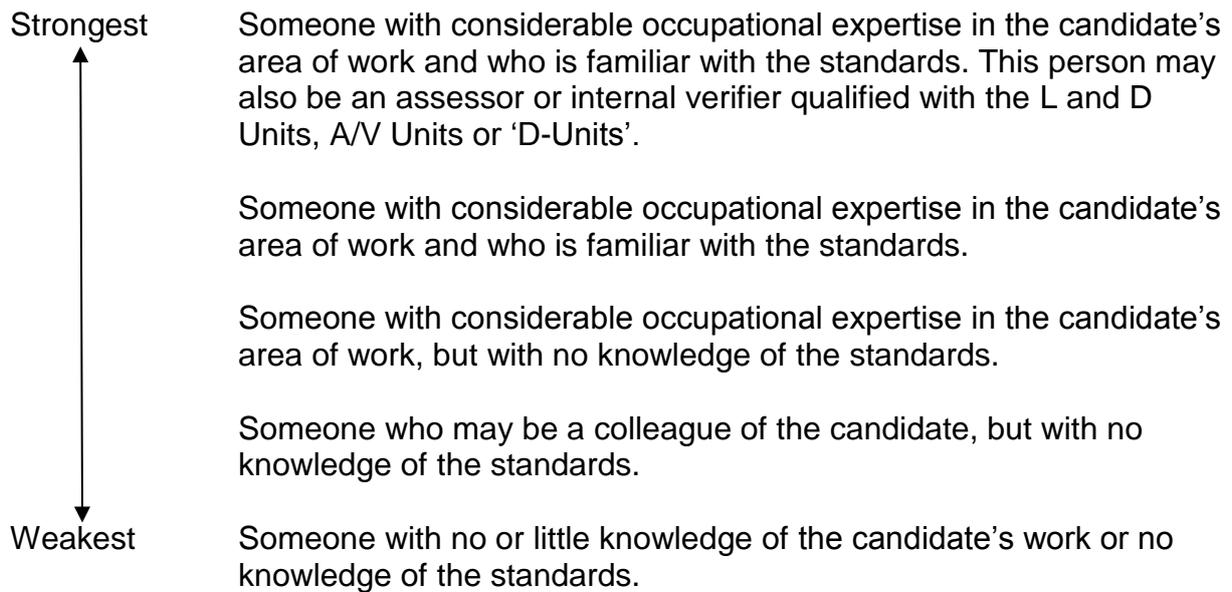
Example

The candidate could use a personal statement in Unit VR 235 *Contribute to the Piling Operation*. You may not have been able to observe the candidate meeting all the Performance Criteria for Piling Operations. The personal statement would allow the candidate to explain the process and procedures as well as demonstrating their grasp of knowledge and understanding.

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you may not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your candidates, but might feel that other people may be able to provide a statement on what your candidates have been doing or producing as part of their work. Statements of this kind are called *witness testimony*, and are often used to support other evidence produced by candidates. If witness testimony is used, you should, ideally, identify witnesses and opportunities for using their testimony as part of assessment planning.

You should bear in mind that the weight of the evidence will vary, depending on the knowledge and expertise of the person providing the witness testimony. You will have to take these factors into account as you make your judgement.



Witness testimony is unlikely to be sufficient in itself for a decision about the candidate's competence, and would normally be supplemented by questioning candidates.

Example

In Unit VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*, candidates are required to 'comply with all workplace health, safety and welfare legislation requirements at all times'. A witness testimony produced by the candidate's supervisor or employer would be very useful, as it could detail the ability of the candidate to conform to legislation in their work role.

Simulation

Simulation is any structured assessment exercise involving a specific task which reproduces real-life situations.

On some occasions, it may not be practical to assess a candidate in real work. Examples might be where the standards require candidates to carry out emergency or contingency procedures, or where client confidentiality is an issue, or where a candidate's job role does not cover all aspects of the qualification.

ConstructionSkills has defined what it regards as simulation, and has specified in the standards when simulation is and is not acceptable. The standards also state when candidates must demonstrate competence in the workplace.

For more details on simulation and what constitutes performance in the workplace, look at the Assessment Strategy on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence can be previous experience or learning, case studies or assignments.

SQA's *Guide to Assessment* (see section 5) has more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable and practicable.

3 Generating evidence

The methods of assessment you use should generate sufficient evidence to demonstrate the candidate's competence.

We described earlier the circumstances in which you might choose to use different methods of assessment. Starting on the next page, this section gives you examples of forms which you can use to record and present evidence of:

- ◆ observation (by the assessor)
- ◆ questions and candidate responses
- ◆ personal statement (produced by the candidate)
- ◆ witness testimony

There are blank forms which you can copy and use in assessment in Appendix 1.

Observation

For observation, note that the form asks you to record the skills and activities observed. This helps you to make a judgement on how the activity was carried out and what it demonstrates.

Observation record

Unit/Element(s) VR 235 Contribute to the Piling Operation

Candidate Ian Rogers

Evidence index number 02

Date of observation 10/02/12

Skills/activities observed	Performance Criteria covered
<p>Contribute to the Piling Operations which will allow the requirements of PC 5, range/scope 10 in particular to be observed.</p> <p>Ian had been given instructions by his supervisor about the job in hand.</p> <p>He demonstrated good organisational skills in preparing the work area and gathering tools and equipment required for the installation of a continuous flight auger.</p> <p>Ian was wearing the appropriate PPE for the work that was to be carried out.</p> <p>Appropriate checks were carried out on the piling equipment.</p> <p>Ian worked from the drawings, specifications and method statements, and communicated with colleagues with regard to the position, set up and securing the rotary drill.</p> <p>Throughout the observation, Ian displayed an awareness of other workers and ensured that the work area was fenced off, kept clear of debris, with all waste disposed of.</p> <p>Ian met all relevant legal requirements in terms of health and safety and codes of practice for Piling Operations throughout the observation.</p> <p>On completion all equipment was washed down and checked for damage.</p> <p>The work was completed within the allocated time and company documentation was completed as required.</p>	<p>PC 1 range 1 PC 3 range 4</p> <p>PC 2 range 2.2</p> <p>PC 5 range 10</p> <p>PC 1 range 1</p> <p>PC 4 range 5 and 7 PC 5 range 8</p> <p>PC 2 range 2</p> <p>PC 5 range 9</p> <p>PC 6 range 10</p>

Knowledge and Understanding apparent from this observation

K1, K2, K4, K5, K7, K9, K12, K14, K15, K16, K17, K18

Knowledge and understanding not apparent from this observation:

K3, K6, K8, K10, K11, K13

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute

VR 01, VR 02, VR 03

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate

Ian, you carried out the task in a professional and assured manner, focusing on the need to meet the specification and adjusting to suit on-site conditions. At all times you worked from instructions and demonstrated good skill and knowledge whilst carrying out the work.

I would ask you to obtain a copy of all non-sensitive documents you made reference to or used today, and place them in the supporting evidence section of your portfolio for evidence cross-referencing purposes.

Knowledge questions to cover K3, K6, K8, K10, K11, and K13 conducted at our next planned visit.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature Robert Watson **Date** 10/02/12

Candidate's signature Ian Rogers **Date** 10/02/12

Questions and candidate responses

This form can be used to record any questions you might ask the candidate to establish what they know and understand. You should note the candidate's responses on this form too.

Note that there is a space near the top of the form for you to record when, where, how and why you asked the questions.

Where you want to give the candidate written questions, this form could also be used.

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit	VR 235 Contribute to the Piling Operation
Element(s)	PC 1, PC 2, PC 3, PC 4, PC 5, PC 6.
Evidence index number	03
Circumstances of assessment	
Following observation the following questions were asked to cover the knowledge and understanding not confirmed by the observation.	
List of questions and candidate's responses	
Q	List four important reasons why the planning and organisation of work is important.
A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Ensures the work is completed on time. 2 Allows efficient use of labour and equipment. 3 Ensures the job will run to budget. 4 Ensures the materials are available when required.
Q	State the most appropriate fire extinguisher to be used on each of the following fires: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) natural gas (b) electrical (c) solid fuel (d) flammable liquid
A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) natural gas — dry powder (b) electrical — CO₂ or dry powder (c) solid fuel — water or foam (d) flammable liquid — foam or CO₂
Q	State three checks that should be carried out to ensure efficiency when taking delivery of resources.
A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Check delivery note, to match resources. 2 Place resources where they will be free from and damage and theft. 3 Inform supervisor and pass delivery note to the office.
Q	State who normally has some responsibility for security in the workplace.
A	All personnel.

Assessor's signature Robert Watson **Date** 11/02/12

Candidate's signature Ian Rogers **Date** 11/02/12

Candidate's personal statement

If a personal statement is being used as evidence, it should be completed by the candidate. The statement should record what they did, how and why they chose to carry out an activity or produce work in a certain way. Where other people may have been present during an activity and they may be able to provide witness testimony, the candidate should record how the statement links to other evidence in the column provided.

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, Performance Criteria, Performance statements, scope covered
08/03/12	05	<p>I arrived on-site and signed in with the site agent. I then gathered the tools and equipment required for the piling operation.</p> <p>Before starting I carried out checks on the equipment before use.</p> <p>Working from the drawings, specifications and method statements with colleagues, we positioned, fixed and secured the machinery in place.</p> <p>I am aware of other trades and ensured that the work area had protection to stop others entering whilst we were working.</p> <p>I make sure I work to all relevant legal requirements in terms of health and safety and codes of practice for piling.</p> <p>On completion I removed all machinery, tools and debris from the work area and stored or disposed of them correctly.</p>	Witness testimony (evidence no 09)	VR 235, PC 1, PC 2, PC 3, PC 4, PC 5, PC 6.

Candidate's signature Ian Rogers

Date 08/03/12

Witness testimony

Remember when you begin to use witness testimony that it must be capable of being authenticated — even if the testimony itself is being used to authenticate a candidate's claim to competence.

To make sure the witness testimony is genuine, you must ensure that you have a record of who is acting as a witness, their relationship to the candidate (eg supervisor, client) address, telephone number and the date. There are spaces for this information in the form.

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level	SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction) SCQF level 5
Candidate's name	Ian Rogers
Evidence index no	09
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any)	05
Element(s)	VR 235, PC 1, PC 2, PC 3, PC 4, PC 5, PC 6.
Date of evidence	08/03/12
Name of witness	Mr Gordon
Designation/relationship to candidate	Site Agent
Details of testimony	
<p>Ian arrived on site and signed into the site register. He was given instructions and drawings by myself. He then collected his tools and equipment from his container and commenced work. Ian was positioning and securing his piling equipment, with support from his colleagues. He wore relevant protective equipment at all times on site.</p> <p>Ian completed the task in a competent and safe manner. He cleaned up the waste and returned the tools to his container. On leaving the site he gave me an update on progress and signed out.</p> <p>During the contract Ian overcame a problem with the piling machine, which he resolved with his company.</p> <p>Contact 07123 456789</p>	

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature Archie Gordon **Date** 08/03/12

Witness (please select the appropriate box):

- Holds L and D Unit 9D/9D1, A1/A2 or D32/D33 qualifications
- Is familiar with the SVQ standards to which the candidate is working

Filling the gaps

There may come a time when your candidate has provided evidence for most of the Unit (or SVQ), but there are some gaps. For example, you may find that certain situations, such as handling contingencies, have not arisen during assessment. Often these will relate to dealing with health and safety issues, or unexpected problems with workflow like delays in receiving information from another part of the organisation.

Guidance and support to candidates

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — feedback should be ongoing, clear and constructive. Feedback should be given against the national standards by relating it to the evidence provided, including the knowledge specifications.

Where there are any shortfalls in a candidate's competence, you should discuss these with your candidate and make plans for re-assessment.

Judging candidate evidence and making an assessment decision

In judging candidate evidence, you must be satisfied that your candidates can work consistently to the required standard, and that the evidence they have produced is their own. You must consider whether your candidate understands and applies the knowledge evidence and how this links to performance evidence.

Evidence must:

- ◆ be relevant to the SVQ
- ◆ be authentic
- ◆ show current competence
- ◆ be sufficient to help you form a decision about the candidate's competence

Insufficient evidence

You have to judge whether the candidate has produced enough evidence required by the standards for you to reach a decision about their evidence.

Where there is insufficient evidence, you should say this to your candidate. You should tell them that it is not that they are not yet competent — there is simply not enough evidence on which to make a decision.

In this situation, your feedback to your candidates must help them produce more evidence and/or plan for further assessment.

Authenticating candidates' evidence

Authentication is required where you have not observed candidates' performance at first hand.

You can check whether a candidate has produced evidence which they claim shows their competence by questioning them or, if this is appropriate, asking them to produce a personal statement, using witness testimony, or seeking peer reports from other colleagues of the candidate.

Example

Authentication will be required when a candidate has produced a piece of evidence that could appear to have been produced by anyone. For example, a candidate may have constructed a product of work. It may require the use of a personal statement, candidate questioning, witness testimony or photographic evidence to confirm that the work is genuinely the candidates own.

4 Recording achievement

You should retain all evidence — clearly referenced — for internal and external verification.

The candidate's evidence is normally kept in a file, often called a *portfolio*. These documents help you and your candidates to collect, present and cross-reference the evidence to the national standards. They are also a means of recording your assessment decisions, and they tell an External Verifier what stage a candidate has reached in achieving the SVQ.

In the Piling Operations (Construction) SVQ, it is strongly recommended that you use these nationally devised recording documents. You can however, choose to use your own recording material.

Recording documents do not need to be paper-based — it is possible to use an electronic format for collecting and structuring the evidence. Whatever format you and your candidates choose to use, the documents must show what evidence was generated, the assessment decisions you made, how the evidence meets the standards, and where the evidence can be located. You should avoid photocopying items simply to put them in a portfolio — a clear explanation of where the evidence can be found (for example, in a filing cabinet) may be sufficient for the External Verifier to follow it up and include it in the visit.

There are various reasons why record-keeping is so important:

- ◆ it provides a way of tracking a candidate's progress in achieving an SVQ
- ◆ it helps candidates to make claims for certification of their competence
- ◆ internal verifiers and External Verifiers use the records to sample assessment decisions
- ◆ it helps us to monitor the quality assurance of our qualifications

If your candidates' evidence is incomplete, or cannot be located, or if there is inaccurate cross-referencing to the standards, there is a risk that an internal verifier or External Verifier will be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

To help you and your candidate present evidence and record your assessment decision, we have provided examples of the forms which you and your candidate might use to compile the portfolio.

- ◆ Completing the Unit progress record
- ◆ Using the evidence index
- ◆ Completing the Element achievement record

These forms are also used in SQA's portfolio.

Completing the Unit progress record

You should complete this form each time your candidate achieves a Unit from the SVQ by adding your signature and the date next to the relevant Unit.

At this stage, candidates should make sure they have completed the recording documents correctly and that their evidence can be easily located. Only then should they circle the relevant Unit number at the top of the form. This enables both of you to see at a glance what stage the candidate is at in their SVQ.

Unit progress record

Qualification and level SVQ2 Piling Operations (Construction): Piling Operative
SCQF level 5

Candidate Ian Rogers

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in five **mandatory** Units and two **optional** Units.

Unit checklist

Mandatory	VR 641	VR 642	VR 643	VR 235	VR 402		
Optional	VR 214	VR 233	VR 236	VR 239	VR 338	VR 400	

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date
VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare	<i>R Watson</i>	16/05/12
VR 642	Conform to Productive Work Practices		
VR 643	Move, Handle or Store Resources		
VR 235	Contribute to the Piling Operation		
VR 402	Slinging and Signalling the Movement of Loads		

Optional Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date
VR 214	Allocate and Monitor the Use of Plant, Machinery and Equipment		
VR 233	Carry Out Mud, Slurry or Fluid Plant Operations		
VR 236	Carry Out Tremie Operations		
VR 239	Guide Formation of Piles		
VR 388	Operate Plant or Machinery to Extract		
VR 400	Operate Specialised Powered Tools and Equipment		

Using the index of evidence

The purpose of the index of evidence is to help you locate and work through the candidate's evidence. It should give you a summary of what evidence the candidate has collected, and where (eg in a portfolio) it can be found.

The index of evidence should be completed by entering:

- ◆ the index number for each piece of evidence
- ◆ a description of each piece of evidence
- ◆ the place or location where it can be found
- ◆ the initials of the internal verifier and the date (if they have sampled the candidate's evidence)

Ideally, it should be candidates themselves (with your support and encouragement) who complete the index.

You must make sure that the information in the evidence index is accurate when your candidates' portfolios are presented for assessment and verification — particularly the information about where the evidence can be located. This is important because we suggest that anything which has been produced as day-to-day work is kept in its normal location, but anything which has been produced through assessment for the SVQ, eg observation checklists, is filed in the candidate's portfolio. In this way, your candidate can avoid having to photocopy work products just for the sake of including them in a portfolio. It also means that evidence produced as a result of assessment is kept safely in a central file.

If the index of evidence is not completed with an accurate description and location of the evidence, there is a risk that an internal verifier or External Verifier might be unable to confirm your assessment decisions.

Completing the Element achievement record

To help you and your candidates cross-reference the evidence to the standards of the SVQs, we have provided records similar to those produced in the SQA portfolio. Use one record for each Element. The grids should be completed by:

- ◆ entering the evidence index number in the first column
- ◆ giving a brief description of the evidence in the second
- ◆ ticking the relevant boxes for the Performance Criteria (or statements of competence as they are sometimes known)
- ◆ entering the areas of knowledge and understanding the piece of evidence covers

If integrated assessment is used (linking PC or Elements across different Units) the evidence should be cross-referenced back to the relevant Units.

We have provided a completed example to show how to use the record.

Element achievement record

Unit VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Evidence Index No.	Description of Evidence	Performance Criteria				Range/Scope relating to Performance Criteria					
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Performance observation	✓	✓				✓	✓			
15	Performance observation				✓			✓		✓	
16	Performance observation (simulated)			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
18	Oral questions/ responses										
22	Written knowledge questions/responses										
38	Witness testimony			✓	✓						✓

Unit VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Evidence Index No.	Description of Evidence	Knowledge and Understanding												Range/Scope relating to Knowledge and Understanding							
		K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	K11	K12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	Performance observation		✓												✓	✓			✓		✓
15	Performance observation							✓	✓								✓			✓	
16	Performance observation (simulated)	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			✓				✓		✓	
18	Oral questions/ responses		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓				✓			
22	Written knowledge Questions/responses	✓		✓																	
38	Witness testimony											✓	✓			✓	✓				

Unit VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Notes/comments

James carried out the tasks in a confident manner demonstrating the ability to recognise problems and come up with a solution, ensuring he still conformed to the specification. He showed good communication skills and the ability to follow company procedures.

The candidate has satisfied the assessor and internal verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate's signature	<u>James Cameron</u>	Date	<u>12/07/12</u>
Assessor's signature	<u>Robert Watson</u>	Date	<u>12/07/12</u>
Internal verifier's signature	<u>Alan Green</u>	Date	<u>11/08/12</u>

5 Further information

What else should I read?

The publications listed here provide additional information on how to implement SVQs. Details of these and other SQA publications are available on our website at **www.sqa.org.uk** on the 'Publications, Sales and Downloads' section. They can be ordered from SQA's Business Development and Customer Support Team — telephone 0303 333 0330. Please note that there may be a charge for some of these publications.

Assessor/Verifier Units: assessment guidance

External Verification: A Guide for Centres

Guide to Assessment

Introduction to Assessment Arrangements for Schools and Colleges

SQA's Quality Framework: a guide for centres

Operational Help Centre

The Operational Guide for Centres has been replaced by the online Operational Help Centre on **www.sqa.org.uk**

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

Unit progress record

Qualification and level _____

Candidate _____

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in xx **mandatory** Units and xx **optional** Units.

Unit checklist

Mandatory							
Optional							

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date

Optional Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date

Element achievement record

Unit

Evidence Index No.	Description of Evidence	Performance Criteria				Range/Scope relating to Performance Criteria					
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6

Unit

Evidence Index No.	Description of Evidence	Knowledge and Understanding												Range/Scope relating to Knowledge and Understanding								
		K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	K11	K12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Unit

Notes/comments

The candidate has satisfied the assessor and internal verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate's signature _____

Date _____

Assessor's signature _____

Date _____

Internal verifier's signature _____

Date _____

Assessment plan

Units					
Elements					
Activities	Performance Criteria (PC)	Method of assessment/ Sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (Performance Criteria and Range)
Questioning for Knowledge and Understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					

Assessor's signature _____

1st review due _____

Candidate's signature _____

2nd review due _____

Date of agreement _____

Date of completion _____

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, Performance Criteria, Performance statements, scope covered

Candidate's signature _____

Date _____

Observation record

Unit/Element(s) _____

Candidate _____

Evidence index number _____

Date of observation _____

Skills/activities observed	Performance Criteria covered

Knowledge and Understanding apparent from this observation

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature _____ **Date** _____

Candidate's signature _____ **Date** _____

Record of questions and candidate's answers

Unit	
Element(s)	
Evidence index number	
Circumstances of assessment	
List of questions and candidate's responses	
Q	
A	

Assessor's signature _____ **Date** _____

Candidate's signature _____ **Date** _____