

Assessment Strategy	
Qualification Title(s)	SVQ in Advanced Skin Therapy Practices at SCQF level 8
Developed by	SkillsActive/Habia
Approved by ACG	
Version	1

Assessment Strategy for SVQ in Advanced Skin Therapy Practices at SCQF Level 8

About Habia

Habia is the hair and beauty industry authority and the standard setting body (SSB) for hair, beauty, nails, barbering, wellbeing and aesthetics sector and a subsidiary of Skills Active the Sector Skills Council for active leisure, learning and wellbeing. Our role is to create the standards that form the basis of all qualifications in hair and beauty including SVQs and Apprenticeships, as well as industry codes of practice.

Purpose of the assessment strategy

This Assessment Strategy has been produced by Habia in partnership with industry partners and awarding body partners to ensure the SVQ in Advanced Skin Therapy Practices which has been developed after the approval of SkillsActive's review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Non-surgical cosmetic procedures (2021-2024), has credibility in the industry. It outlines the principles and requirements to be applied to the assessment of knowledge, understanding, performance and competence for these qualifications and associated units.

The following sections outline Habia's industry specific principles in regard to:

- *External quality control of assessment*
- *Workplace assessment, inclusive of the use of simulation*
- *Assessment of knowledge and understanding*
- *Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes.*

These principles are in addition to the requirements that awarding bodies must adhere to for the delivery of qualifications, as required by the relevant qualification regulator for Scotland (SQA Accreditation). Awarding bodies may specify additional requirements for Centres, as they consider necessary in order to enhance the principles and quality of assessment.

This strategy supersedes and replaces all previous assessment strategies and supplementary guidance.

1. External quality control of assessment

The monitoring and standardisation of assessment decisions must be achieved through robust assessment, internal and external quality assurance systems. These must be reliable, transparent and fit for purpose and, must comply with the requirements of the qualification regulator.

1.1 Internal Quality Assurance

Centres must, in line with regulatory guidance, have an effective internal quality assurance strategy and processes in place to ensure learners are assessed fairly and consistently, and that standards are being met.

To ensure all assessment activities are valid and effective and that Assessors decisions are accurate, a Centre's internal quality assurance process should:

- *Identify effective Internal Quality Assurers who are responsible for implementing these processes. If necessary, identify a coordinating Internal Verifier who manages the process*
- *Produce an effective internal verification policy*
- *Produce and maintain a clear audit trail of decision making and action*
- *Produce an internal verification schedule of assessment activities and assessment decisions*
- *Produce a training and standardisation plan for all those involved in assessment and internal verification*
- *Produce an improvement plan*

Internal Quality Assurers should observe Assessors performing learner assessments at regular intervals according to awarding body guidelines, risk rating and experience of the Assessor. The reliability, validity and authenticity of evidence must be checked during these observations.

An Internal Quality Assurer cannot internally quality assure assessment decisions they have made.

1.2 External Quality Assurance

To ensure successful monitoring and standardisation of the assessment activities made by a Centre, the assessment decisions made by an Assessor, and the Centre's internal quality assurance process, an awarding body must have in place a robust external quality assurance system with clear and effective arrangements to ensure consistency in quality. The mechanisms required to achieve this are outlined by the qualification regulator.

In addition to the qualification regulator's requirements all external quality assurance reports and other data relating to a Centre must be reviewed by the awarding body. Where any risks are identified relating to the quality control of assessment the awarding body must have in place an effective risk management and rating system to determine, depending on a Centre's level of risk, the appropriate external quality assurance, monitoring, support and control that should be put in place.

1.3 Risk Assessment

All awarding bodies are required to implement effective risk management and rating systems to help protect the integrity of the qualification, safeguard assessment and verification processes and ensure standards are maintained. These systems should also focus on:

- Conflict of interest

Any personal or professional relationship between Learners, Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and External Quality Assurers should be declared.

- Adherence to Centre approval criteria

Centres should be continually monitored in addition to its delivery to ensure that the integrity of the qualification is maintained.

Where risk is identified through these systems, awarding bodies will need to act accordingly to ensure the Centre is performing to an acceptable level. This may include, but is not limited to:

- *Inspection/spot visit(s)*
- *Additional monitoring of assessment activities and/or internal verification processes*

- *Verifying a sample of learners work from each Assessor over an agreed period of time*
- *Training and development*
- *Or other action appropriate to the risk*

Awarding bodies should be able to demonstrate a risk assessment has been carried out for each Centre and a strategy to minimise any risk identified has been implemented.

2. Assessment Environment

Learners must have received sufficient training to prepare them for assessment to enable them to demonstrate competence of the standards required. Evidence should be valid, naturally occurring and collected through performance in the workplace.

It is acknowledged not all assessment environments are the same, therefore assessment conditions may not be identical. However, to safeguard the integrity of the qualification and ensure a robust and consistent approach to assessment the assessor must ensure the assessment conditions reflect, as far as possible, those to which the learner is expected to work and should not put the learner under unnecessary pressure.

A holistic approach towards the collection of evidence for the qualification is encouraged. The focus should be assessing activities generated in a realistic working environment, through naturally occurring evidence, rather than focusing on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show the learner meets all of the performance and knowledge criteria across the scope/range consistently. It should be clear where each criteria has been covered and achieved.

2.1. Units where simulation is permitted

Simulation may be undertaken where it is not possible or practical to observe the learner's performance in a real work environment. This may include situations that are high risk, rare, time-sensitive, or ethically sensitive. Any simulation must be realistic, fully reflective of workplace conditions, and aligned with the performance criteria and knowledge and understanding criteria and should be agreed in advance by the assessor and learner at the assessment planning stage. Those involved in the assessment process must be satisfied

that the use of simulation does not compromise the rigor and integrity of assessment. Evidence gathered through simulation must be valid, authentic, and sufficient to support sound assessment decisions.

This only applies to: -

SKANSC15 Complication management for non-surgical cosmetic procedures

However naturally occurring evidence should be used wherever possible.

3. Assessment of knowledge and understanding

The knowledge and understanding required by a learner to support performance in the workplace is detailed within the knowledge and understanding criteria of the Advanced Skin Therapy Practices NOS.

It is the responsibility of awarding bodies to ensure centres are aware of these and have sufficient resources and arrangements in place to support learners to achieve these requirements of this qualification.

A range of assessment methods where knowledge is not evidenced through naturally occurring means may be used to evaluate learners' knowledge, ensuring validity, reliability, and inclusivity. These methods may include: -

- *Short response questions*
- *Extended response questions*
- *Written assignment*
- *Professional discussion*
- *Questioning*
- *Reflective diary on own practice in an appropriate working environment*
- *Case studies*

The chosen methods should be appropriate to the level and subject of the qualification, aligned with the knowledge requirements and adapted to suit individual learner needs where necessary. All evidence gathered must be sufficient to support informed and robust assessment decisions.

3.1 Supporting evidence

Evidence produced by learners must be valid, sufficient, reliable, authentic and current and relate directly to specific criteria. Types of acceptable evidence are valid, but are not limited to:

- *Direct observation of performance by assessor*
- *Work products produced/completed by the learner*
- *Questioning*
- *Professional discussion*
- *Reflective diary on own practice in an appropriate working environment*
- *Expert witness testimony*
- *Written assignments/projects*

3.2 Evidence Recording

It is recognised that alternative forms of recording assessment evidence will evolve using information and communications technologies including e portfolios. Regardless of the form of recording used, the guiding principle must be that information about practice must comply with legal requirements and best sector practice in relation to confidentiality. **All evidence** must also be traceable for internal and external quality assurance purposes. Additionally, assessors must ensure they are satisfied the evidence presented is traceable, auditable and authenticated and meets the requirements set out in this strategy.

4. Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes

The occupational expertise of those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes is key to ensure valid, fair and reliable assessment. Therefore, the integrity and professionalism of this workforce is of paramount importance and those involved must be given sufficient time to carry out their role effectively. Assessment centres will be responsible for maintaining up-to-date information on assessors, internal quality assurers and expert witnesses and for ensuring the currency of the competence of all those involved in the assessment process.

4.1 Assessor

The assessor must be:

- Occupationally competent

The assessor must hold:

- Beauty Therapy qualification at minimum SCQF Level 7 or above or equivalent recognised qualification

and

- must have sufficient, current, and relevant operational experience within the industry, directly related to the units being assessed. This experience must be clearly evidenced and of enough depth to ensure effectiveness and reliability when contributing to assessment decisions and judgements.

Where individuals have qualifications other than the above, their Centre should contact their awarding body to determine the acceptability of their qualification(s).

4.2 Familiar with the qualification

The Assessor must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.

4.3 Credible

The Assessor should have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector.

4.4 CPD (Continuous professional development)

30 hours of vocationally related CPD is required annually pro-rata based on a 35 hour or above working week (1st September – 31st August) which must be evidenced and recorded. However, a minimum of 7 hours CPD in any 12 month period must be carried out by all part time assessors. CPD hours for new assessors shall be measured from the date their duties commence.

When evidencing and recording CPD activity, reference should be made to the outcome(s) and how it is intended to be implemented in practice. CPD is the individual's responsibility to complete in conjunction and agreement with the Centre who has responsibility to meet the quality requirements of the awarding body and regulator.

4.5. Assessor Qualifications

The Assessor must hold or be working towards; a valid Assessor qualification based on the Learning and Development National Occupational Standards.

NB: Holders of predecessor Assessor qualifications must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

A list of acceptable assessor and verifier qualifications is available on SQA Accreditation website.

Awarding bodies may approve individuals to assess this qualification who have not yet achieved their Assessor qualification. However, these individuals must be working towards the qualification and meet the other requirements. Should a trainee Assessor be used they must be fully supported and have their assessment decisions countersigned by a qualified Assessor to ensure the learner has achieved the required standard.

5. Internal Quality Assurance

The internal quality assurer must be:

- Occupationally competent

The internal quality assurer must hold

- Beauty Therapy qualification at SCQF Level 7 or above or equivalent recognised qualification

and

must have sufficient, current, and relevant operational experience within the industry, directly related to the units being assessed. This experience must be clearly evidenced and of enough depth to ensure effectiveness and reliability when contributing to assessment decisions and judgements.

Where individuals have qualifications other than the above, their Centre should contact their awarding body to determine the acceptability of their qualification(s).

5.1 Familiar with the qualification

The internal quality assurer must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.

5.2 Credible

The internal quality assurer should have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector.

5.3 CPD (Continuous professional development)

30 hours CPD is required annually pro-rata based on a 35 hour or above working week (1st September – 31st August) which must be evidenced and recorded. However, a minimum of 7 hours CPD in any 12 month period must be carried out by all part time quality assurers.

CPD hours for new internal quality assurers shall be measured from the date their duties commence.

When recording CPD activity, reference should be made to the outcome(s) and how it is intended to be implemented in practice. CPD is the individual's responsibility to complete in conjunction and agreement with the Centre who has responsibility to meet the quality requirements of the awarding body and regulator.

5.4 Internal Quality Assurer Qualifications

The Internal Quality Assurer must hold or be working towards an Internal Quality Assurance qualification based on Learning and Development National Occupational Standards.

In addition, the Internal Quality Assurer must also hold a valid Assessor qualification.

NB: Holders of predecessor Internal Quality Assurance qualifications must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

A list of acceptable assessor and verifier qualifications is available on SQA Accreditation website.

Awarding bodies may approve individuals to internally quality assure this qualification who have not yet achieved their Internal Quality Assurance qualification. However, these individuals must be working towards the qualification and meet the other requirements. Should a trainee Internal Quality Assurer be used they must be fully supported and have their decisions countersigned by a qualified Internal Quality Assurer.

6. Expert Witness

The nature of work to be assessed may include situations of a sensitive nature which require confidentiality. There may also be occasions when there are no occupationally competent assessors for occupationally specific units.

An expert witness may be used to provide evidence of a learner's performance in real work environments where direct observation by the assessor is not possible or practical.

While the expert witness can provide supportive, credible, and informed evidence, the final assessment decision remains the sole responsibility of the qualified assessor, who must judge whether the learner has met the required criteria based on all available evidence.

Evidence from expert witnesses must meet the requirements of validity, reliability and authenticity. Expert witnesses must be inducted by the centre so they are familiar with those units for which they are to provide expert witness evidence.

Expert witnesses must:

- be occupationally competent in the area of practice to which the NOS being assessed apply
- have a working knowledge of the relevant National Occupational Standards for the competences on which their expertise is based
- evidence continuous professional development relevant to the area of practice for which they are assessing competence
- have either a qualification in the assessment of workplace performance or a professional work role which involves evaluating the everyday practice of staff
- understand the centre's recording requirements and the necessary skills required to provide evidence.

An Expert Witness testimony should only be used as an additional method of assessment to supplement the observations carried out by the assessor.

7. External Quality Assurer

The external quality assurer must be

- Occupationally competent

The external quality assurer must hold

- Beauty Therapy qualification at SCQF Level 7 or above or equivalent recognised qualification

and

must have sufficient, current, and relevant operational experience within the industry, directly related to the units being assessed. This experience must be clearly evidenced and of enough depth to ensure effectiveness and reliability when contributing to assessment decisions and judgements.

Where individuals have qualifications other than the above, their awarding body should determine the acceptability of their qualification(s).

7.1 Familiar with the qualification

The external quality assurer must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification.

7.2 Credible

The external quality assurer should have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector.

7.3 CPD (Continuous professional development)

30 hours CPD is required annually pro-rata based on a 35 hour or above working week (1st September – 31st August) which must be evidenced and recorded. However, a minimum of 7 hours CPD in any 12 month period must be carried out by all quality assurers.

CPD hours for external quality assurers should be based on external quality assurance activities undertaken from the date their duties commence.

When recording CPD activity, reference should be made to the outcome(s) and how it is intended to be implemented in practice. CPD is the individual's responsibility to complete in conjunction and agreement with the awarding body who has responsibility to meet the quality requirements of the awarding body and regulator.

7.4 External Quality Assurer Qualifications

The External Quality Assurer must hold or be working toward a valid External Quality Assurer qualification based on Learning and Development National Occupational Standards.

In addition, the External Quality Assurer must hold, valid Assessor and Internal Quality Assurer qualifications.

NB: Holders of predecessor External Quality Assurer qualifications must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development.

A list of acceptable Assessor and Quality Assurance qualifications is available on the SQA Accreditation website.

Assessor qualifications

- Learning and Development Unit 9DI – Assess Workplace Competences using Direct and Indirect Methods; **or**
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF/RQF); **or**
- Equivalent predecessor qualification (those holding a predecessor qualification must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development).

Internal Quality Assurance qualifications

- L&D11 Internally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment; **or**
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF/RQF); **or**
- Equivalent predecessor qualification (those holding a predecessor qualification must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development).

External Quality Assurance qualifications

- L&D12 Externally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment; **or**
- Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF/RQF); **or**

- Equivalent predecessor qualification (those holding a predecessor qualification must work to the current National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development).

For further information on equivalent/predecessor qualifications - a list of acceptable Assessor and Quality Assurance qualifications is available on the SQA Accreditation website.