



Assessor's Guidelines for the SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)

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About this guide

This guide provides some practical examples of how to assess your candidates for the **SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)**. 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 SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)

The SVQ in Stonemasonry (Construction) has been developed by ConstructionSkills and is intended for people in employment as stonemasons.

These people will require skills and knowledge in the trade of stonemasonry, in team building and communication, as well as all aspects of health and safety and COSHH regulations to pass the health and safety test.

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, civil engineering sites, colleges and appropriate training centres.

Structure of the SVQs

This section lists the Units which form the SVQ in Stonemasonry (Construction).

SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction) (GF21 23)

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
F7A9 04			VR 209	Confirm Work Activities and Resources for the Work
F7AA 04			VR 210	Develop and Maintain Good Working Relationships
F7AB 04			VR 211	Confirm the Occupational Method of Work
FN2J 04			VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
B664 04				Integrative Assessment in the Construction Industry

Plus one of the following optional routes

Banker Masonry route

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
DY8X 04			VR 199	Produce Complex Templets and Moulds
DY8W 04			VR 200	Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components

Optional Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
H0WC 04			VR 207	Produce Complex Architectural Stone Enrichments
F00Y 04			VR 402	Slinging and Signalling the Movement of Loads

Stone Fixing route

Mandatory Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
F00D 04			VR 201	Set Out Complex Stonemasonry Structures
DY0J 04			VR 202	Erect Complex Stonemasonry Structures
F004 04			VR 208	Repair Complex Stonemasonry Structures

Optional Units

SQA ref	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SSC ref	Title
H0WD 04			VR 227	Install Stone Flooring
F00Y 04			VR 402	Slinging and Signalling the Movement of Loads
H0WE 04			VR 548	Prepare and Mix Lime Mortars

An Assessment Strategy for the SVQ

As part of their/its review of the SVQ(s), 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 as an apprentice stonemason. They will attend a college of further education for a prescribed period of time during their apprenticeship.

Whilst attending college, candidates will generate all the necessary evidence to meet the requirements of the SVQ Units in their chosen occupational area.

In addition to this, candidates will be required to sit and pass a health and safety test and practical skills test, both administered by ConstructionSkills.

Example

Robert had just left school and was deciding which career to follow. He had taken qualifications at school but felt he was more a practical type of person. This had been confirmed when he studied the Scottish Progression Awards in Construction and had particularly enjoyed the bricklaying part of the course. With this in mind he contacted

ConstructionSkills and completed an application form. He was invited to sit the ConstructionSkills learning exercise which he passed at a level suitable for him to pursue a career in bricklaying or stonemasonry. He contacted some local companies and managed to secure a Modern Apprenticeship as a stonemason with one of them. He had to attend the local FE college on a block release basis to complete his 'off the job' training whilst also gaining relevant work experience in his trade with his company.

During his four year apprenticeship Robert also sat and passed his health and safety test and practical skills test which allowed him to successfully complete his SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction).

Experienced worker

This route is available to candidates who have been employed as a stonemason for several years but hold no formal qualifications which would give them national recognition for the skills they already have.

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 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

Joe is 38 years old. On leaving school at 16 he had served an apprenticeship with a small rural builder but had not gained any formal qualifications during this period. After serving his time he had been employed as a stonemason in the building industry. He has gained wide experience in the private and public sector and has held his place in his current stonemasonry squad for about four years.

With the prospect of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card becoming a prerequisite to hold down his employment in the construction industry, Joe found himself in the position of having to be registered for an SVQ in Stonemasonry. This would enable him to access his CSCS card. Joe was registered by his company as a candidate for this award which was to be delivered by the On Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) method. Joe was quite worried about this as he had not been in any formal training or education for over 20 years.

Joe attended an initial meeting with his appointed assessor from a local training organisation. This meeting was conducted on a one-to-one basis and Joe completed the Skill and Knowledge Scan for the following Unit:

- ◆ Unit VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*
- ◆ Unit VR 199 *Produce Complex Templets and Moulds*
- ◆ Unit VR 200 *Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components*

The assessor gave Joe some initial guidance and advice on how to collect evidence and construct a portfolio to achieve the mandatory SVQ Units which Joe felt very comfortable with. The optional Units which had been identified as being the preferable ones would require some planning in order to provide him with the opportunities to demonstrate competence in these areas, or alternatively to provide any training deemed necessary.

The assessor then arranged to visit the construction site that Joe was currently working on to make some initial observations and assessment for the relevant Unit for whatever site activity Joe was undertaking during the site visit.

It was acknowledged at this point that it would be very difficult to predict exactly what activity would be occurring on any site visit and that assessment plans would have to be modified to meet natural occurrences on the sites. Joe's current site was a repair and maintenance project in a listed building using traditional construction methods, which should provide opportunities to generate evidence for the initial Units as identifies.

The remaining Units were reviewed and it was acknowledged that in the immediate short term it was unlikely that Joe would get the opportunity to generate evidence for every aspect of these Units.

It was therefore agreed to draft an assessment and training plan which would include, where necessary, Joe's attendance at a local FE college and/or in-house training, in order to provide coverage of the full scope of Performance and Knowledge Evidence for the outstanding Units in the SVQ. This plan was agreed by all concerned and formally written up for Joe.

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 Units VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*, and VR 200 *Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components*.

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 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare VR 200 Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components.				
Activities	Performance Criteria (PC)	Method of assessment/ sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other Units (PC and range)
It is planned that the candidate will be observed preparing and working a stone, cutting a cyma recta moulding to include an external mitre, internal mitre and ashlar stop. This stone component is to replace a weathered/damaged stone in the listed building.	VR 200 Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components (all PC covered)	Observation, product evidence and oral questions.	31 Jan 2012	Candidate's portfolio or work-based recording.	VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare (PC 1–3)
During this practical activity observation, note will be taken of any other relevant integrated activities to include, for example: reading drawings, storing and stacking of building materials, methods used to lift stones and other heavy objects, protecting surrounding areas, keeping working area tidy, using PPE and taking care of tools and equipment.	VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare (PC 1–4)	Written questions and observation. Observation and oral questions.	31 Jan 2012	Candidate portfolio or work-based recording.	

Questioning for Knowledge and Understanding not apparent from performance to be identified from 2nd review					
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Assessor's signature	<u>Mark Cameron</u>	1st review due	<u>28/02/12</u>
Candidate's signature	<u>Robert Reid</u>	2nd review due	<u>28/03/12</u>
Date of agreement	<u>31/01/12</u>	Date of completion	<u></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:

- ◆ resources are readily available
- ◆ direction on assembly
- ◆ candidate can progress at own speed
- ◆ performance and product evidence will be valid and can be authenticated

The challenges might be:

- ◆ candidates being too familiar in the context of a construction site
- ◆ pressure of work/productivity on the site
- ◆ candidates constantly moving around sites, making it difficult to locate them
- ◆ timing visits for specific assessments
- ◆ candidates changing companies regularly

Example

You might agree with the candidate an assessment plan to visit his site when it is anticipated he will be involved in preparing and cutting a stone to replace a damaged one in an existing building. This situation should allow you to observe the candidate's performance in a variety of the skills and allow him to demonstrate his knowledge. This type of observation is considered to be the best method of assessing candidates.

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. For example, it may be appropriate to ask oral questions of candidates as they carry out naturally-occurring activities.

Example

An assessor could observe a candidate preparing product evidence by marking out and measuring a stone at the very commencement of a job. This could include selecting an appropriate stone, measuring, marking and the sequence of roughing down.

- ◆ 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.

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 cutting of moulds on a block of stone, or the building of models in a workshop area.

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** What would you do if you observed an abrasive cutting disc on a power tool prior to use with a fracture running through it?
- A** Disconnect the power, then have the abrasive cutting disc replaced and discard the blade.
- Q** When roughing down a block of stone, what sequence would you use for hand-held tools?
- A** Usually I would use the hammer point first, followed with the mallet point, then the teeth tool and finally the chisel.

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

Two weeks ago a load of facing stones arrived at the site. The gaffer was off work at a funeral that day so I checked the driver's delivery note and showed him where we needed the stones placed. I made sure the different sizes of stones were stacked separately and were located as near as possible to where they were required. I also made sure that none of the unloaded stones was causing any obstruction on the site. After they were unloaded I signed the delivery note and handed it to the gaffer when he returned to work the next day. The gaffer says he will confirm this to you if necessary.

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.

	Strongest	Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards. This person may also be an assessor or internal verifier qualified with the L and D Units, A/V Units or 'D-Units'.
		Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work and who is familiar with the standards.
		Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the candidate's area of work, but with no knowledge of the standards.
		Someone who may be a colleague of the candidate, but with no knowledge of the standards.
	Weakest	Someone with no or little knowledge of the candidate's work or no knowledge of the standards.

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 safety 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.

Photographic evidence

In Construction SVQs, evidence being generated by candidates is often authenticated by the use of photographic evidence. Established best practice is for photographs to be presented in a natural sequence of events with the candidate being visible in the assessment activity. Exact site locations of the activity should be clearly labelled in the photographs with dates, etc.

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.

It is only high quality simulation that reflects the reality of the true work environment with all of the attendant constraints and pressures which is acceptable. Here are two examples in the Stonemasonry SVQ when simulation under the aforementioned conditions is acceptable.

Examples

- ◆ PC 2 in Unit VR 641 requires the candidate to demonstrate the correct use of a fire extinguisher. For obvious reasons simulation is the only way this could be assessed.
- ◆ PC 4 in Unit VR 641 requires the candidate to demonstrate using the correct organisational procedures in case of accidents or a fire. For obvious reasons simulation is the only way this could be assessed.

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.

Knowledge and Understanding apparent from this observation

The candidate demonstrated a high level of stone cutting skills, excellent organisational abilities and an awareness of H&S all of the time. He organised the resources he required in an efficient manner, contributed to a safe working environment and left his workplace in an organised and tidy state in preparation for commencing the following day.

During his working activities he demonstrated the ability to read and interpret drawings correctly, produced a high standard of work in an efficient manner and showed good knowledge of the use of other walling components, and the correct use of relevant geometry in producing a zinc template.

Other Units/Elements to which this evidence may contribute

VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
VR 199 Produce Complex Templates and Moulds

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate

All tasks were performed correctly and in a safe manner. The end product was fit to be applied as a replacement stone for the damaged existing one. I congratulated Robert on his overall performance.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature Mark Cameron **Date** 04/03/2012

Candidate's signature Robert Reid **Date** 04/03/2012

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 200 Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components
Element(s)	PC 2
Evidence index number	2
Circumstances of assessment	
Direct observation using a checklist.	
List of questions and candidate's responses	
Q	Why do you rough down a stone in the correct sequence?
A	To carry out the task efficiently and quicker.
Q	Why do we file down zinc templets?
A	To prevent you getting cuts and abrasions.
Q	Why do you think it is important to cut a stone on its natural bed?
A	The stone will be more durable and will therefore last longer.
Q	What type of information could you find in the specification?
A	It could tell me information on the types of materials and other components I must use to do the job.
Q	How would you transfer a level over a long length, say about 35 metres?
A	A straight edge would be no use for that. I would use a laser level or my own wee cowley level.
Q	Why did you cover over all your stonework when you finished building?
A	Heavy frost is forecast for tonight and could cause severe damage if we don't protect the work.

Assessor's signature Mark Cameron **Date** 31/01/12

Candidate's signature Robert Reid **Date** 31/01/12

VR 641 Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Sample bank of oral questions for scope of knowledge and understanding

Disposal of waste

- Q Why do you think there are different skips on this site for all the different building materials to be put in?
- A It's to help the environment. There are lots of regulations and procedures about all of this now.

Emergencies

- Q What do you think you should do if you saw a large fire starting on the site?
- A Raise the alarm right away to anyone nearby and then go and phone the fire service.

Fire extinguishers

- Q Why are fire extinguishers different colours?
- A Because you have to use different types of extinguishers depending on the kind of fire that has started.

Hazards

- Q What is a site hazard?
- A Something which might cause danger or an accident.

Methods of work

- Q What is meant by manual handling?
- A It's all that stuff about how to lift and carry heavy things safely, so that you don't hurt yourself.

PPE

- Q Tell me which PPE you would wear if you were using a stihl saw.
- A All the usual basic stuff — safety boots, hi-vis vest, hard hat plus gloves, visor or eye protection, a mask and ear defenders.

Protecting work

- Q Why do you think you need to protect your work after you have finished?
- A Well, it costs a lot of money to fix it you know — if it gets damaged or vandalised or something like that — even the weather can cause problems for our type of work.

Resources

Q How can you make sure that the correct type of materials required for the job are delivered to the site?

A A good reliable supplier who knows his job can save you a lot of bother. We always go to the same people who have been good in the past for us.

Reporting procedures

Q If you see a problem on the site, what is the procedure for dealing with it?

A Well it depends on the type of problem, doesn't it! If it's a simple job-related problem I will deal just with it, but if it's above my level I just report it to the gaffer. That's what he gets paid for.

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 (Example 1)

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, Performance Criteria, Performance statements, scope covered
14/01/12	3	<p>About a month ago a load of facing stones arrived at the site. The gaffer was off work at a funeral that day so I checked the driver's delivery note and made sure that the correct number of pallets of stones were on the lorry. I then showed him where we needed the stones placed around the site. On checking the stones I noticed one of the pallets had a lot of damaged ones and I brought this to the driver's attention and these were left on the lorry to be returned to the brick yard. I also informed the site manager about this to make sure we did not get charged for them.</p> <p>I made sure the different types of stone were stacked separately and were located as near as possible to the houses where they were required. I also made sure that none of the stone pallets was causing any obstruction on the site. After they were unloaded I signed the delivery note and handed it to the gaffer when he returned to work the next day. The gaffer says he will confirm this to you if necessary.</p>	Witness testimony by John Bain, Site Manager (5)	VR 210 PC 1-4

Candidate's signature Robert Reid

Date 14 Feb 2012

Personal statement (Example 2)

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, Elements, Performance Criteria, Performance statements, scope covered
16/02/12	4	I was instructed by my tutor to cut a cyma-recta moulding on a block of stone in the workshop. I put on all my Personnel Protective Equipment and proceeded to locate a suitable stone in the outside yard. As the stone was above the recommended weight for manual handling, I asked a colleague to assist with the lift. I have had instruction on the correct methods for manual handling and I communicated this information to my colleague. We proceeded to lift the stone without injury.	Observation checklist (1)	VR 641 PC 1–3

Candidate's signature Robert Reid

Date 20/03/2012

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 (Example 1)

SVQ title and level	SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)
Candidate's name	Robert Reid
Evidence index no	5
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any)	3
Element(s)	VR 210 PC 1–4
Date of evidence	11 Dec 11
Name of witness	John Bain
Designation/relationship to candidate	Site Manager
Details of testimony	
<p>Robert has worked under my supervision on a variety of sites for about four years now. I can't remember him ever being off work and I can rely on him under all circumstances. He is one of the top stonemasons in our company.</p> <p>He recently had to deal with a situation which happened when the foreman bricklayer Davie Rice was off work attending a funeral. A large load of mixed type and coloured stone had arrived on site that day. These had been ordered by me some weeks previously.</p> <p>In Davie's absence Robert took full responsibility of taking delivery of these stones and directing the driver to the various drop-off points. He checked the delivery line and confirmed one of the pallets had been badly damaged and many of the stones had been consequently broken. These were rejected and returned to the supplier. The stones were placed at their correct locations around the site and Robert signed the driver's line which I received from Davie the foreman the following day.</p>	

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature John Bain **Date** 18 Jan 2012

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

Witness testimony (Example 2)

SVQ title and level	SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)
Candidate's name	David Smith
Evidence index no	6
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any)	
Element(s)	VR 201 Set Out Complex Stonemasonry Structures
Date of evidence	29/03/06
Name of witness	Douglas Morrison
Designation/relationship to candidate	Site Manager
Details of testimony	
<p>I can confirm David completed his building activity in snecked rubble to the specification given. His behaviour was appropriate and he complied with all Health and Safety regulations that are applied on this site. We discussed his open communication with other site operatives, which was good. He requested materials in correct sequence and on time. David is proving to be a valuable member of the team and will progress to be a good tradesperson in due course. His timekeeping could be better, but he has agreed to address this problem.</p>	

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature Douglas Morrison **Date** 20/03/12

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.

In this SVQ, such gaps are likely to occur in generating evidence for:

- ◆ VR 641 *Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare*

You may be able to overcome this by simulation and questioning or secondment to another part of the organisation. It may be necessary, in extreme cases, to find another organisation which can provide the relevant experience for candidates to generate the required evidence.

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 on the face of it have been produced by anyone else. For example, a candidate who was working as a member of a team could have claimed to set out the stone corners in a building, using datum levels and ranging lines to establish the position and heights of these corners. This could require a witness testimony or questioning or some other form of authentication.

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.

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 SVQ3 Stonemasonry (Construction)

Candidate John Brown

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

Unit checklist

Mandatory	VR 641	VR 209	VR 211				
Optional	VR 199	VR 200					

Mandatory Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date
VR 641	Conform to General Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare	<i>Mark Cameron</i>	14/11/11
VR 209	Confirm Work Activities and Resources for the Work	<i>Mark Cameron</i>	3/12/11
VR 210	Develop and Maintain Good Working Relationships	<i>Mark Cameron</i>	13/04/12

Optional Units achieved

Unit number	Title	Assessor's signature	Date

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 200 Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components

Evidence index no	Description of evidence	PC/performance statements						Areas of Knowledge and Understanding/scope																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5													
1	Direct observation of candidate building stonework on site by assessor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																		
2	Written and oral questions							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													

Unit VR 200 *Produce Complex Stonemasonry Components*

Notes/comments

John carried out the work in a professional manner. He planned ahead and made sure he had the building material resources to hand before commencing work and communicated very clearly to the labourer in attendance. He kept the working area around him clean and tidy throughout and did a final tidy-up at the end. He covered and protected his stone before leaving the working area.

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

Candidate's signature	<u>John Brown</u>	Date	<u>13/04/12</u>
Assessor's signature	<u>Mark Cameron</u>	Date	<u>13/04/12</u>
Internal verifier's signature	<u>Donald Dickson</u>	Date	<u>13/04/12</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

Unit

Element

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** _____

Witness testimony

SVQ title and level	
Candidate's name	
Evidence index no	
Index no of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any)	
Element(s)	
Date of evidence	
Name of witness	
Designation/relationship to candidate	
Details of testimony	

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness signature _____ **Date** _____

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

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** _____