Information for Assessment of Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Version number: 03

Published: October 2026

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We are committed to using plain language. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve, let us know at editor@qualifications.gov.scot.

Changes in this version

Section	Details of changes
4 Who is involved in SVQs?	Content expanded and formatted into a table.
5 Preparing to assess an SVQ	Formatting updated.
6 Methods of assessment	Formatting updated. Content added regarding remote assessment. Tables edited for accessibility.
7 Generating and collecting evidence	Examples updated for relevance. Tables edited for accessibility.
Appendix 2	New section.

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1 About this information

This guide offers practical advice on how to assess your candidates for an SVQ.

This assessment information contains some general examples of assessment practice that are typical to most job roles. This advice is offered as examples of good practice. You may develop your own approaches to assessing your candidates, as long as they adhere to the assessment strategy for the qualification you are assessing. This information also contains suggested recording documentation, which you may amend as appropriate.

Before assessing any candidate, you must read the assessment strategy produced by the standards-setting organisation (SSO) for the SVQ being assessed. This is published on the SVQ subject page on the Qualifications Scotland website.

The assessment strategy outlines the following requirements:

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

Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that assessments are appropriate and that quality assurance procedures are followed. The only exception to this is where assessments are provided by Qualifications Scotland, for example via SOLAR, our digital assessment platform.

2 About SVQs

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are work-based qualifications that set the level of occupational competence for each sector of the economy. They are usually delivered and assessed in the workplace or in partnership with a college or training provider.

SVQs are designed by standards-setting organisations which are made up of experienced practitioners who represent employers, professional bodies, trade unions, education organisations and voluntary organisations.

Each standards-setting organisation is responsible for developing National Occupational Standards (NOS), 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.

SVQs are a means of recognising the skills and knowledge people need in employment, also known as ‘job competence’. Having an SVQ provides clear evidence that a person works to nationally recognised occupational standards.

There are SVQs for many different occupations in Scotland and they range from SCQF level 4 to level 12. Some SVQs or SVQ units are incorporated into other qualifications or programmes, including Higher National Certificates, Diplomas and Apprenticeship Frameworks. SVQ units can also be taken individually without the need to complete a full SVQ.

SVQs attract UCAS tariff points, which are used by some higher education providers to set entry requirements for courses. More information about tariff points can be found on the UCAS website.

How are SVQs structured?

An SVQ is made up of a number of units that are formed from National Occupational Standards (NOS). Each unit defines one aspect of a job or work-role and what it is to be competent in that aspect of the job. To be awarded a full SVQ, candidates must achieve each of the SVQ units that make up the qualification by demonstrating that they are competent in each aspect of the job.

The standards-setting organisation develops the NOS and determines the structure of an SVQ in consultation with employers, professional bodies, trade unions, education organisations and voluntary organisations. Employers can provide feedback on the content and structure of the NOS directly to the standards-setting organisation at any time.

The units that make up an SVQ are identified as mandatory or optional. The mandatory section will consist of units that employers consider to be crucial to the job role — meaning that all

candidates doing the SVQ need to do them. The optional section provides candidates with an opportunity to choose units that are most relevant to their specific job role.

How are standards defined?

The units that make up an SVQ define the broad functions carried out in the sector and are made up of a number of performance criteria and knowledge and understanding statements.

Performance criteria describe what the candidate has to do and how well they have to do it.

The knowledge and understanding statements describe what candidates must know and understand, and how this knowledge applies to their job.

Varying terminology may be used in different SVQs, depending on how the standard-setting organisation has defined the NOS, but all will be recognisable as either a performance criteria or knowledge and understanding statement.

3 SVQs and the SCQF

What is the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)?

The SCQF provides a national framework for qualifications in Scotland by bringing together all Scottish mainstream qualifications, including SVQs, into a single unified framework.

How does the SCQF work?

The SCQF uses two measures: the level of a qualification or learning programme (level 12 is the most challenging) and the number of credit points awarded (the size of the qualification).

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

Individual SVQs sit at differing SCQF levels and have differing amounts of credit points, depending on the structure and context of the SVQ.

The level of a qualification indicates the level of difficulty and the number of credit points indicates the typical length of time it takes to complete. One SCQF credit point represents an average of 10 notional hours of learning time.

Titling in SVQs

All SVQs are assigned a level on the SCQF. ‘Credit rating’ is the term given to the process for the allocation of an SCQF level and the calculation of SCQF credit points.

All SCQF credit rating must be confirmed and approved by an authorised credit rating body for the SCQF. Qualifications Scotland Accreditation is an approved SCQF credit rating body and is also the qualifications regulator for Scotland.

The titling of SVQs incorporates the SCQF level, to distinguish between SVQs at different SCQF levels in the same subject. For example, ‘SVQ in Professional Cookery at SCQF Level 5’.

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

You can find further information on credit rating on the Qualifications Scotland Accreditation website.

4 Who is involved in SVQs?

A number of individuals and organisations have parts to play in SVQ assessment. Their roles have been designed to guarantee fair, accurate and consistent assessment.

Role	Who are they?	What is their role?
Approved centres	Organisations approved by Qualifications Scotland to deliver and co-ordinate assessment arrangements for SVQs.	Manage assessment on a day-to-day basis. Centres are responsible for registering candidates with Qualifications Scotland and the assessors and internal verifiers that work from them. Must have effective assessment practices and internal verification procedures. Must meet criteria laid down by Qualifications Scotland and be able to provide sufficiently competent assessors and internal verifiers.
Candidates	The person who wants to achieve the SVQ.	Need to show they can perform to National Occupational Standards to be awarded a unit or a full SVQ.
Assessors*	The person who assesses the candidate and decides whether they are competent. They will be experienced in the same area of work as the candidate, for example, a supervisor.	Judge the evidence of a candidate's performance, knowledge and understanding against the National Occupational Standards. Decide whether the candidate has demonstrated competence. Provide guidance and support to the candidate. Assist with planning assessments, giving feedback, and recording candidate progress. Ensure that the assessment process is not discriminatory in any way and that assessments are as fair and accessible as possible.
Internal verifiers	An individual nominated by an approved centre to ensure the quality of assessment within the centre.	Advise assessors and maintain the quality of assessment in a centre. Systematically sample assessments to confirm the quality and consistency of assessment decisions.

Role	Who are they?	What is their role?
External verifiers	An individual appointed by the awarding body to ensure that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the SVQ.	Check the quality and consistency of assessments, both within and between centres, by systematically sampling candidates' evidence. Make regular visits to centres to ensure they still meet the criteria to deliver SVQs.
Employers	An organisation that presents a candidate to an approved centre for assessment.	Employers will be required to support the assessment process by making themselves available to the Assessors where required. Support the candidate undertaking the SVQ, for example ensure a full induction to the role has been provided and that they are provided with rich job experiences and opportunities relevant to their job role.

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by Qualifications Scotland to prove they have the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the SVQ. Occupational competence will have been defined by the standards-setting organisation in the assessment strategy for each SVQ — see the Qualifications Scotland website.

Assessors and verifiers are also expected to obtain an appropriate qualification in assessment and verification — or an equivalent as recognised by Qualifications Scotland and the relevant Assessment Strategy. In some instances, Assessor and Verifiers may have predecessor qualifications but can prove currency of practice by undertaking continued professional development. More information on Assessor and Verifier qualifications can be found in our publication Choosing appropriate assessor and verifier qualifications.

5 Preparing to assess an SVQ

This section offers practical advice on how to assess your candidates for an SVQ. This advice is offered as examples of good practice. You may develop your own approaches that work just as well provided they are in adherence with the assessment strategy for the qualification you are assessing.

Your role and your candidates' role

Assessing an SVQ will involve several stages: planning for assessment, generating and collecting evidence, judging the evidence, making an assessment decision, and recording the assessment decision. Both you and the candidate should be clear on your respective roles in the assessment process before you begin.

Your role as an assessor

- Plan for assessment.
- Ensure candidates understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed.
- Ensure candidates understand that English is the language of assessment for regulated qualifications, unless otherwise stated.
- Ensure candidates are entered into the most appropriate level of SVQ for their job role.
- Ensure the conditions for assessment are appropriate and any required resources are available.
- Ensure that the assessment process is not discriminatory in any way and that assessments are as fair and accessible as possible.
- Ensure candidates know how 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.
- Advise candidates on how 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.
- Participate in centre standardisation meetings and any other quality assurance practices as required by your centre.

Candidates' role

- Prepare for assessment — become familiar with the standards, what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed.
- Identify sources of evidence and how these could be assessed.
- Carry out activities, produce products of own work, and answer questions.
- Gather and present evidence.
- Receive and act on feedback from the assessor.

Planning for assessment

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. People will take an SVQ for a variety of reasons, including to prove job competence or for personal development. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to your candidates, they might help you provide this advice.

Candidates need advice to ensure that their existing job remit, skills, experience, and their plans for progression, are matched to the SVQ they have selected. It does not have to be you as the assessor who carries out the matching process, but whoever has responsibility for this should ensure that the assessment opportunities that are available to the candidate are also considered. To ensure candidates are entered for the correct qualification in the first instance, this conversation should take place before candidates are registered with Qualifications Scotland.

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.

While you are planning assessment, don't forget to make the most of opportunities to integrate assessment. This means planning to assess an activity that draws on the contents of different units, in full or in part. It can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing your candidate's competence. Integrating assessment is often referred to as 'holistic assessment'.

To help you and your candidates plan for assessment, we have produced an example of an assessment plan that covers a typical health and safety unit. It is included as guidance only. Examples relevant to this unit are used throughout the rest of this document.

Producing an assessment plan will help focus the discussion with your candidate around possible sources of evidence and assessment methods.

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.

Internal and external verifier roles in the assessment process

To support the assessment process and to ensure that standards are being applied consistently across your centre and others, internal and external verification are required.

Internal verifier's role

- Appointed by the approved centre.
- Guides and supports assessment teams and individual assessors.
- Monitors and develops assessors' practice.
- Conducts formative, interim and summative internal verification.
- Monitors candidate records, progress and achievements.
- Participates in the development of the centre's quality assurance systems, procedures and staff competences.
- Instigates and manages standardisation events and team meetings.
- Answers queries relating to assessment and verification practices and processes.
- Support assessors in specific ways such as providing guidance for simulations and additional support needs.
- Ensures that awarding organisation and centre quality assurance requirements are adhered to, monitored and evaluated.

External verifier's role

- Appointed by Qualifications Scotland.
- Prepares, plans and carries out external quality assurance to Qualifications Scotland and subject specific requirements.
- Undertakes prior verification of centres' internally devised instruments of assessment.
- Provides the approved centre with feedback, advice and support to help them maintain and improve their assessment practice.
- Participates in approval, post approval and development visits to approved centres.
- Assists Qualifications Scotland and centre staff with subject specific inquiries.
- Delivers and participates in external verifier training events and standardisation.

Extract from an SVQ unit

Unit number: XXXX XX

Unit title: Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

Unit overview:

It is the responsibility of all individuals, in all working contexts, to operate to certain standards of health, safety and security. This standard covers the key activities that are required to prevent (as far as possible) any accidents, health problems or emergencies from occurring and to promote good health, safety and security practice.

An important aspect of this standard is risk assessment. You will be able to conduct a risk assessment prior to work activities, and to take action to minimise the potential risks to yourself and others within the workplace. Work activities must adhere to health and safety codes of practice and relevant legislation.

Performance Criteria

(Performance criteria set out the standard of performance you need to demonstrate consistently to claim competence.)

You must be able to:

P1 carry out a formal risk assessment for work activities as required by legislation

P2 identify the hazards, evaluate the risks and implement suitable control measures

P3 where existing control measures are in place ensure that they are adequate and applied

P4 communicate the findings of the risk assessment to those at risk and promote good health and safety practice

Knowledge and Understanding

(The knowledge and understanding requirements state what you must know and understand, and how this knowledge and understanding applies to your job.)

You need to know and understand:

K1 the difference between ‘hazard’ and ‘risk’ and how to carry out a risk assessment

K2 the hierarchy of measures to control risks (including elimination, substitution, relevant engineering controls, safe systems of work, training/instruction and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

K3 how to communicate the findings of the risk assessment and health and safety precautions to those at risk

K4 relevant health and safety legislation and the standards of protection to be achieved

Assessment plan

Unit title: Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

Activities	Performance / Knowledge and Understanding Statement	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other units
Visit the HSE website for practical guidance on what a risk assessment is and how to go about it.	P1, K1, K2, K4	Review documentation (product evidence) Personal statement	By 00/00/0000 By 00/00/0000		
Walk around the workplace and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm.	P1 and 2, K1 and K2	Observation	By 00/00/0000		
Ask employees for their thoughts on potential hazards.	P1 and 2	Observation	By 00/00/0000		
Check manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals and equipment to determine potential hazards and any counter measures.	P1 and 2	Observation	By 00/00/0000		
	Informal review to chat through how things are progressing and discuss any issues or concerns		00/00/0000		
Read through the company's accident and ill-health records to identify hazards that have occurred and frequency.	P1 and 2	Review documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		

Activities	Performance / Knowledge and Understanding Statement	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other units
Evaluate findings.	P1 and P2	Question and Answer (second review)	By 00/00/0000		
Identify and implement control measures.	P1 and P2	Review documentation (product evidence) Witness testimony	By 00/00/0000 By 00/00/0000		
Identify, source and review current company policy, documentation and procedures to determine what existing control measures are in place.	P3	Review documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		
Check how well the existing control measures are applied by employees through observation of working practice, visibility of health and safety notices, etc.	P3	Review of documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		
Check existing control measures are adequate by comparing them with examples of good practice identified on HSE's website.	P3, K4	Review of documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		
Identify any additional precautionary measures that should be applied to bring control measures up to current standard.	P3	Review of documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		

Activities	Performance / Knowledge and Understanding Statement	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other units
Produce a report that records details of the hazards identified, adequacy of existing control measures and recommendations for updating existing control measures to meet current standards and new control measures to be introduced.	P4	Review of documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		
Communicate Health and Safety control measures through staff presentations, handbooks, procedures and signage.	P4, K3	Review of documentation (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		

Assessor's signature	Peter Hoskins	1st review due	00/00/0000
Candidate's signature	Paul Lee	2nd review due	00/00/0000
Date of agreement	00/00/0000	Date of completion	00/00/0000

6 Methods of assessment

Selecting methods of assessment

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

- 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.
- By equitable and fair we mean that the assessment method should offer all candidates an equal opportunity to demonstrate their competence.

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, practicable, equitable and fair. This does not apply in cases where assessments are provided by Qualifications Scotland, for example via SOLAR, our digital assessment platform.

There are both benefits and challenges when you are assessing qualifications in the workplace, or in conditions in 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:

- Familiarity with working environment
- Familiarity between candidate and assessor
- Assessment supports valid work practices
- The challenges might be:
- Staff co-operation to complete required documentation or to provide information
- Time commitments

Example

You could agree with a candidate working in an engineering firm who has to ensure that relevant information and advice on health and safety is provided in a timely way, that this will be carried out by observation when situations arise. If you are an assessor who is working alongside the candidate you should be well placed to observe the candidate’s performance,

perhaps using a prepared checklist, and to question the candidate about the situation 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. Qualification-specific Assessment Strategies will detail the most appropriate methods of assessment for the SVQ you are assessing. For some SVQs, mandatory or optional assessments are provided via SOLAR. Examples are provided here in the context of a typical Health and Safety unit.

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

If it is not possible to conduct an observation in person, it may be acceptable do so remotely, as long as the assessment strategy for the qualification permits this. This must take place in real time, in a way that allows the assessor to verify the candidate's identity, to have an uninterrupted view of the candidate, and to ask questions through live audio. There are specific SVQs that allow remote assessment unless the assessment strategy prohibits it. More detail about this is provided in Appendix 1.

Example

The assessor could observe the candidate undertaking a formal Health and Safety risk assessment of the work environment. The assessor can note if the candidate 'misses' any key factors to support the assessment criterion, and can use question and answer techniques alongside this observation to see what the candidate did or did not notice.

The assessor could observe the candidate presenting the resulting plan to the responsible people. The structure and the clarity of this presentation would be important for the assessor to observe.

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. Examples of product evidence include:

- Plan of areas to be inspected and potential hazards to look for.
- Presentation to senior management team.
- Risk assessment report for senior management team.
- Emails relating to developing and communicating risk assessment.
- A questionnaire for all staff to identify how information on health and safety instructions and regulations is currently communicated.

Questioning

Candidates have to show that they can meet the knowledge statements for the SVQs. 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 on a face-to-face basis or via video call, 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 questions.

Examples of oral questioning

Q While observing you undertaking your review of the workplace, I noticed you referenced a trip hazard as a potential problem. Could you explain how you would go about controlling the risk?

A I would talk to the staff about both short-term and long-term solutions to the problem, asking them why the trip hazard is there in the first place. If it needs to stay there, in the short-term they need to look at adequate signage, but in the long-term there needs to be a solution that removes the trip hazard. This may involve moving equipment, adding extra plug sockets, etc.

Q Having completed your review, how adequate do you consider current control measures to be and how effectively are they being applied?

A I'd say that on the whole, existing control measures throughout the workplace are adequate and staff are following them as required. I found examples of good practice in some areas and also identified areas of current practice which could be improved upon.

Other methods of assessment

These methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication. See Section 7 for more information about authenticating candidates' evidence.

Professional discussion

Professional discussion is a structured and recorded talk between the candidate and the assessor. The objective of the discussion is to allow the candidate to present evidence of competence to you, and to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding by discussing the evidence they have presented and showing how it relates to the standards. It is seen as a more holistic approach than questioning.

Your role is to guide the discussion by using open questioning, active listening and knowledge of the standards so that the discussion stays focused on the competences and the knowledge being explored.

This is not an easy alternative to questioning, rather it requires careful planning to stay focused. It can be successful only when both assessor and candidate have a good knowledge of the standards. It is most appropriate when the level and scope of the work activities is complex and when the underpinning knowledge required to do the range of activities competently is interrelated.

As a method of assessment, it lends itself to audio or video recording, but can be recorded by paper-based methods.

Personal statements (or reflective accounts)

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, practical, equitable and fair method of assessment.

Example

A personal statement could be used as an opportunity for the candidate to say how helpful their research was in helping them prepare to carry out a formal Health and Safety risk assessment in their workplace. The candidate could be asked to explain how their research contributed towards their plan of areas to be inspected and potential hazards to look for. Similarly, following

the formal risk assessment, a personal statement could provide evidence of a candidate's knowledge and understanding for example, explaining how recommendations for change/ improvement of current control methods were derived.

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 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.

Strength of witness testimony (in decreasing order)

- 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 appropriately qualified assessor or internal verifier.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

The assessment strategy produced by the standards-setting organisation will define what it regards as simulation, and will specify the standards (units) where simulation is and is not permitted.

For more details on simulation and what constitutes performance in the workplace, look at the assessment strategy for the qualification being assessed on the SVQ subject qualification page on the Qualifications Scotland website.

Remote assessment

If it is not possible to conduct assessment in person, it may be acceptable assess remotely.

Some types of live remote assessment, such as live video streaming, can be used for direct observation. This must take place in real time, in a way that allows the assessor to verify the candidate's identity, to have an uninterrupted view of the candidate, and to ask questions through live audio. You can only use remote assessment in this way if the assessment strategy for the qualification permits it.

There are specific SVQs that follow different guidance on using remote assessment for direct observation. There is more detail about this in Appendix 1.

Pre-recorded evidence, for example in video or audio, is considered an indirect method of assessment. This can be used for assessment, but it cannot be used to conduct direct observation.

The same principles of assessment apply whether conducting assessment in-person or remotely. The assessor must gain the candidate's consent if making a recording, and may also need the employer's authorisation if the recording is taking place in the workplace. There is more information on remote assessment on the Qualifications Scotland website.

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.

You may be able to overcome these through 'what if' questions, either by questioning or professional discussion. You might also want to consider extending the time period for the

overall completion of the unit, so that the candidate has adequate time to provide relevant information and advice when it is needed. If acceptable, evidence may be gathered through simulation or undertaking different or new opportunities or responsibilities within 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 standards (units) by relating it to the evidence provided.

Where there are any shortfalls in a candidate's competence or knowledge and understanding, you should discuss these with your candidate and make plans for re-assessment. In some instances, you may be required to provide some feedback to the candidate's employer.

Other sources of evidence

Other sources of evidence can be previous experience or learning, case studies or assignments. Our Guide to Assessment has more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

7 Generating and collecting evidence

The methods of assessment used 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 is a link to blank forms that you can copy and use 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 title Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

Candidate's name Paul Lee

Evidence index number 3

Date of observation 00/00/0000

Skills/activities observed	Performance criteria/Knowledge and Understanding statements covered
Prior to carrying out the risk assessment, Paul prepared a plan detailing the areas of the organisation to be inspected and potential hazards to look for. This approach proved very successful as it helped him focus on what to look for in terms of hazard, risk and control measures either currently in place or that should be implemented. Throughout the risk assessment, Paul spoke with several members of staff to gather their understanding of health and safety in general and any potential hazards they considered to be present. Paul made comprehensive notes during the review.	P1, 2 and 3, K1 and 2.

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation
It is clear from the plan that Paul produced prior to carrying out the risk assessment that he has a good knowledge and understanding of the importance of health and safety and how to go about carrying out a risk assessment.

Other units/outcome(s) to which this evidence may contribute

Assessor's comments and feedback to candidate

The research and preparation you undertook beforehand enabled you to carry out a very thorough risk assessment and gather invaluable evidence that will help support any recommended actions you consider will be beneficial to the organisation. Well done.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature Peter Hoskins Date 00/00/0000

Candidate's signature Paul Lee Date 00/00/0000

Questions and candidate responses

Unit	Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security
Outcome(s)	
Evidence index number	4

Circumstances of assessment
First review session with candidate. (Considering Performance criteria/Knowledge and Understanding statements: P1, 2 and 3, K1, 2, 3 and 4)

List of questions and candidate's responses
Q Can you explain the difference between a hazard and a risk?
A Hazard — anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer. Risk — the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards and how series the harm could be.
Q Tell me about the health and safety legislation that applies to your organisation.
A Section 3 (i) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which states that: 'It shall be the duty of every employer to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.'
Q What standards of protection must be achieved in your organisation?
A • Management of Health and Safety at Work (Amendment) Regulations 2006 Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 • Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 • Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (Amendment) 2012 — (RIDDOR) • Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (As Amended) • Although not strictly under Health and Safety Regs the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 does affect us greatly.

Assessor's signature Peter Hoskins Date 00/00/0000

Candidate's signature Paul Lee Date 00/00/0000

Candidate's personal statement (reflective account)

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)	Performance criteria/ Knowledge and Understanding statements covered
00/00/0000	2	Having attended the health and safety meeting today, I have been able to identify further how information on health and safety instructions and regulations are currently communicated. I think the meeting also improved my awareness of the current level of understanding and support for health and safety. Clearly the management team is very supportive of all health and safety issues and this was highlighted in a report discussed at the meeting about an incident at another factory. The meeting has also clarified my thoughts on providing opportunities to promote the advantages and legal necessity of following health and safety procedures. Having attended the meeting, I feel more able to include these in my plan.	4 and 6	P1 and 2, K1, K4.

Candidate's signature Paul Lee Date 00/00/0000

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 contact details, their relationship to the candidate and the date.

Qualification title	Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security
Candidate's name	Paul Lee
Performance Criteria/Knowledge and Understanding statements covered	
Evidence index no.	5
Date of evidence	00/00/0000
Name of witness	Dave Mulvaney (on behalf of senior management team)
Email address of witness	
Designation/relationship to candidate	Senior manager responsible for health and safety, line manager of Paul Lee

Details of testimony
Paul delivered a very interesting and informative presentation to senior management today about the risk assessment he carried out in January this year. He began by explaining what a risk assessment is and what is meant by a hazard, risk and control measures. He then handed us a blank risk assessment template he had produced. He then put a picture of our general office up on the screen and asked us to see whether we could see any hazards. This prompted a very interesting discussion as some hazards are much more obvious than others. Having identified the hazards, Paul then asked us to consider who might be harmed and how. Again, this prompted good discussion as it encouraged us to think about the consequences of what could happen to the individual and the organisation. Paul then presented us with a report of his risk assessment findings. After reading through the report and discussing some aspects with Paul, all members of the senior management team agreed with most of Paul's recommendations and requested he implement them as soon as possible.

I can confirm the candidate's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature Dave Mulvaney Date 00/00/0000

Witness (please select the appropriate box):

Holds appropriate qualifications and/or experience ☐

Is familiar with the Units to which the candidate is working ☐

Judging candidate evidence and making an assessment decision

In judging candidate evidence, you must be satisfied that your candidates can work 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 current, valid, authentic and sufficient.
- Assessments must be:
- valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair
- safe
- measured against specified criteria
- relevant to the qualification
- sufficient to help you form a decision about the candidate's current competence.

Insufficient evidence

You have to judge whether the candidate has produced enough evidence required by the standards (units) 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.

The candidate's portfolio should contain a declaration that confirms that the content of their portfolio is their own work.

Example

For this unit, the ‘responsible people’ in the organisation are in the best position to make observations regarding the content and suitability of the health and safety plan produced by the candidate. Questioning the candidate about approaches to developing the plan would also help to authenticate the evidence produced.

8 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.

Evidence may be physical or paper-based, or it may be electronic. Physical or paper-based evidence may be stored in a traditional portfolio. Electronic evidence may be stored in any appropriate and secure manner. You may wish to use e-portfolio software to help manage the storage of electronic 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.

There is no need to duplicate evidence for a portfolio, for example by making copies or printing out digital evidence. A clear explanation of where the original evidence can be found is sufficient for an external verifier.

There are various reasons why record-keeping is 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 Qualifications Scotland qualifications

If your candidates' evidence is incomplete or cannot be located, or if there is inaccurate cross-referencing to the standards (units), 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 on the following pages of the forms you and your candidate might use to compile the 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 standard.

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 (example)

Qualification and level:

Candidate's name:

To achieve the whole qualification, you must prove competence in insert number mandatory units and insert number optional units.

Unit checklist

Mandatory units	**Optional units**
Unit title	Unit title
Unit title	Unit title
Unit title	Unit title
Unit title	Unit title

Mandatory units achieved

Qualifications Scotland code	Unit title	Assessor's signature	Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		Date

Optional units achieved

Qualifications Scotland code	Unit title	Assessor's signature	Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		Date
Code	Unit title		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 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 found. This is important because we suggest that anything that has been produced as day-to-day work is kept in its normal location, but anything that has been produced through assessment for the SVQ, for example observation checklists, is filed in the candidate's portfolio. In this way, your candidate can avoid having to replicate 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.

Index of evidence – (example)

Qualification title and level:

Evidence number	Description of evidence	Included in portfolio (Yes/No) If No, state location	Sampled by the IV (initials and date)
1	Plan of areas to be inspected and potential hazards to look for	Yes — Section 1, page 1	SM — 00/00/0000
2	Personal statement reflecting on the importance and benefit of promoting a culture of health and safety within the organisation	Yes — Section 1, page 2	SM — 00/00/0000
3	Observation record of workplace review	Yes — Section 1, page 3	SM – 00/00/0000
4	Record of questions and answers	Yes — Section 1, page 4	SM — 00/00/0000
5	Witness testimony of responsible people	Yes — Section 1, page 5	SM — 00/00/0000
6	Presentation to senior management team	Yes — Section 1, page 6	SM — 00/00/0000
7	Risk assessment report for senior management team	Yes — Section 1, page 7	SM — 00/00/0000

Completing the Achievement Record

To help you and your candidates cross-reference the evidence to the standards (units) of the SVQs, we have provided an example to show you how to use the record. Use one record for each Unit. 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
- entering the areas of knowledge and understanding the piece of evidence covers

If integrated (holistic) assessment is used (linking performance criteria or knowledge and understanding statements across different units), the evidence should be cross-referenced back to the relevant units.

Unit Achievement Record – Example 8

Unit title Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

Columns P1 to K4 indicate the Performance criteria/Knowledge and Understanding statements covered

Evidence index no.	Description of evidence	P1	P2	P3	P4	K1	K2	K3	K4
1	Plan of areas to be inspected and potential hazards to look for	✓	✓	✓		✓			
2	Personal statement reflecting on carrying out a risk assessment	✓	✓			✓			
3	Observation record of workplace review	✓	✓			✓	✓		
4	Record of questions and answers	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Witness testimony from Dave Mulvaney (on behalf of senior management team)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
6	Presentation to senior management team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
7	Risk assessment report for senior management team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Assessor's notes/comments

Paul has worked conscientiously on this unit and produced some very good evidence that will benefit both himself and the organisation.

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

Candidate's signature Paul Lee Date 00/00/0000

Assessor's signature Peter Hoskins Date 00/00/0000

Internal verifier's signature Sharon Moore

Date 00/00/0000

10 Further information

Qualifications Scotland has developed a wide range of generic guidance on assessment, verification, quality assurance, etc. The following publications provide additional information which would be beneficial in implementing the qualifications. Details of these and other Qualifications Scotland publications are available on our website:

Assessor/Verifier units

Quality Assurance Guidance

Guide to Assessment

Assessment Arrangements Resources

Digital assessment

Digital assessment can offer significant benefits to Qualifications Scotland, centres and candidates that take our qualifications. Qualifications Scotland has a digital assessment platform, SOLAR. Elements of some SVQs have mandatory or optional SOLAR assessments. Access further information on the SOLAR website.

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

On the Qualifications Scotland website there are downloadable versions of blank recording forms. These are generic forms that can be found on the page for any SVQ, within the Candidate Guidance and Portfolio section. This includes blank versions of the following forms:

Unit Progress Record

Assessment Plan

Candidate Declaration

Personal Profile

Index of Evidence

Achievement Record

Observation Record

Question and Answer

Personal Statement

Witness Testimony

There are printable versions of these forms, as well as ones that can be completed digitally.

Appendix 2: Remote assessment

This appendix provides more detail on the arrangements for remote assessment for SVQs. Remote assessment means using technology to conduct assessment from another location. In this case, we refer specifically to the use of remote assessment to conduct direct observation, such as through a live video stream.

For the majority of SVQs, remote assessment can be used for direct observation if the assessment strategy for the qualification specifically permits it. This means that the assessment strategy will state that remote assessment can be used in this way. If the assessment strategy does not state this, remote assessment cannot be used.

There are specific SVQs for which remote assessment **can** be used to conduct direct observations, as long as the assessment strategy does not prohibit it. These are:

Qualification title	**Code**
SVQ in Beauty Therapy at SCQF level 6	GW2F
SVQ in Learning and Development at SCQF level 8	GV86
SVQ in Learning and Development at SCQF level 9	GV87
SVQ in Museums and Galleries Practice at SCQF level 7	GV5T
SVQ in Beauty Therapy at SCQF level 5	GW2E
SVQ in Textile Care Services at SCQF level 5	GW1G
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Brewing Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW05
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Craft Bakery Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW06
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Craft Bakery Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0E
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Dairy Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW02
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Distribution Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW03
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Distribution Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0F
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Fish and Shellfish Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW04

Qualification title	Code
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Food Sales and Service Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW07
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Food Sales and Service Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW08
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Meat and Poultry Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0A
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Meat and Poultry Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0G
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Production and Processing Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0H
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations (Production and Processing Skills) at SCQF level 5	GW0J
SVQ in Food and Drink Operations: Food Manufacturing Excellence at SCQF level 5	GW0C