Information for assessment of Externally Regulated Qualifications in England and Wales

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Updates to assessment information for regulated qualifications in England and Wales, January 2025

Document section	Details of updates
Throughout	Terminology updated so that the document refers to 'information' instead of 'guidance'.
Throughout	Updated links and names of resources.
Throughout	Text updated for clarity and plain language.
Title	Changed from 'guidance on' to 'information for'.
1 About this information	Title changed from 'guide' to 'information' Content updated for relevance.
2 About externally regulated qualifications in England and Wales	Content added to explain competence-based qualifications. Level descriptors table removed and replaced with links.
3 Who is involved in the qualification?	Content about centres added.
4 Preparing to assess the qualification	Content updated for relevance and clarity. Additional explanation added about assessment plans. Content added on remote assessment. Tables updated for accessibility.
5 Generating evidence	Tables updated for accessibility.
7 Recording achievement	Content on electronic portfolios updated. Tables updated for accessibility.
8 Further information	Document titles updated.
Appendix 1	Forms removed and replaced with information on how to download from the website.

Contents

1   About this information

This document offers practical advice on how to assess your learners for an externally regulated qualification. In this document, 'externally regulated' refers to qualifications regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.

This document explains requirements applicable to the whole qualification or a number of units in the qualification, where appropriate.

You may be able to think of other ways of assessing your learners and recording your decisions about their competence. For example, while it is a requirement for all assessment criteria in each unit to be assessed; there is still the option for holistic assessment across units, where appropriate.

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 learners as long as they adhere to the assessment requirements of the specific qualification you are assessing. This information also contains suggested recording documentation, which you may amend as appropriate.

Before assessing any learner, you must read the Qualification Specification and any associated assessment strategy or equivalent for the qualification. This is published on the qualification subject page on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

The Qualification Specification and/or 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 SQA, for example via SOLAR, SQA's digital assessment platform.

2 About externally regulated qualifications in England and Wales

This section provides a brief overview of the qualification frameworks used in England and Wales and how vocational and occupational qualifications in the frameworks can be assessed. If you are already familiar with the concept of vocational and occupational qualifications, you may wish to go to the next section.

England uses the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and Wales uses the Regulated Qualifications Pillar of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).

The frameworks provide a structure within which:

♦ qualifications can be located
♦ achievements are recognised through the award of qualifications
♦ the level and size of achievements can be easily identified
♦ learners are given the maximum flexibility and range of opportunities to progress and receive recognition for their achievements

All qualifications have a Total Qualification Time (TQT) and level:

♦ TQT is the estimated notional learning time that an average learner might take to complete all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for a qualification.
♦ Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is a component of TQT and shows how much learning time will normally be undertaken under direct guidance or supervision, including supervised assessment.
♦ Qualifications may also be given a credit value. Where credit has been applied, one credit point represents 10 TQT hours.
♦ A level between entry level and level 8 is assigned to all qualifications which indicates the degree of challenge or difficulty.

There are three sizes of qualification:

♦ Awards (up to 120 hours)
♦ Certificates (121–369 hours)
♦ Diplomas (370+ hours)

Each size of qualification can be offered at any level of the framework(s).

Unlike most other SQA qualifications the title of an alternative CBQ indicates the size of qualification rather than the level of the qualification.

Competence-based qualifications

Competence-based qualifications allow learners to evidence a standard of skill, usually in a workplace setting.

SQA's main competence-based qualifications are SVQs, which are delivered in Scotland and regulated Awards, Certificates and Diplomas (collectively termed alternative CBQs) in England and Wales.

Awards, Certificates and Diplomas are externally regulated qualifications and depending on the country of delivery, will be regulated by SQA Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales.

Awards, Certificates and Diplomas can be derived from a range of sources including National Occupational Standards (NOS), industry standards and professional standards.

Unit specification

A standard unit specification template is used for all units in this qualification. An overview of the unit specification template is below.

Each unit has a common format. The main components of the unit are:

Unit title: The unit title describes the content of the learning.

Unit level: All units must identify a single level for the unit that represents the complexity, autonomy and/or range of achievement expressed within the unit.

Credit value: Application of credit value is optional in units. One credit equals 10 notional learning hours (TQT/10). Learning time is defined as the time taken by learners at the level of the unit, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard determined by the assessment criteria.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH): GLH shows how much of the learning will take place under direct supervision (in real time), including 'invigilated assessment'.

SQA unit code: This is a 4 + 2-digit code and it should be used in all correspondence with SQA.

Regulator code: This is the unit code issued by Ofqual and/or Qualifications Wales.

Unit owner and reference number: In most cases, the 'Unit Owner' will be the organisation which developed the unit, for example SSC/SSB or sometimes refers to the national occupational or other professional standards from which the unit has been derived.

Learning outcome(s): All units must contain learning outcomes that set out what a learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do as the result of a process of learning.

Assessment criteria: All units must contain assessment criteria that specify the standard a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that the learning outcomes of that unit have been achieved.

♦ The second section of the unit provides 'Additional information about the unit':
♦ Unit purpose and aim(s)
♦ Unit start date
♦ Details of the relationship between the unit and relevant national occupational standards or other professional standards or curricula
♦ Requirements about the way a unit might be assessed
♦ Support/endorsement for the unit from a sector or other appropriate body
♦ Location of the unit within the subject/sector classification system

RQF /CQFW Level descriptors

To assist in ensuring consistency of assessment decisions across different centres / assessors / verifiers, links to level descriptors from Ofqual and Qualifications Wales are provided below. Although these are different links, the level descriptors are the same.

- ♦ [RQF level descriptors](#)

- ♦ [QCFW level descriptors](#)

3   Who is involved in the qualification?

There are several roles:

Learner: the person who wants to achieve the qualification (for example, an employee).

Assessor*: the person who assesses the learner and decides if they are competent (for example, a supervisor).

Internal verifier*: an individual nominated by the learner's centre (for example, a company) who ensures that assessors apply the standards uniformly and consistently (for example, supervisor's line manager).

External verifier*: an individual appointed by SQA who ensures that standards are being applied uniformly and consistently across all centres offering the qualification.

Approved centre: an organisation approved by SQA to deliver, asses and quality assure SQA qualifications. Centres are responsible for registering learners and the Assessors and Internal Verifiers that work for them.

*Assessors and verifiers in centres will be asked by SQA to prove they have the appropriate occupational competence to assess and verify the qualification. Occupational competence will have been defined by the standards-setting body or equivalent in the assessment strategy — 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 Assessor/Verifier Units (the national standards for assessment).

Requirements specific to externally regulated qualifications delivered in England and Wales

The assessment approaches required across different units within Regulated Qualifications in England and Wales may vary. For example, some units will have knowledge-based assessments, whereas others may have performance-based approaches.

In some qualifications, for example, where 'NVQ' is employed in the title, we must also apply any requirements specified by the relevant Sector Skills Organisation (SSO), or other professional bodies in their assessment strategy; these outline the way in which units are to be assessed.

Where assessment strategies apply, these can be located on the relevant qualification page of SQA's website.

The steps involved in assessing a learner for a Regulated qualification in England and Wales

In deciding whether a learner should gain a qualification, assessors will go through the following stages:

- ♦ planning for assessment.
- ♦ confirming that learners understand what is to be assessed and that they know how to identify and gather evidence for assessment.
- ♦ ensuring that the conditions for assessment are appropriate and any required resources are available.
- ♦ ensuring learners know how to generate and collect evidence of their competence in the units.
- ♦ judging the evidence of the learner's ability and make an assessment decision based on the evidence.
- ♦ providing feedback to learners throughout the assessment process.
- ♦ recording the assessment decision and the learner's achievement.

Why would people be interested in the qualification?

People will take externally regulated vocational qualifications for a variety of reasons: to gain promotion, to prepare for an occupational role, or for personal development. There will be other reasons too. One of the first things to do is to find out why the learners want to do the qualification, and to advise them of the appropriateness of the qualification. If anyone is acting as a coach or mentor to the learners, they might help you to do this.

How do learners begin?

Choosing the right qualification

You should make sure that learners get guidance before starting out on this qualification — they need advice to ensure, for example, their existing job remit, skills, experience, and their plans for progression, are matched to the qualification 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 available to the learner are also considered.

4   Preparing to assess the qualification

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

Your role and the learner's role

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

Your role as an assessor:

♦ plan for assessment
♦ ensure learners understand what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed
♦ ensure learners understand that English is the language of assessment for externally regulated qualifications, unless otherwise stated
♦ ensure the conditions for assessment are appropriate and any required resources required are available
♦ ensure that the assessment process is not discriminatory in any way and that assessments are as fair and accessible as possible
♦ ensure learners know how to identify and gather evidence
♦ observe and record learners carrying out the activities described in the units — records should say what has been observed, how it was carried out, and what it demonstrates
♦ assess products of the learner's own work
♦ question learners and record results
♦ advise learners on how to present evidence
♦ authenticate the evidence learners provide
♦ judge evidence and make assessment decisions
♦ identify gaps or shortfalls in learners' competence
♦ provide feedback to learners throughout the assessment process
♦ record achievement
♦ participate in centre standardisation meetings and any other quality assurance practices as required by your centre

The learner's role:

♦ prepare for assessment — become familiar with the units, 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, 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 the learner 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 learner.

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

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 or learning outcomes. It can be a practical and cost-effective way of assessing the learner's competence. Integrating assessment is often referred to as 'holistic assessment'.

To help you plan for assessment, we have produced an assessment plan which 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 assessment information document.

Producing an assessment plan will help focus the discussion with your learner 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 learners and noted for action in the assessment plan.

Structure of the unit

Unit title	Promote a Culture of Health and Safety in the Workplace
Unit level	3
Credit	4
Guided learning hours	18

Learning outcome — the learner will:	Assessment criteria — the learner can:
1 Be able to develop plans to promote a health and safety culture in the workplace.	1.1 Identify where improvements and changes may be necessary. 1.2 Identify how information on health and safety instructions and regulations are currently communicated. 1.3 Identify current level of understanding and support for health and safety instructions and procedures. 1.4 Develop a plan based on findings to include performance measures, review dates and resources. 1.5 Include in the plan opportunities for promoting the advantages and legal necessity of following health and safety procedures.
2 Implement the plan to promote a health and safety culture in the workplace.	2.1 Present the plan to the responsible people for the workplace to gain their support. 2.2 Identify those in the workplace who will require advice about the plan to promote a health and safety culture in the workplace. 2.3 Ensure that relevant information and advice is provided in a timely way and provide opportunities for encouraging ideas on good practice. 2.4 Measure the effectiveness of the plan against past and present performance.

Assessment plan

Unit: Promote a Culture of Health and Safety in the Workplace

Outcomes

1 Be able to develop plans to promote a health and safety culture in the workplace.

2 Implement the plan to promote a health and safety culture in the workplace.

Activities	Assessment criteria	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other units (assessment criteria)
Conduct a review of currently available health and safety documentation and procedures to ensure understanding (staff handbooks, induction information, etc).	1.2	Review documentation (product evidence) Question and answer	By 00/00/0000 00/00/0000 (first review)		
Conduct a review of the working environment.	1.2	Observation of review Question and answer	00/00/0000 00/00/0000		
Devise a questionnaire for all staff to identify current levels of understanding and support. Staff complete questionnaire.	1.3	Questionnaire (product evidence)	By 00/00/0000		
Attend health and safety meetings.	1.2	Personal statement	By 00/00/0000		
Develop a plan based on findings.	1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 2.2	Plan	By 00/00/0000		

Assessment plan (cont)

Activities	Assessment criteria	Method of assessment/sources of evidence	Date of assessment	Evidence already available	Links to other units (assessment criteria)
Present plan to the responsible people.	2.1	Observation of presentation. Witness testimony of those 'presented' to.	00/00/0000		
Run focus groups with staff to ensure relevant information and advice is provided.	2.3	Observation of focus group.	00/00/0000		
Staff complete questionnaire to compare against previous findings. Conduct a re-review of working environment.	2.4	Findings of completed questionnaire compared to previous results (product evidence).	By 00/00/0000		
Use performance measures as indicated in plan (such as % of dangerous occurrences) to measure effectiveness of plan.	2.4	Report on performance measure comparisons (product evidence).	By 00/00/0000		

Assessor's signature   <u>Peter Hoskins</u>   1st review due   00/00/0000

Learner's signature   <u>Paul Lee</u>   2nd review due   00/00/0000

Date of agreement   00/00/0000   Date of completion   00/00/0000

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 units.
♦ By **reliable** we mean that the assessment method should ensure consistent results when used with different learners, 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 learners an equal opportunity to demonstrate their competence.

Before you assess a learner, 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 SQA, for example via SOLAR, SQA's 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 learner the benefits of workplace assessment and minimise any potential difficulties.

The benefits might be:

♦ familiarity with working environment
♦ familiarity between learner and assessor
♦ assessment supports valid work practices

The challenges might be:

♦ staff co-operation to complete required documentation or provide information
♦ time commitments

Example

You could agree with a learner 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 learner you should be well placed to observe the learner's performance, perhaps using a prepared checklist, and to question the learner about the situation afterwards.

Methods of assessment

Assessment may involve a range of assessment methods. For externally regulated vocational qualifications, some of the most commonly used methods are observation, product evidence, and questioning. 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 learner
♦ arranging to visit when naturally occurring activities are carried out by the learner
♦ 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 learners as they carry out naturally occurring activities.

Should it not be possible to conduct face-to-face observations, video streaming or recorded evidence can be used — provided that the qualification specification/ assessment strategy does not prohibit this. The same principles of assessment apply to recorded evidence as they would to any other. Assessors must also gain consent from the learner to make the recording, and will need to authenticate that the person in the recording is who they say they are.

Example

Observation could be used for assessment of this unit in a variety of ways such as:

♦ Assessor could observe the learner undertaking a review of the work environment. The learner is undertaking this review to identify how information on health and safety instructions and regulations are currently communicated. The assessor can note if the learner 'misses' any key factors to support this assessment criterion and can also use question and answer techniques alongside this observation to see what the learner did or did not notice.
♦ Assessor could observe the learner 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 learners work towards achieving the qualification, they will produce evidence in the form of products of their work. The nature of this evidence can vary widely depending on what the learner's job entails.

Examples

♦ Plan to promote a health and safety culture.
♦ A questionnaire for all staff to identify how information on health and safety instructions and regulations are currently communicated.

♦ Report on performance measures comparison (past and present performance) to review the effectiveness of the plan.

Questioning

Learners must show that they can meet the knowledge specifications for the qualifications. Much of a learner'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 learners 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 qualification and become a barrier to fair assessment. For example, some learners will feel more comfortable with oral questions than written.

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 provide support or information to promote a culture of health and safety so that such a hazard is removed?

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, then 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 electrical sockets, etc.

Q: Having completed your review, how would you rate the way health and safety information is currently communicated to the workforce within your organisation?

A: I'd say that currently the communication with regard to health and safety is adequate; there are some good practices, but there are also plenty of opportunities for improvement.

Other methods of assessment

These methods, like questioning, are often used for authentication. See Section 6 for more about authenticating learners' evidence.

Personal statements

You might sometimes find it helpful to ask a learner 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**, sometimes these may also be referred to as Reflective Accounts. You should take care to ensure that by asking learners 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

A personal statement could be used as part of the assessment methodology for this unit to provide an opportunity for the learner to 'write up'/evaluate their attendance at the health and safety meeting. The learner could be asked to include this in their personal statement showing how the meeting contributed to the plan. Similarly, following the focus groups a personal statement could provide evidence of findings and why the learner then suggested particular activities within the plan.

Witness testimony

For practical reasons, you may not be able to observe all the activities carried out by your learners but might feel that other people may be able to provide a statement on what your learners 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 learners. 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.

Strength of witness testimony (in decreasing order)
♦ Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the learner'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 learner's area of work and who is familiar with the standards.
♦ Someone with considerable occupational expertise in the learner's area of work, but with no knowledge of the standards.
♦ Someone who may be a colleague of the learner, but with no knowledge of the standards.
♦ Someone with no or little knowledge of the learner's work or no knowledge of the standards.

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

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 learner in real work. Examples might be where the standards require learners to carry out emergency or contingency procedures, or where client confidentiality is an issue, or where a learner's job role does not cover all aspects of the qualification.

More information on the use of simulation, including when it is not permitted, and the description of a realistic working environment can be found in the assessment strategy.

Remote assessment

Should it not be possible to conduct assessment in-person, conducting assessment remotely, for example via live video streaming or recorded video, may be acceptable, provided the qualification-specific Qualification Specification/Assessment Strategy does not prohibit this.

The same principles of assessment apply whether conducting assessment in-person or remotely. The assessor must gain the learner'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 our website.

Other sources of evidence

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

SQA's document 'Assessment: a guide for centres offering externally regulated qualifications' more advice on methods of assessment and how to ensure that your assessment is valid, reliable and practicable.

5   Generating evidence

The methods of assessment you use should generate sufficient evidence to
demonstrate the learner'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 learner responses
♦ personal statement (produced by the learner)
♦ witness testimony

There are blank forms on the SQA website. You can find more information on where to
find these 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/outcome(s)   Promote a Culture of Health and Safety in the Workplace
Learner's name   Paul Lee
Evidence index number   4
Date of observation   00/00/0000

Skills/activities observed	Assessment criteria covered
A thorough review of the workplace environment was carried out by Paul. This review included the observation of current posters, signage, etc that was displayed in the environment. Paul also spoke to several employees to ask them about how information on instructions and regulations was communicated to them. Paul made comprehensive notes during the review.	1.2 Identify how information on health and safety instructions and regulations are currently communicated. 1.3 Identify current level of understanding and support for health and safety instructions and procedures.

Knowledge and understanding apparent from this observation
Current communication strategies in respect of health and safety — Paul completed a thorough review which will support the development of a plan to promote a health and safety culture within the organisation. Current level of understanding and support for health and safety instructions and procedures — Through his insightful discussions with employees as he conducted his review Paul was able to identify the current level of understanding and support for health and safety within the organisation which will all make a valuable contribution to the development of his plan.

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

Assessor's comments and feedback to learner
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 learner's performance was satisfactory.

Assessor's signature <u>Peter Hoskins</u> Date   00/00/0000

Learner's signature   <u>Paul Lee</u>   Date   00/00/0000

Questions and learner responses

This form can be used to record any questions you might ask the learner to establish what they know and understand. You should note the learner'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 learner written questions, this form could also be used.

Record of questions and learner's answers

Unit	Promote a Culture of Health and Safety in the Workplace
Outcome(s)	
Evidence index number	6

Circumstances of assessment
First review session with learner. (Considering assessment criteria: 1.2 and 1.3 in particular)

List of questions and learner's responses
Q Having completed your review of the workplace how would you rate the way health and safety information is currently communicated to the workforce within your organisation? Can you support your view?
A I'd say that currently the communication with regard to health and safety is adequate. There are some good practices, but there are also plenty of opportunities for improvement.
Q Having completed your review, spoken to employees and collated the results of your questionnaire, what would you say is the current level of understanding and support for health and safety instructions and procedures?
A Generally, the understanding of health and safety instructions and procedures is good. All employees remembered the information they had been given at induction. They could show me the relevant sections within the staff handbook and they were aware of the importance of health and safety. However, in some of the operational areas there are instances where standards have begun to slip and shortcuts are being made. When I develop my plan, I will need to focus on opportunities for promoting the advantages and legal necessity of following health and safety procedures. I'm sure management will support me with this.

Assessor's signature <u>Peter Hoskins</u>   Date   00/00/0000

Learner's signature <u>Paul Lee</u>   Date   00/00/0000

Learner's personal statement

If a personal statement is being used as evidence, it should be completed by the learner. 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 learner should record how the statement links to other evidence in the column provided.

Personal statement

Date	Evidence index number	Details of statement	Links to other evidence (enter numbers)	Unit, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria covered
00/00/0000	5	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	1.2

Learner'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 learner'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 learner (for example supervisor, client) address, telephone number and the date. There is space for this information in the form.

Witness testimony

Qualification title and level	Promote a Culture of Health and Safety in the Workplace
Learner's name	Paul Lee
Evidence index no.	7
Index no. of other evidence which this testimony relates to (if any)	
Outcome(s)	
Date of evidence	00/00/0000
Name of witness	Dave Mulvaney (on behalf of senior management team)
Designation/relationship to learner	Senior manager responsible for health and safety, line manager of Paul Lee

Details of testimony
Paul has provided a very insightful and detailed plan to support the promotion of a culture of health and safety within the organisation. Paul has made some good recommendations about how the communication of health and safety information could be improved; he has based this on some sound research, including a detailed audit, discussions with staff and the results of a staff questionnaire. Paul has clearly used his knowledge and understanding of health and safety and the organisation to include within his plan new and innovative opportunities for promoting health and safety within the organisation.   The senior management team has agreed Paul's plan and recommended that he takes this forward. I can confirm the learner's performance was satisfactory.

Witness's signature   <u>Dave Mulvaney</u>   Date   <u>00/00/0000</u>

Witness (please select the appropriate box):

☐   Holds appropriate qualifications

☐   Is familiar with the units to which the learner is working

Filling the gaps

There may come a time when the learner has provided evidence for most of the unit (or qualification), 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 this by extending the time period for the overall completion of the unit, so that the learner has adequate time to provide relevant information and advice when it is needed. If acceptable, evidence may be gathered through simulation or opportunities to take on different roles within the organisation.

Guidance and support to learners

At all times during the assessment process — from planning through to making your assessment decision — feedback should be on-going, clear and constructive. Feedback should be given against the units relating it to the evidence provided.

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

6 Judging learner evidence and making an assessment decision

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

Evidence must:

♦ be relevant to qualification and be authentic
♦ show current competence
♦ be sufficient to help you form a decision about the learner's competence

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 learner's current competence.

Insufficient evidence

You must judge whether the learner has produced enough evidence required by the units for you to reach a decision about their evidence.

Where there is insufficient evidence, you should say this to the learner. 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 the learners must help them produce more evidence and/or plan for further assessment.

Authenticating learners' evidence

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

You can check whether a learner 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 learner.

The learner'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 learner. Questioning the learner about approaches to developing the plan would also help to authenticate the evidence produced.

7   Recording achievement

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

The learner's evidence is normally kept in a file, often called a portfolio. These documents help you and the learners to collect, present and cross-reference the evidence to the units. They are also a means of recording your assessment decisions, and they tell an external verifier what stage a learner has reached in achieving the qualification.

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 learners 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 so important:

♦   it provides a way of tracking a learner's progress in achieving a qualification
♦   it helps learners to make claims for certification of their competence
♦   internal verifiers and external verifiers use the records to sample assessment decisions
♦   it helps with monitoring the quality assurance of SQA qualifications

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

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

♦   Using the evidence index
♦   Completing the unit progress record
♦   Completing the learning outcome achievement record

Using the index of evidence

The purpose of the index of evidence is to help you locate and work through the learner's evidence. It should give you a summary of what evidence the learner has collected, and where (for example, 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 learner's evidence)

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

You must make sure that the information in the evidence index is accurate when the learners' 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 qualification, for example observation checklists, is filed in the learner's portfolio. In this way, the learner 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.

Index of evidence

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 unit progress record

You should complete this form each time the learner achieves a unit from the qualification by adding your signature and the date next to the relevant unit.

At this stage, learners 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 learner is at in their qualification.

Unit progress record

Qualification and level: Click or tap here to enter text.

 Learner name: Click or tap here to enter text.

 To achieve the whole qualification, I must prove competence in <mark>insert number </mark>mandatory units and <mark>insert number </mark>optional units.

 ## Unit checklist

Mandatory units	Optional units
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit
Name of unit	Name of unit

Mandatory units achieved

SQA code	Unit title	Assessor's signature	Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date

Optional units achieved

SQA code	Unit title	Assessor's signature	Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date
SQA code	Unit title		Date

8   Further information

What else should I read?

SQA 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 regulated vocational qualifications. Details of these and other SQA publications are available on our website at www.sqa.org.uk.

Assessment: A Guide for Centres Offering Externally Regulated Qualifications, FA5465

Internal Verification: A Guide for Centres, AA7617

HNVQ Internal Verification Toolkit

Information on Reasonable Adjustments for Qualifications regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales, EA6058.

Appendix 1: Blank recording forms

On the SQA website there are downloadable versions of blank recording forms that. These are generic forms that can be found on the individual qualification page, within the Learner Guidance and Portfolio section. This includes blank versions of the following forms:

Unit Progress Record

- Assessment Plan

- Learner Declaration

- Personal Profile

- Index of Evidence

- Observation Record

- Question and Answer

- Personal Statement

- Witness Testimony