

Assessment Strategy

NVQ/SVQ Level 2: Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Removal

Introduction

This document sets out the assessment strategy for the Level 2 N/SVQ Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Removal. The assessment strategy describes the ConstructionSkills expectations with regard to assessment of the National Occupational Standards that form the basis of the qualification.

The document has been prepared following guidance published by QCA and SQA 'Developing an assessment strategy for N/SVQs' and 'Good practice in the development of assessment strategies for N/SVQs'.

As with all N/SVQs, Awarding Bodies are also expected to meet the requirements for quality control as set out by the regulatory bodies.

N/SVQs have been in operation in the sector for a number of years. The assessment strategy therefore reflects and builds upon existing experience and good practice in relation to assessment and quality control.

This document addresses the responsibilities of ConstructionSkills in respect of the four components of an assessment strategy:

- mandatory requirement for evidence from performance in the workplace
- where simulated working conditions may be deployed to assess competence and the characteristics that simulation should have
- the occupational expertise requirements for assessors and verifiers
- the recommended approach to external quality control of assessment.

Assessment of performance in the workplace and simulation

The majority of the evidence required for this award must be derived from performance in the workplace. The units of competence clearly indicate in bold italic print the few instances where evidence via simulation is permitted. All simulations, where these are allowed, must be set up to replicate real work activities as closely as possible to those normally found in the workplace. Simulations must be designed to achieve the following:

- Candidates must be able to demonstrate the actions they would take, using the equipment and materials normally found within the workplace;
- Information available to candidates on the hazards and risks they may encounter and the response expected must be consistent with workplace policies and practices of a typical organisation involved with asbestos removal.

Where simulation is allowed, it must only be practised under the conditions of a realistic working environment, which is defined as:

- A place where the provision of hazardous and/or non-hazardous waste removal activities are carried out;
- Working conditions should reflect those found in the workplace (which may include the customers' premises) and include facilities, appliances, systems and controls used in the workplace for the activities being assessed. The simulation must also replicate the constraints and pressures of the workplace.

Occupational competence of assessors and verifiers

Assessors

Assessors for the N/SVQ must be occupationally competent and must have an up-to-date working knowledge of hazardous and non-hazardous waste removal, they must:

- have sufficient current operational experience (see note 1) appropriate to the level of N/SVQ they intend to assess (they must still be working in the sector)
- hold an in-depth knowledge of the National Occupational Standards for Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Removal
- hold or be working towards Employment National Training Organisation (ENTO) unit A1 or hold units D32 and D33. In Scotland the Scottish teaching exemption should apply and where the ENTO units apply, an action plan should be agreed for their achievement.

All assessors must have a sound in-depth knowledge of the National Occupational Standards and requirements of the Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Removal N/SVQ; they must also have knowledge and access to the Awarding Body policies and procedures.

All assessors must only assess in their acknowledged area of occupational competence.

All assessors must be registered with their approved centre and be accountable to that organisation for their assessment practice.

All assessors must demonstrate a commitment to uphold the integrity of the National Occupational Standards and their assessment practices.

All assessors must be prepared to participate in training initiatives for their continued professional development.

All assessors must provide evidence of their ability to maintain occupational competence thus keeping their technical knowledge and skills up to date.

Ideally, assessors will not be involved in the training of candidates. However, if this places an unrealistic assessment burden on the approved centre, it is acceptable, in instances where the assessor might hold a position of giving him/her a vested interest in the outcome of the assessment, for the Awarding Body to implement additional quality assurance measures to ensure that the integrity and objectivity of assessment will not be compromised.

Note 1 Operational experience is defined as a period of employment in the hazardous and non-hazardous waste removal sector, e.g. as an operative, a chargehand or supervisor, a manager of operatives, chargehands or supervisors.

Internal Verifiers

Internal Verifiers for the N/SVQ must be occupationally competent and must have an up-to-date working knowledge of hazardous and non-hazardous waste removal, they must:

- have experience appropriate to the level of N/SVQ they intend to verify (they must still be working in the sector)
- have an in-depth knowledge of National Occupational Standards for Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Removal
- hold or be working towards ENTO unit V1 or hold unit D34, they must also hold the ENTO unit A1 or units D32 and D33.

Internal Verifiers must be in a position to contribute to and influence an Approved Centre's assessment policy. They should be EITHER

- employed by the same organisation as an Assessor (Internal verifiers cannot verify their own assessments) OR
- working in partnership with the Approved Centre and have access to the evidence used by the Assessors.

All internal verifiers must have a sound in-depth knowledge of the National Occupational Standards and N/SVQ requirements for the assessments they are verifying. They must also have a good knowledge or access to the Awarding Body policies and procedures.

All internal verifiers must demonstrate a commitment to uphold the integrity of the National Occupational Standards and their assessment and verification practices.

All internal verifiers must be prepared to participate in training initiatives for their continued professional development.

All internal verifiers must provide evidence of their ability to maintain occupational competence thus keeping their technical knowledge and skills up to date.

External Verifiers

External Verifiers must have an up-to-date working knowledge of the sector – this is defined as:

- having in-depth knowledge of the National Occupational Standards for hazardous and non-hazardous waste removal
- have sufficient expertise within the sector OR
- involvement in the delivery of training and skills development activities within the sector.

External Verifiers must either hold or be working towards ENTO Unit V2 or hold unit D35, the units of competence concerned with external verification when they are appointed by the Awarding Body. External Verifiers must also hold ENTO unit A1 or units D32 and D33 and they are encouraged to achieve unit V1 or hold unit D34.

External Verifiers must demonstrate a commitment to uphold the integrity of the National Occupational Standards and their assessment and verification practices.

External Verifiers must be prepared to participate in training initiatives for their continued professional development.

External Verifiers must demonstrate their ability to maintain credibility with the sector and to retain the confidence of the sector through commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.

External quality control of assessment

This section of the Assessment Strategy addresses the need to put in place means by which greater quality control of assessment can be achieved and can be recognised.

The purposes of introducing external quality control strategies for the N/SVQ are as follows:

- raising the credibility of the awards in the eyes of the industry and the general public
- reducing the risk of pressure being placed on assessment organisations to award qualifications
- ensuring consistency of the assessment of the essential knowledge and understanding
- raising the health and safety standards within the industry.

A four-strand approach to quality control of assessment has been adopted for the Hazardous and Non-hazardous Waste Removal N/SVQ:

- 1 Externally set banks of questions and answers available to assess the 'essential' knowledge and understanding not demonstrated through performance alone. These should be available for each unit, delivered and marked internally and moderated externally by external verifiers. This will serve to ensure the consistency of assessments of the essential knowledge and understanding.
- 2 For quality control purposes Awarding Bodies should base independent assessment and verification on the health and safety unit VR 01 (Conform to General Workplace Safety).
- 3 A risk assessment approach should be used to identify and evaluate the likely risks that assessment decisions may be unsound, so that prompt and effective actions can be taken to achieve reliable, valid and consistent assessment. A statistical monitoring system should be adopted to provide information on the performance of centres and assessors. The information should be used to inform the external verification policies and practices and to inform the development of training and development events and activities. It is also recommended that the information be used to establish an effective system of cross-centre consistency of interpretation and assessment of the National Occupational Standards through, for example, national external verifier meetings and regional assessor and internal verifier meetings.
- 4 Ideally, assessors will not be involved in the training of candidates. However, it is recognised that if this places an unrealistic burden on the approved centre, it is acceptable that instances where the assessor might hold a position of giving him/her a vested interest in the outcome of the assessments, the Standards Setting Body would require the Awarding Body to implement additional quality assurance measures to ensure that the integrity and objectivity of assessment will not be compromised. This will include EV sampling as determined by the Awarding Body.