

Skills for Logistics Assessment Strategy for NVQs and SVQs

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Introduction

This document sets out the recommendations of Skills for Logistics for the assessment of NVQ and SVQ qualifications based on Skills for Logistics-developed National Occupational Standards. **It replaces the Assessment Strategy for NVQs and SVQs dated February 2003 and the Assessment Strategy for Mail Services NVQ dated May 2005.**

Application of the Strategy

1. The main body of this document describes the overarching strategy for the assessment and verification of S/NVQs based on the following National Occupational Standards:

Driving Goods Vehicles

Carry and Deliver Goods

Traffic Office

Storage and Warehousing/Warehousing and Storage

Distribution, Warehousing and Storage Operations

Mail Services

International Trade and Logistics Operations

Logistics Operations Management

2. Further annexes describe additional assessment, verification and related certification requirements that apply to specified S/NVQs. Currently there are four such annexes: Annex B dealing with Driving Goods Vehicles; Annex C dealing with Carry and Deliver Goods; Annex D dealing with Mail Services; and Annex E dealing with Warehousing and Storage.

As required by future qualifications development, further annexes will be submitted to UKCG for approval and incorporation into the strategy.

The Assessment Strategy

The Strategy has four elements:

- External Quality Control of Assessment
- Workplace Assessment/Simulation
- Realistic Work Environment
- Occupational expertise of Assessors and Verifiers

External Quality Control of Assessment

External quality control of assessment will be achieved through rigorous internal and external verification processes underpinned by effective risk management.

To ensure that common approaches are employed and that consistent, high standards are achieved, Skills for Logistics require Awarding Bodies delivering

Skills for Logistics S/NVQs to participate in an Awarding Body Forum. This will, as a minimum, involve an annual meeting to discuss issues of assessment and verification.

External verifiers will be required to sample the work of all assessors and implement rigorous risk management strategies consistently across all centres for which they are responsible. Internal verifiers should sample evidence from all candidates and observe each assessor conducting candidate assessments at regular intervals.

External verifiers should also generally aim to sample the work of candidates at each centre, appropriate to the centre size; number of candidates registered; and identified risk rating by Awarding Body.

Skills for Logistics recommend that Awarding Bodies adopt a risk rating and risk management system for centres offering Skills for Logistics S/NVQs. Subject to guidance from the regulatory bodies, Skills for Logistics recommend that such systems identify:

- Commercial Risk – is there potential for commercial pressures to ensure that candidates achieve qualifications within unduly short time frames?
- Assessment/Verification risk – are factors apparent in the relationship between candidates, assessors and verifiers that might prejudice a fair and consistent assessment process?

Where risks or potential risks are identified, Skills for Logistics expects that the Awarding Body, via the external verifier takes appropriate action to ensure that the credibility of the assessment process is not prejudiced.

Workplace Assessment/Simulation

Skills for Logistics NOS are work-competency based and therefore candidates are to be assessed under normal workplace conditions. However it is recognised that there are situations where the workplace may not be appropriate or waiting for naturally occurring evidence is impractical. Skills for Logistics therefore allows centres to set up or devise assessment situations, with the prior agreement of the external verifier that the simulation is valid before assessment is undertaken. We suggest that centres seek written confirmation before proceeding with assessment. The need for simulation may result from consideration of:

- Safety
- Legislation
- Regulation
- Contingency
- Cost

In addition, Skills for Logistics recognises that candidates using these NOS in the context of a Level 1 award may be in a learning environment and not in a

workplace. In these situations, centres may set up or devise assessment situations as required, with prior agreement of the external verifier.

Skills for Logistics re-iterates that its NOS have been designed to be capable of assessment in the normal workplace and that subject to the arrangements for simulation described above this should be the case. Skills for Logistics will indicate RWE requirements within specific NOS.

An employer who wishes to use their own training programme must be able to confirm that their in-house practices conform to the requirements of Skills for Logistics NOS, in association with the prospective Awarding Body which will be offering the qualification. The mapping process must be agreed by the Awarding Body as providing the equivalent rigour and robustness as the achievement of the unit qualification.

Witness Testimony

Witness testimony is recognised by Skills for Logistics as an appropriate tool for assessors in collecting evidence about candidate performance in the workplace. However before using witness testimony, assessors must satisfy themselves that:

- Witnesses are clear as to the purpose and use of the testimony;
- Witnesses have relevant experience and expertise in the area of competence in which they are providing testimony and;
- There is no relationship between the candidate and witness or witness and assessor that might invalidate the testimony.

Realistic Work Environment

To ensure that assessment is carried out in realistic work environment (RWE), Skills for Logistics requires that candidates be in a relevant job role in the logistics sector throughout the period of assessment, except in the circumstances for Level 1, described in the above section 'Workplace Assessment/Simulation'. Assessors should ensure that they and the internal verifier agree that the candidate is in a suitable job role during the period of assessment. If required, the internal verifier should ensure that the candidate's job description is made available to the external verifier in their portfolio.

Criteria for Assessors and Verifiers

Regulations for the approval of vocational qualifications require Awarding Bodies to put arrangements in place for independent assessment, including criteria for the qualifications and practices of assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers. The provisions of this Strategy set out below are intended to complement, not duplicate these requirements.

Occupational expertise of Assessors and Verifiers

Skills for Logistics NOS are designed to be assessed by vocationally competent assessors in the workplace, backed up by consistent internal verification, and external verification through the work of the Awarding Bodies. The overall criteria set out below and any criteria specific to individual S/NVQs indicated in the annexes will be kept under review by Skills for Logistics. Skills for Logistics will continue to encourage Awarding Bodies to monitor the impact of these criteria on the quality of assessment.

Assessors

Assessors must meet the following criteria:

1. Current industry experience and competence, that is verifiable and relevant, in the occupational area in which they are assessing, gained either in employment or in assessment activities. If the latter, the assessor should be able to provide the relevant external verifier with evidence of professional development showing that they have maintained the currency of their knowledge of working practices in the sector.

Experience and competence could be evidenced by:

- Curriculum vitae and references
 - Possession of a relevant S/NVQ
 - Membership of a relevant professional institution
 - Continuing professional development
2. Current working knowledge of the national occupational standards against which they are assessing.
 3. Assessors should satisfy the qualification requirements specified by the regulatory authorities, unless they are assessing in an '**employer direct**' model (below).

Workplace Assessment – The Role of Supervisors and Managers in the Assessment Process

Where employers opt for an '**employer direct**' model, the qualification requirements specified by the regulatory authorities may be waived as described below.

The 'employer direct' model is where colleagues, supervisors and/or managers in the workplace are involved in the assessment process. Under this model, the employer, with the agreement of their Awarding Body and the approval of the qualifications Regulators, may choose between:

- Achieving the appropriate regulatory body approved unit qualifications for assessment and internal verification

OR

Demonstrating that the employer's training and development activity undertaken to prepare, validate and review these assessment/verification roles, is conducted to the National Standards for assessment and verification.

The alternative option described above, which waives the need for the regulatory approved units, must be confined in application to an 'organisation by organisation' and 'qualification by qualification' basis, and agreed by the qualification regulators.

Internal Verifiers

Internal verifiers should assure themselves that all assessors whose assessments they are verifying meet the criteria set out above. They must also meet the following criteria:

1. Current working knowledge of the national occupational standards against which they are verifying.
2. Experience in the occupational area in which they are verifying gained either in employment or in assessment/verification activities. If the latter, the verifier should be able to provide the external verifier with evidence of professional development showing that they have maintained the currency of their knowledge of working practices in the sector.
3. Internal verifiers should satisfy the qualification requirements specified by the regulatory authorities, unless they are verifying in an '**employer direct**' model (above).

External Verifiers

External verifiers should assure themselves that all internal verifiers whose verifications they are verifying meet the criteria set out above.

They must also meet the following criteria:

1. Current working knowledge of the national occupational standards against which they are verifying.
2. Satisfy the qualification requirements specified by the regulatory authorities.
3. Ideally have experience in the occupational area in which they are verifying gained either in employment or in assessment/verification activities. If the latter, the verifier should be able to provide the

awarding body with evidence of professional development showing that they have maintained the currency of their knowledge of working practices in the sector.

Annex A

Rationale for the Strategy

In developing and maintaining the currency of this Strategy, Skills for Logistics has been guided by the following processes and arrangements:

- The development and maintenance of Skills for Logistics NOS and the oversight of their development as S/NVQs is overseen by the **Skills for Logistics' Executive Board**.
- Skills for Logistics has arrangements for the delivery of S/NVQs with **Awarding Bodies**. Formal arrangements are in place relating to the delivery of specific S/NVQs and regular meetings are held with Awarding Body product managers to discuss delivery issues, including assessment and verification.
- Skills for Logistics holds meetings at least annually open to all Centres delivering S/NVQs in the sector and who are Skills for Logistics 'Approved Training Organisations'. These provide direct feedback from assessors and verifiers using the S/NVQs.

Standard Tests

Skills for Logistics has considered the potential value of setting standard tests to be used by the Awarding Bodies. It has concluded that it would be extremely difficult to devise a standard set of assessments that would be valid, credible, and practicable and still cover equitably the multifarious types of: company or organisation, vehicle, load, delivery conditions, and customers that comprise the industry.

As a heavily regulated industry most candidates being assessed for a qualification based on Skills for Logistics NOS are also subject to other testing relating to acquisition of a statutory licence or certificate associated with the operation of vehicles and equipment or the job role they undertake. These are therefore closely related to the content of the NOS-based qualifications. Significant among these are: the DSA Driving Tests for vans, rigid trucks and articulated trucks; certification for Lift trucks, used by warehouse operative staff, required by the Health and Safety Executive; and the Certificate of Professional Competence for Transport Operators required by an EU Directive as part of the licensing process for operators of goods vehicle fleets ('O' Licensing)

Annex B

Specific Criteria for the Assessment and Verification of Driving Goods Vehicles

Assessors

- In the case of the qualification ***Driving Goods Vehicles*** at Level 2 and Level 3 assessors must hold a Driving Licence with the entitlement needed to drive the vehicle on which the assessment is being undertaken.
- Assessors must satisfy the external verifier that they are occupationally competent in the employment context in which assessment is undertaken.
- When assessment takes place in the context of the movement or handling of dangerous goods the assessor must hold a current ADR certificate.

Internal Verifiers

- In the case of the qualification ***Driving Goods Vehicles*** at Level 2 and Level 3 internal verifiers must have a working knowledge of the DVLA Driving Licence regulations relating to the candidate and the vehicle on which the assessment is being undertaken.
- When assessment takes place in the context of the management, movement or handling of dangerous goods the internal verifier must have a working knowledge of ADR certification and the risks associated with the transport of dangerous goods.

External Verifiers

- When assessment takes place in the context of the handling of dangerous goods the external verifier must have a working knowledge of ADR certification and the risks associated with the transport of dangerous goods.

Annex C

Specific Criteria for the Assessment, Verification and Certification of Carry and Deliver Goods.

Assessors

- Assessors must hold a current Driving Licence with the entitlement needed to drive the vehicle on which the assessment is to take place (i.e., Cat A or Cat B or Cat C1 or Cat C or Cat C+E).
- Assessors must satisfy the external verifier that they are occupationally competent in the employment context in which assessment is undertaken.

Annex D

Specific Criteria for the Assessment, Verification and Certification of Mail Services

Mail Services NOS are work-competency based and therefore candidates are to be assessed under normal workplace conditions. However, it is recognised that there are situations where the workplace may not be appropriate, or waiting for naturally occurring evidence is impractical for Unit 1 'Contribute to safety and security in mail services'. Skills for Logistics therefore allow centres to set up or devise assessment situations for this unit, with the prior agreement of the external verifier that the simulation is valid before assessment is undertaken.

Annex E

Specific criteria for the Assessment and Verification of Warehousing and Storage

Assessors

In the case of the qualification Warehousing and Storage at levels 1 and 2, where the candidate uses equipment that requires specific training, or a 'licence' (certificate), for example lift trucks, assessors must have undertaken the specific training, or hold the 'licence' for the type of equipment on which the assessment is to take place.

Expert witness

Where the assessor has not undertaken the specific training, or does not hold the 'licence' for the type of equipment on which the assessment is to take place, the testimony of an expert witness should be sought.

An expert witness **must** be someone who is both competent on the type of equipment and is working sufficiently closely with the candidate to be able to comment on their operating ability. Competence may be demonstrated by the achievement of a 'licence' or evidence of specific training.

The expert witness is not consulted as a professional assessor, but as someone who is expert in the use of the type of equipment being used.