



IMI
Automotive Retail Sector
Assessment Strategy for
Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)



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1. Introduction

1.1 **Background**

This assessment strategy applies to all competence based units and qualifications that sit within the automotive retail sub-sectors represented by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI). Competence based units and qualifications in Scotland are in the form of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). This sector assessment strategy comes into force on the 1st April 2015 and will apply to any new competence based units and qualifications. It will also replace other assessment strategies, currently used for existing SVQs, as and when they are updated and re-accredited. See www.theimi.org.uk for a list of all competence based units and qualifications that are covered by the sector assessment strategy. There are four components to the sector assessment strategy which set out requirements and guidance relating to:

- assessment principles
- occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers
- external quality control of assessment
- continuous professional development

The purpose of the sector assessment strategy is for the IMI and awarding bodies to work in partnership to:

- maximise the quality assurance arrangements for the sector's competence based units and qualifications and maintain standardisation across assessment practice
- assure employers and candidates that the sector's competence based units and qualification are consistently assessed to the National Occupational Standards, and
- promote continuous professional development amongst assessors and verifiers

The content of the assessment strategy has been reviewed in close consultation with awarding bodies. The primary audience are awarding bodies that offer Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) in the automotive retail sector. Prospective or approved centres should not need to work directly with this document as its requirements will be incorporated within the procedures of their chosen awarding body. The strategy should be used alongside the assessment and quality assurance guidance published by the regulatory authority.

1.2 **Scope of this assessment strategy**

This assessment strategy relates to the technical National Occupational Standards developed by IMI and as a result applies to the SVQs that have been put in place to cover the following sectors of the industry:

This is the overarching strategy for the assessment and verification of SVQs that are based upon National Occupational Standards from the IMI.



1.3 The aims of the assessment strategy

1.3.1 This assessment strategy addresses the key features specified by SQA Accreditation in terms of the design and delivery of assessment.

1.3.2 The aim of this assessment strategy is to put in place a robust assessment system that will instil industry confidence in SVQs.

1.3.3 IMI will work closely with its awarding body partners to develop this assessment strategy further. Together we aim to use this assessment strategy to put in place:

- sets of operating principles for awarding bodies
- guidance materials for assessment centres on how to manage the system of assessment
- a range of materials that candidates, assessors and internal verifiers will use for assessment purposes
- systems and materials to monitor the quality of assessment



2. Assessment requirements

Candidates seeking an SVQ based on the technical National Occupational Standards developed by IMI must:

- take and pass assessments in order to test underpinning knowledge described in the technical units
- complete tasks in the workplace or, in exceptional circumstances, a simulated environment, in order to confirm occupational competence.

2.1. Assessment of underpinning knowledge:

2.1.1 The awarding body should decide how best to fully assess the underpinning knowledge of the candidate to fulfil the requirements of the SVQ.

2.2. Assessment of occupational competence:

The main purpose of the National Occupational Standards and the SVQs developed from them is to assess the occupational competence of candidates, which is their ability to use all their skills and knowledge to complete tasks effectively so that the expectations of employers and customers are met.

2.2.1 Candidates must be assessed in the workplace where they will complete tasks that will provide them with opportunities to produce performance evidence demonstrating that the National Occupational Standards have been met.

2.2.2 The workplace must always be the first place of choice for assessment to be carried out. It is expected that candidates will complete tasks in their normal place of work, but if this is not possible because they do not complete the type of tasks that would be appropriate to the units being assessed, then they can move to another workplace where the task is carried out.

2.2.3 Awarding bodies must stress to and make clear in their guidance to approved assessment centres that assessment of candidates must take place in the workplace. Awarding bodies are also expected to monitor assessment centres in order to make sure that candidates are generating performance evidence from tasks completed in the workplace.

2.2.4 If candidates do not have the opportunity to carry out a task that would generate performance evidence for a particular unit, because the task does not occur at frequent intervals within the workplace or to carry out a task would be unsafe, then the assessment centre can use a simulated environment through which the candidate completes the task. For example, it may not always be possible to diagnose and rectify faults because they do not frequently occur, in which case a simulated environment could be used. In addition, dealing with fire and other emergencies such as recovering overturned vehicles, might be better assessed through a simulated environment because this approach would be safer.

2.2.5 Simulated environments must not be used for the assessment of entire units. For example, if a unit asks the candidate to complete three tasks by working on different types of equipment simulation can only be used once. As a result two of the tasks must be completed in the workplace such as the candidate's normal place of work. This will ensure that the minimum specifications for workplace evidence are met in every instance.



2.2.6 Simulation must be agreed with the awarding body prior to its use by an assessment centre.

2.2.7 A simulated environment must be managed and organised by an approved assessment centre. Only assessment centres that have been approved by a nationally accredited awarding body can set up simulated environments.

2.2.8 A simulated environment must allow the candidate to perform an entire occupational role in an environment that replicates the working environment as closely as possible. Guidance on what should be covered and included in order to manage and organise a simulated environment is provided in Appendix One. The aim of the guidance is to help ensure that candidates:

- work in a realistic facility
- have access to complete vehicles
- use up to date information sources
- have access to appropriate tools, parts and materials
- use and complete appropriate documentation
- work to recognised time schedules
- take care of all resources
- work in a safe way

2.2.9 Candidates will need to be observed by qualified assessors as they complete tasks in the workplace or in a simulated environment. The number of times a candidate must be assessed through observation is determined in the evidence requirements for the units.



3. Requirements for Assessors and Verifiers

3.1 Assessor Requirements

The assessment of SVQs must be carried out by approved industry competent assessors.

Assessors will be responsible for, and accountable for, the validity, reliability and authenticity of evidence.

The primary responsibility of the assessor is to ensure that candidates satisfy the requirements of the National Occupational Standards. It is important that an assessor can recognise occupational competence as specified by the National Occupational Standards. Assessors therefore need to have a thorough understanding of assessment and quality assurance practices, as well as have in depth technical competence related to the qualifications for which they are assessing candidates.

It will be the responsibility of the approved centre to select and appoint assessors.

It will be the responsibility of the awarding body to approve centre selected assessors.

To be an approved assessor the person must:-

- have sufficient and relevant technical/occupational competence in the unit, at or above the level of the unit being assessed
- have in depth knowledge of the qualification or SVQ unit evidence requirements
- hold or be working towards the appropriate assessor qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation the qualification regulator. Assessors holding older assessor qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards
- when working towards a relevant assessor qualification, achieve their qualification within 12 months
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the competencies that a learner is required to demonstrate for the qualification that they are undertaking
- provide evidence of completing 5 days working / job shadowing in industry within their professional area in a 24 month period
- provide evidence of 30 hours of technical / qualification related CPD within a 12 month period.(This is in additional to working / job shadowing)
- be approved by the awarding body, in line with their policies and processes, to carry out assessments for the SVQs they are competent in

Approval of assessors can be **removed**.

Assessors **cannot** assess the SVQ if they are not currently approved by, or have had their approval removed by, the awarding body.



3.2 Internal Verifier Requirements.

SVQs must be underpinned by quality assurance appropriate to workplace based delivery. At a minimum this should reflect the principles outlined below.

Internal verification of SVQs shall be the responsibility of approved industry competent internal verifiers (IVs)

The primary responsibility of the IV is to assure the quality and consistency of assessments by the assessors for whom they are responsible. IVs therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as technical competence related to the qualifications that they are internally verifying.

IVs will be responsible for, and accountable for consistency, quality and reliability of evidence and assessors.

It will be the responsibility of the approved centre to select and appoint IVs

It will be the responsibility of the awarding body to approve centre selected IVs

To be an approved IV the person must:-

- have in-depth knowledge of the occupational standards and SVQ unit evidence requirements
- be occupationally aware of the relevant industry sector being internally verified
- hold or be working towards the appropriate internal verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation (see appendix two, table two) the qualification regulator. Internal verifiers holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards
- when working towards a relevant qualification (defined as a 'current unit' within table two in appendix two), achieve their qualification within 12 months
- provide evidence of CPD totalling not less than 30 hours from within their professional area within a 12 month period
- be approved by the awarding body, in line with their policies and processes, to carry out internal verification for relevant SVQ(s)
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the quality assurance processes required by the centre and the awarding body

Approval of internal verifiers can be **removed**.

Internal verifiers **cannot** verify the SVQ if they are not approved by, or have had their approval removed by the awarding body.



3.2 Multi Discipline Assessors and Internal Verifiers

Assessors and IVs who work across multi disciplines must agree to a programme of CPD that will, over an agreed period of time, show their competence across all areas that they assess.

The programme of CPD and the timescale must be agreed for each multi discipline assessor by their external verifier (EV) and may be subject to scrutiny by IMI.

It is the responsibility of the centre to keep a record of these agreements.

4. External Quality Control of Assessment

4.1 External Verifier Requirements

Awarding bodies will be responsible for selection and appointment of external verifiers.

To be an approved EV or moderator the person must:-

- hold or be working towards the appropriate external verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation (see appendix two, table three) the qualification regulator. EVs holding older qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards
- when working towards a relevant qualification (defined as a 'current unit' within table three in appendix two, achieve their qualification within 12 months
- have experience of working within the Automotive industry gained through current or prior employment in order to have an up to date technical awareness relevant to the SVQ they are seeking to externally verify
- have a sound and in-depth knowledge of the SVQ requirements
- demonstrate their commitment to maintaining their industry knowledge by providing evidence of CPD totalling not less than 30 hours from within their professional area within a 12 month period

4.2 External Quality Control

It is expected that the awarding of qualifications will be underpinned by quality assurance appropriate to workplace based delivery. At a minimum this should reflect the principles outlined below.

External quality control of assessment is the responsibility of the awarding bodies. They must ensure that common approaches are employed and that consistent, high standards are achieved.

EVs will be required to implement rigorous risk management strategies consistently across all centres for which they are responsible.

IMI recommends that awarding bodies adopt a risk rating and risk management system for centres offering IMI SVQs.

IMI 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, IMI expects that the awarding body, via the EV, takes appropriate action to ensure that the credibility of the assessment process is not prejudiced.



Awarding bodies will be responsible for and accountable for the quality of SVQs delivered and assessed by their approved assessment centres.



Appendix One

IMI SVQ ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Evidence other than from direct workplace observation

1. Workplace Assessment/Simulation.

IMI SVQ units are work / competency based and therefore candidates are to be assessed under normal workplace conditions. It is recognised however, that there are situations where the workplace may not be appropriate or that waiting for naturally occurring evidence is impractical. In these situations IMI will allow centres to set up or devise assessment situations.

These assessment situations can only be set up after:-

- all possible routes for the collection of naturally occurring evidence have been exhausted
- the exact make up and content of the centre devised assessment has been agreed and approved by the EV
- the assessor can assure that the simulation will provide evidence that is valid, reliable and authentic

It is a pre requirement that centres seek written confirmation before proceeding with simulated assessment. The need for simulation may result from consideration of:

- Safety
- Legislation
- Regulation
- Contingency
- Cost
- Frequency

In addition, IMI recognises that candidates using these SVQ units in the context of a Level 1 SVQ 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 written agreement of the EV.

Any simulation must be carried out using actual vehicles; the use of engine rigs or electrical boards is not permitted.

IMI re-iterates that its SVQ units 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.

Simulation will be monitored by the awarding bodies and where it is found to be the “norm” rather than the exception suitable action will be taken.



2. Realistic Work Environment

IMI requires that candidates are assessed within their normal workplace, or in exceptional circumstances as described previously via simulation. The use of approved simulation means therefore that RWE, Realistic Work Environment is not to be used.

3. Expert Witnesses

The use of **witness testimony** and **expert witness testimony** are appropriate methods for assessors to collect supplementary evidence on candidates' performance for SVQs.

Witness testimonies may be obtained from people that are occupationally competent and whom may be familiar with the National Occupational Standards (NOS), such as the candidate's line manager.

The assessor must judge the validity of the witness testimony and these may vary depending on the source. Witness testimonies can only support the assessment process and may remove or reduce the need to collect supplementary evidence, however the awarding body's quality assurance requirements must be met. Additionally the person or persons providing the witness testimony evidence must make themselves available to the external verifier for confirmation of evidence validity if required.

4. Remote Observation.

The use of direct observation from a remote location is permitted as long as the centre seeks and receives the approval of their awarding body and discusses and agrees this with Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) prior to its use.

Appendix Two

Assessor and Verifier Guidance (September 2013)

This document has been produced to provide clarification and guidance relating to the qualification requirements for the assessment and verification of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). In addition the following clarification and guidance may also be used for assessing other types of qualifications that may be supported by assessment strategies and/or assessment principles.

Learning and Development (L & D) SVQs and Units, which are based on the current National Occupational Standards (NOS), were approved by ACG in October 2010.

Assessors and verifiers who currently hold D or A and V Units are still considered to be qualified assessors and internal verifiers/external verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Units. However, they must be working to the current NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development. **Any new assessors and verifiers, who do not currently hold any of these qualifications, should undertake the qualifications based on the current Learning and Development (L & D) NOS.**

The relationship between the current L & D Units and previous Assessor and Verifier qualifications can be found on the attached tables.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list and assessment and verification of SVQs must always be in line with the current L & D NOS and in accordance with the specific assessment strategies dependant on the requirements of the sector.

Awarding bodies must recognise that where an assessor or verifier has achieved a relevant qualification then there is no stipulation for them to repeat with the most current version.

Table One – Assessors

| Title | Abbreviation | Replaced by | Comments | Additional Comments |
|--|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| Assess workplace competence using direct methods | L & D 9D | Current Unit | This is the current accredited L & D Unit. QCF qualifications based on the current L & D NOS are equally acceptable. | NB. In all situations it is imperative that Assessors meet the occupational competency requirements specified in the specific Assessment Strategy/Principles that support individual qualifications |
| Assess workplace competences using direct and indirect methods | L & D 9DI | Current Unit | This is the current accredited L & D Unit. QCF qualifications based on the current L & D NOS are equally acceptable. | |
| Assess candidates using a range of methods | A1 | L & D 9DI | The L & D Units replaced these in May 2011. Assessors who hold these Units (A1/A2) are still considered to be qualified assessors and are not required to undertake the new Units. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development. Any new assessors should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS). | |
| Assess candidates' performance through observation | A2 | L & D 9D | | |
| Assess candidate performance | D32 | A2 | The A Units replaced these in 2008. | |
| Assess candidates using differing sources of evidence | D33 | A1 | Assessors who hold these Units (D32/D33) are still considered to be qualified assessors and are not required to undertake the new Units. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development. | |

| | | | |
|---|------|--|--|
| | | | Any new assessors should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS). |
| Teacher Qualification (Further Education) | TQFE | | This was an accepted exemption for the D Units. Assessors who hold this qualification (TQFE) are still considered to be qualified assessors and are not required to undertake the new Units. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development. |

Table Two – Internal Verifiers

| Title | Abbreviation | Replaced by | Comments | Additional Comments |
|--|--------------|--------------|---|---|
| Internal Quality Assurance | L & D 11 | Current Unit | This is the current accredited L & D Unit. QCF qualifications based on the current L & D NOS are equally acceptable. | <p>NB. In all situations it is imperative that Verifiers meet the occupational competency requirements specified in the specific Assessment Strategy/Principles that support individual qualifications</p> |
| Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process | V1 | L & D 11 | <p>The L & D Units replaced this in May 2011</p> <p>Internal Verifiers who hold this Unit (V1) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new internal verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> | |
| Internally verify the assessment process | D34 | V 1 | <p>The V Unit superseded this qualification in 2008.</p> <p>Internal Verifiers who hold this Unit (D34) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new internal verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> | |
| | | | | Additional Comments |

| Title | Abbreviation | Replaced by | Comments |
|--|--------------|--------------|--|
| External Quality Assurance | L & D 12 | Current Unit | This is the current accredited L & D Unit. QCF qualifications based on the current L & D NOS are equally acceptable. |
| Conduct external quality assurance of the assessment process | V2 | L & D 12 | <p>The L & D Units replaced this in May 2011</p> <p>External Verifiers who hold this Unit (V2) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new external verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> |
| Externally verify the assessment process | D35 | V2 | <p>The V Unit superseded this qualification in 2008.</p> <p>External Verifiers who hold this Unit (D35) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new external verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> |

Table Three – External Verifiers

| Title | Abbreviation | Replaced by | Comments | Additional Comments |
|--|--------------|--------------|---|---|
| External Quality Assurance | L & D 12 | Current Unit | <p>This is the current accredited L & D Unit. QCF qualifications based on the current L & D NOS are equally acceptable.</p> | <p>NB. In all situations it is imperative that Verifiers meet the occupational competency requirements specified in the specific Assessment Strategy/Principles that support individual qualifications</p> |
| Conduct external quality assurance of the assessment process | V2 | L & D 12 | <p>The L & D Units replaced this in May 2011</p> <p>External Verifiers who hold this Unit (V2) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new external verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> | |
| Externally verify the assessment process | D35 | V2 | <p>The V Unit superseded this qualification in 2008.</p> <p>External Verifiers who hold this Unit (D35) are still considered to be qualified verifiers and are not required to undertake the new Unit. However, they must be working to the current L & D NOS and undertaking appropriate continuous professional development.</p> <p>Any new external verifiers should undertake the Learning and Development Units which are based on most recent National Occupational Standards (NOS).</p> | |