# SQA-21054 Shell A4 Ppaer_JC



**Assessment Strategy**

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| **Sector** | Sport and Active Leisure |
| **Qualification Title(s)** | SVQ Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance at SCQF Level 8 |
| **Developed by** | SkillsActive |
| **Date approved by ACG** | 18 March 2020 |
| **Version** | 1 |

**Introduction**

SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for active sport, leisure and wellbeing, including the sport, fitness, outdoor activities, playwork, caravan and hair and beauty sectors. Our role is to create the National Occupational Standards that form the basis of all qualifications in the SkillsActive footprint including SVQs, Apprenticeships, as well as industry codes of practice.

# Purpose of the assessment strategy

This Assessment Strategy has been produced by SkillsActive in partnership with industry

and awarding bodies to ensure the SVQ Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance at SCQF Level 8, which has been developed after the approval of SkillsActive’s review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance (2019), has credibility in the industry. It outlines the principles and requirements to be applied to the assessment of knowledge, understanding, performance and competence for this qualification and associated units.

The following sections outline SkillsActive’s industry specific principles in regard to:

* External quality control of assessment
* Workplace assessment, inclusive of the use of simulation
* Assessment of knowledge and understanding
* Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment and verification process

These principles are in addition to the requirements that awarding bodies must adhere to for the delivery of qualifications, as required by the qualification regulator for Scotland (SQA Accreditation). Awarding bodies may specify additional requirements for Centres, as they consider necessary in order to enhance the principles and quality of assessment.

This strategy supersedes and replaces all previous assessment strategies and supplementary guidance.

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# Quality control of assessment

The monitoring and standardisation of assessment decisions must be achieved through robust assessment, internal and external quality assurance systems. These must be reliable, transparent and fit for purpose and must comply with the requirements of the qualification regulator (SQA Accreditation).

## Internal Verification

Centres must have an effective internal verification strategy and processes in place to ensure learners are assessed fairly and consistently, and that standards are being met.

To ensure all assessment activities are valid and effective, and that Assessors decisions are accurate, a Centre’s internal verification process should:

* Identify effective Internal Verifiers who are responsible for implementing these processes.

If necessary, identify a coordinating Internal Verifier who manages the process

* Produce an effective internal verification policy
* Produce and maintain a clear audit trail of decision making and action
* Produce an internal verification schedule of assessment activities and assessment decisions
* Produce a training and standardisation plan for all those involved in internal verification

Internal Verifiers should observe Assessors performing learner assessments at regular intervals according to awarding body guidelines, risk rating and experience of the Assessor. The reliability, validity and authenticity of evidence must be checked during these observations.

An Internal Verifier cannot internally verify either assessment activities they have produced or assessment decisions they have made.

## External Quality Control

To ensure successful monitoring and standardisation of the assessment activities made by a Centre, the assessment decisions made by an Assessor, and the Centre’s internal verification processes, an awarding body must have in place a robust external verification system with clear and effective arrangements to maintain consistency in quality. The mechanisms required to achieve this are outlined by the qualification regulator (SQA Accreditation).

In addition to the qualification regulator’s requirements, all external quality assurance reports and other data relating to a Centre must be reviewed by the awarding body. Where any risks are identified relating to the quality control of assessment the awarding body must have in place an effective risk management and rating system. This will determine, depending on a Centre’s level for risk, the appropriate external quality assurance, monitoring, support and control that should be put in place.

## Risk Assessment

All awarding bodies are required to implement effective risk management and rating systems to help protect the integrity of the qualification, safeguard assessment and verification processes and ensure standards are maintained. These systems should also focus on:

* Conflict of interest

Any personal or professional relationship between learners, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers should be declared.

* Adherence to Centre approval criteria

Centres should be continually monitored in addition to its delivery to ensure that the integrity of the qualification is maintained.

Where risk is identified through these systems, awarding bodies will need to act accordingly to ensure the Centre is performing to an acceptable level. This may include, but is not limited to:

* Inspection/spot visit(s)
* Additional monitoring of assessment activities and/or internal verification processes
* Verifying a sample of learners work from each Assessor over an agreed period of time
* Appointment of Independent Verifiers
* Or other action appropriate to the risk.

Awarding bodies should be able to demonstrate a risk assessment has been carried out for each Centre and a strategy to minimise any risk identified has been implemented.

# Workplace assessment

Learners are expected to demonstrate competence to the standards required over a period of time. Therefore, to ensure validity, evidence should be naturally occurring and collected through performance in the workplace. ‘Workplace’ in this context means a real environment in which the learner is training for and/or competing at the elite level in their sport. The learner would be defined as Elite by their National Governing Body/Scottish Governing Body.

It is acknowledged not all workplaces are the same, therefore assessment conditions may not be identical. However, to safeguard the integrity of the qualification and ensure a robust and consistent approach to assessment the Assessor must ensure the assessment conditions reflect, as far as possible, those to which the learner is expected to work.

It is imperative the learner is not placed under more, or less, pressure than found normally in the workplace during assessment. It could be the case the learner may feel more pressure simply because they are being assessed.

## Simulation

Learners should be assessed through performance in the workplace. Only in circumstances where it is difficult to collect evidence through a real work environment situation, and is deemed acceptable in specific unit guidance, may simulation be permitted.

Simulation, the imitation of a real life activity or situation, should only be undertaken:

* Where events either never or infrequently occur and yet a high degree of confidence is needed that the learner would act appropriately, for example:

health and safety activities that fall outside, or are secondary to, normal practices; or

* Where events happen frequently but where there is risk of harm to the learner in a real situation, (although evidence from direct observation should be used where possible).

Where permitted, simulation must, as far as reasonably practicable, match conditions of a realistic working environment (RWE). In other words, the conditions should match those found in the workplace, including facilities, equipment, products, as well as relationships, constraints and pressures.

## Units where simulation is permitted

Simulation is not acceptable for any units within this qualification, with the exception of unit SKAES8 - Work in a healthy and safe way whilst seeking to achieve excellence in your sport.

Awarding bodies must issue sufficient guidance to their Centres which clearly states how simulations should be planned and organised. They must also provide guidance on how the demands placed on the learner are to be no more or less than what they would experience in a real work situation.

Where simulation is used to assess a unit it is good practice for the Centre to seek the advice of an External Verifier to ensure the validity of the simulated activity.

When simulation is used to assess part of a unit, Assessors and Internal Verifiers should agree the circumstances and conditions under which this assessment methodology is implemented.

Observation of a learner’s performance in the workplace is only to be conducted by a qualified Assessor or an Expert Witness.

# Assessment and sources of evidence

A holistic approach towards the collection of evidence for this qualification is encouraged. The focus should be assessing activities generated in the workplace, through naturally occurring evidence, rather than focusing on specific tasks. Taken as a whole, the evidence must show the learner meets all performance criteria and knowledge requirements across the scope/range consistently, over a period of time. It should be clear where performance criteria and knowledge requirements have been covered and achieved.

## Assessment of knowledge and understanding

The assessment of knowledge and understanding may take place in a different environment, for example a college or another environment which is not the immediate workplace. However, the assessment of this knowledge and understanding should be linked directly to workplace performance.

The knowledge and understanding required by learners to support performance in the workplace is detailed within the knowledge and understanding criteria of the Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance NOS. It is the responsibility of awarding bodies to ensure Centres are aware of these and have sufficient resources and arrangements in place to support learners to achieve these requirements of this qualification.

## 3.2 Supporting evidence

Evidence produced by learners must be valid, sufficient, reliable, authentic and current and relate directly to specific performance criteria and knowledge requirements. Sources of Evidence will be through observation of learner performance in the workplace by an assessor or expert witness. This could be supported by evidence from the following:

* Expert witness testimony/evidence
* Direct questioning
* Professional discussion
* Portfolio of evidence
* Examination of work products
* Reflective diary on own practice in an appropriate working environment
* Written assignments
* Projects/case studies

## 3.3 Alternative forms of recording evidence using ICT.

It is recognised that alternative forms of recording assessment evidence will evolve using information and communications technologies including e-portfolios. Regardless of the method used, the guiding principle must be that information about practice must comply with legal requirements and best sector practice in relation to confidentiality. This information must also be traceable for internal and external verification purposes.

# Occupational competence requirements for those involved in the assessment and verification process

The occupational expertise of Expert Witnesses, Assessors and those responsible for the internal/external verification of this qualification is one of the key factors underpinning valid, fair and reliable assessment. Therefore, ensuring the integrity and professionalism of these roles is of paramount importance and they must be given sufficient time to carry out their roles effectively.

## Expert Witness

The role of the Expert Witness is to submit evidence to the Assessor regarding the competence of the learner in meeting the standards identified in any given unit. This evidence must directly relate to the learner’s performance in the workplace which has been directly observed by the Expert Witness. Therefore, those who could fulfil the role of an Expert Witness for this qualification could include, but are not limited to:

* Appropriate Coaching staff;
* Team Manager;
* Nutritionist;
* Physiotherapist and other medical related staff;
* Mentors;
* Performance Lifestyle;
* Strength and Conditioning Coach; or other Elite Athletes.

Expert Witnesses may prove particularly important for those learners who are indirectly supervised during part of their work role, but who have contact with a range of different professionals in the course of their work activities.

Evidence from Expert Witnesses must meet the requirements of validity, reliability and authenticity. Expert Witnesses must be inducted by the Centre so they are familiar with those units for which they are to provide expert witness evidence.

The Expert Witness must also be:

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|  | **Definition** |
| **Occupationally competent** | Each Expert Witness must be actively practicing and industry competent in the functions concerned, in the unit(s), for which the learner is being assessed. |
| **Familiar with the qualification** | Each Expert Witness must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work |
| **Credible** | Each Expert Witness must have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development[[1]](#footnote-1) activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector. Responsibility for CPD is the individual’s, not the centre they work for. |
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It is not necessary for Expert Witnesses to hold an assessor qualification as it is the responsibility of the Assessor to make the final assessment decision(s) about the acceptability of all evidence submitted, regardless of source.

## Assessor

All Assessors:

1. Must hold, or be working towards, an appropriate Assessor qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation, the qualification regulator. Achievement of an Assessor qualification needs to be within appropriate timescales.
2. Assessors, who are working towards an appropriate Assessor qualification should have the necessary occupational competence and experience and should be supported by an appropriately qualified Assessor. Appropriately qualified Assessors must review and countersign decisions and activities.
3. Assessors holding older Assessor qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are assessing to the current standards.
4. Provide current records of their skills and supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the qualification units they are assessing.
5. Have knowledge and experience of the regulation, legislation and/or codes of practice applicable to their role and the setting within which they work
6. Take the lead role in the assessment of observed learner performance in relation to the units of the qualification.

The Assessor must also be:

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|  | **Definition** |
| **Occupationally competent** | The Assessor must have:  The relevant vocational training and/or equivalent professional experience and be competent in the functions covered by the units they are assessing. |
| **Familiar with the qualification** | The Assessor must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification. |
| **Credible** | The Assessor must have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development[[2]](#footnote-2) activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector. |
| CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary. Responsibility for CPD is the individual’s, not the centre they work for. |

## Internal Verifier

All Internal Verifiers:

1. Must hold, or be working towards, an appropriate Internal Verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation, the qualification regulator. Achievement of an internal verifier qualification needs to be within appropriate timescales.
2. Internal Verifiers, who are working towards an appropriate Internal Verifier qualification should have the necessary occupational competence and experience and should be supported by an appropriately qualified Internal Verifier. Appropriately qualified Internal Verifiers must review and countersign decisions and activities.
3. Internal Verifiers holding older Internal Verifier qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards.
4. Provide current records of their skills and supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the qualification units they are internally verifying.
5. Have knowledge and experience of the regulation, legislation and/or codes of practice applicable to their role and the setting within which they work

The Internal Verifier must also be:

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|  | **Definition** |
| **Occupationally competent** | The Internal Verifier must have:  The relevant vocational training and/or equivalent professional experience. |
| **Familiar with the qualification** | The Internal Verifier must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification. |
| **Credible** | The Internal Verifier must have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development[[3]](#footnote-3) activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector. |
| CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary. Responsibility for CPD is the individual’s, not the centre they work for. |

## External Verifier

All External Verifiers:

1. Must hold, or be working towards, an appropriate External Verifier qualification as identified by SQA Accreditation, the qualification regulator. Achievement of an External Verifier qualification needs to be within appropriate timescales.

2. External Verifiers, who are working towards an appropriate External Verifier qualification should have the necessary occupational competence and experience and should be supported by an appropriately qualified External Verifier. Appropriately qualified External Verifiers must review and countersign decisions and activities.

3. External Verifiers holding older External Verifier qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they are verifying to the current standards.

4. Provide current records of their skills and supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the qualification units they are externally verifying.

5. Have knowledge and experience of the regulation, legislation and/or codes of practice applicable to their role and the setting within which they work

The External Verifier must also be:

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|  | **Definition** |
| **Occupationally competent** | The External Verifier must have:  The relevant vocational training and/or equivalent professional experience. |
| **Familiar with the qualification** | The External Verifier must have an in-depth technical knowledge of the qualification, units and standards of competencies required. They must be able to interpret current working practices, technologies and products within the area of work and be committed to upholding the integrity of the qualification. |
| **Credible** | The External Verifier must have access to, and be engaging with, continuous professional development[[4]](#footnote-4) activities in order to keep up to date with developments and any issues relevant to the qualification and/or its units. These may include those offered by the awarding body or other recognised and relevant providers in the sector. |
| CPD is required per annum which must be demonstrated through a personal development plan (PDP) or as a reflective diary. Responsibility for CPD is the individual’s, not the awarding body they work for. |

1. Continuous professional development (CPD) refers to the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience individuals gain both formally and informally. It is a record of what they experience, learn and then apply. Responsibility for CPD is that of the individual concerned. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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