

Community Justice N/SVQs (7432)

Quality Guidance - Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How should centres interpret the terms 'recent and consistent application' as applied to the occupational competence requirements for assessors for these Qualifications?

New

The Skills for Justice *Assessment Strategy for N/SVQ in the Justice Sector (October 2007)* contains the following guidance in relation to the issue:

"Each assessor must, according to current sector practice, be competent in the functions covered by the units they are assessing. They will have gained their occupational competence working within the justice sector or within an appropriate occupational sector. They are not required to occupy a position in the organisation more senior than that of the candidate they are assessing."

It further states that an assessor:

"Must be able to demonstrate **consistent application** of the skills and the current supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a **recent** role directly related to the NOS that they are assessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager."

Terms such as 'recent' and 'consistent application' may require interpretation and consideration on a case by case basis. The term 'recent' should be defined as sufficiently recent to ensure that the assessor is up to date with working practices covered by the NOS and 'consistent application' would need to be demonstrated over a sufficient period of time for competence to be fully assessed. Centres should consult with their External Verifiers where there is any uncertainty.

Q2. What are the occupational requirements for an Internal Verifier for this qualification?

The Skills for Justice *Assessment Strategy for N/SVQ in the Justice Sector (October 2007)* identifies the requirements for those taking on the role of Internal Verifier for this qualification.

"Internal Verifiers must be occupationally knowledgeable across the range of units for which they are responsible prior to commencing the role. Due to the risk critical nature of the work and the legal implications of the assessment process, Internal Verifiers must understand the nature and context of the assessors' work and that of their candidates. This means that they must have worked closely with staff who carry out the functions covered by the national occupational standards, possibly by training or supervising them, and have sufficient knowledge of these functions to be able to offer credible advice on the interpretation of the standards."

Centres should consult with their External Verifiers where additional clarification is required.

Q3. Can confidential service users' records be used as evidence?

Confidential service users records can be used as evidence but once inspected by the assessor they must be returned to and remain in situ. A record regarding the evidence must be available and should cover:

- The nature, purpose and organisational relevance of the record
- The competence of its completion by the candidate

- The relationship of the document to the N/SVQ qualification requirements, and
- Its currency, authenticity, reliability and validity

Q4. Can units accredited under the previous 7494 Community Justice N/SVQ be transferred directly into this N/SVQ?

There are no opportunities for 7494 units to be directly transferred into the 7432. This is because the National Occupational Standards (NOS) have been revised and amended and therefore are not identical. However some units are very similar and centres may map the evidence across to the new unit and use supplementary evidence to cover any omissions. The guidance of the External Verifier should be sought in such circumstances.

Q5. What is the status of evidence derived from observation by an Expert Witness?

Observation evidence provided by an Expert Witness has parity with assessor observation. However it is for the assessor to check the currency, authenticity, reliability and validity of such evidence and make the assessment decision..

Q6. What are the occupational requirements for an Expert Witness?

An Expert Witness is required to have the same level of occupational competence as an assessor. They must also maintain their continuous professional development, be familiar with the National Occupational Standards and have had the appropriate induction into the N/SVQ. They are not required to hold or be working towards an assessor qualification.

Expert Witnesses will only need familiarising with the specific units for which they will be providing observed evidence. It would be helpful if they are equally aware of the rules of evidence and centre requirements for recording.

Q7. When is simulation allowed?

The unit evidence requirements indicate for which units simulation is allowed.

Where this is the case the *Skills for Justice Assessment Strategy for N/SVQ in the Justice Sector (October 2007)* outlines that it may only be used in the following circumstances:

1. where evidence in the workplace will not be demonstrated within an acceptable time frame.
2. where the nature of the work activity presents high risk/danger to the candidate and others, for example, firearms operations

The Standards and Assessment Requirements Handbook provides further guidance on how simulation should be undertaken.

Q8. How should Professional Discussion be recorded?

Ensuring Quality provides the following guidance:

“The outcome of the professional should be captured by means of audio/video tape, written summaries or evidence of structured questioning e.g. question checklist or structured interview schedule.”

Whichever method is used it must be auditable. This means that if the discussion is audio taped then a tape counter should be used to identify the key sections of the discussion. If the discussion is recorded in written form then the write –up should be in sufficient detail for the evidence to be apparent. *The N/SVQ Guide for centres and candidates – Recording Forms* contains a Professional Discussion Record form and Centres are recommended to utilise that record.

Q9.If a unit is achieved at one level can it then be transferred to a higher level N/SVQ without supplementary evidence?

Yes, once the unit is achieved it can be directly transferred to a higher level without supplementary evidence being required, so long as it is identical to the one at the higher level.