



The new assessment and verification (A and V) units were produced after extensive consultation with all interested parties, including employers, learning providers, awarding bodies and government agencies.

Their introduction has led to many enquiries directly to ENTO, through our Learning Network and through awarding bodies. After discussion at our awarding body forum for those involved in delivery of the A and V units a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) along with jointly agreed responses has been produced to provide a reference point for those delivering these units.

This list will be updated regularly in response to additional queries we receive.

**1. What N/SVQs/Awards does the Learning and Development Assessment strategy refer to?**

The Learning and Development Assessment Strategy ONLY refers to the N/SVQs and Certificate awards in Learning and Development. Each N/SVQ has its own assessment strategy and this will apply in all cases.

**2. Who decided there was a requirement for an assessment strategy?**

The requirement for an assessment strategy for each N/SVQ has come from the Regulatory Authorities.

**3. Who was responsible for developing the assessment strategy?**

ENTO in conjunction with the Awarding Bodies who offer the Learning and Development N/SVQs developed the assessment strategy. In addition the Awarding Bodies with the support and endorsement of ENTO have also developed additional guidance for the assessment and verification of the A+V units. This additional guidance has been adopted by all Awarding Bodies.

**4. The assessment strategy requires that an assessor must have one years experience in the last two years in the activities described in the standards. When does this one year period commence from?**

The one years experience starts from certification of the assessor unit.

**5. Does the requirement for one years practice apply to those that achieve the D32/33 units??**

*New!* The requirement for one years practice prior to assessing Learning and Development N/SVQs and the assessment and verification units applies to all assessors regardless of which units they hold.

**6. What can be simulated in the Learning and Development N/SVQs?**

There is no simulated activity allowed in the Learning and Development N/SVQs, all evidence must be derived from the workplace and reflect work activity of the candidate.



**7. Is it acceptable for the observation of a presentation for unit L10 to be undertaken in a learning environment to the candidates' peers?**

No, this is simulation and the candidate is being trained rather than undertaking their normal work activity. The presentation must be to a group of people for whom the presentation has been designed and that is appropriate to their learning and development needs.

**8. Does the second assessor or independent assessor need to be independent of the centre?**

No the requirement is for the second assessor to be independent of the candidate and primary assessor and not necessarily independent of the centre although this may be the case in some instances where an organisation uses peripatetic assessors.

**9. Does the second or independent assessor need to be occupationally competent and/or qualified?**

The second or independent assessor must be a competent job holder and must hold a recognised assessor qualification either D32/33 or A1. For the purposes of these qualifications/awards competent job holder is deemed as being the same as the demands for occupational competence in the assessment strategy.

The primary assessor must be occupationally competent but can be 'working towards' their assessor qualification. Where this occurs all assessment decisions of the primary assessor must be signed by a qualified and occupationally competent assessor. This is a requirement of the QCA NVQ Code of Practice. (para 28, page 7). ENTO believes that this countersignature is essential as this provides support and reassurance for the assessor and ensures that the candidate is being treated fairly.

(Whilst SQA policy does not require countersignature it is the considered opinion of ENTO that the countersignature requirement is essential to raise the independence and standard of assessment and is now encouraging SQA to review its policy and practice.)

In all cases both the primary and independent assessor of A+V candidates must hold the relevant assessor unit either D32/33 or A1 and be occupationally competent.

The view of ENTO is that the independent assessor **MUST** not countersign the primary assessors' decisions if the primary assessor is working towards their assessor unit. In this case the primary assessor's decisions must be countersigned by an additional qualified and occupationally competent assessor.

In addition, the view of ENTO is that the Internal Verifier is not one of the two assessors, but is a third party who meets the demands of occupational competence as defined by the assessment strategy. This view is supported by the Awarding Bodies.



**10. What role does the independent assessor have in the assessment planning process where this is the chosen method of independence?**

The independent assessor is expected to agree with the A1 candidate one of their three assessment plans for their N/SVQ candidate.

**11. Does the independent assessor assess the primary assessor's assessments?**

*New!*

The independent assessor does not re-assess the work of the primary assessor but is required to assess completely separate evidence. Likewise, the primary assessor does not revisit the independent assessor's judgements.

**12. How do you define occupational competence?**

Occupational competence is defined in the assessment strategy and involves practising in the activities described in the standards that you are assessing or internally verifying. For example if you assess the unit L16 'Review progress with learners' then the assessor must have been practising in the area of reviewing learners progress for one year in the last two years or been an instructor or trainer of those undertaking that activity for a period of at least one year. If you do not meet the criteria then you are unable to assess that particular unit.

The requirement for one years experience in the last two years is a rolling requirement and therefore in any given two year period in the future the assessor or internal verifier must have been practising for one year. The degree of practising can be proven by producing the same evidence that you would provide to achieve the unit in the first instance.

**13. Who decides on appropriate CPD for assessors and verifiers?**

The requirement for CPD activity for assessors and internal verifiers must be part of the internal verification strategy and planned in advance. Evidence of the activity must be retained as proof; a certificate of attendance is not evidence of CPD. This would have to be accompanied by some form of evaluation of the activity by the assessor or verifier.

**14. Who approves and monitors the planned CPD activity?**

The planned CPD activity should be agreed with the external verifier for the awards and monitored by them during normal centre visits. In all cases all CPD activity should be recorded.

**15. How many hours CPD do an assessor and verifier have to undertake?**

ENTO holds the view that the CPD activity should not be determined by number of hours but by the appropriateness to the individual and their development needs. The minimum requirement is for two activities a year, these should form part of the internal verification strategy for the award and will reflect the individual requirements of the assessor/verifier.



**16. Do all assessors have to undertake two CPD activities each and every year?**

The requirement of the assessment strategy for Learning and Development that all assessors undertake two CPD activities each and every year applies directly to the Learning and Development and Assessment Verification units and not necessarily to assessors and verifiers of other qualifications. However ENTO and the Awarding Bodies are of the view that ALL assessors and verifiers should undertake CPD in relation to assessment and verification and not just their occupational skills. In all cases the CPD activity should be agreed between the assessor and their Internal Verifier and have clear objectives and outcomes. Following the activity(s), it should be reflected upon as to how it has changed practice or confirmed and validated current practice.

**If I am an assessor and Internal Verifier for the Learning and Development**

**17. N/SVQs or the assessment and verification units how many CPD activities do I have to undertake?**

You will need to do two activities in the role of the assessor and two in the role of the Internal Verifier, a total of four in total for each and every year that you continue to practice.

**18. Does my internal verifier need to be a qualified assessor?**

For the assessment and verification units the internal verifier must hold D32/33 or A1 and D34 or V1. For the full N/SVQs in Learning and Development this is also a requirement where the optional units selected include A and/or V units. In other N/SVQs this may not be the case but is subject to guidance from the Regulatory Authorities and will be documented in the relevant assessment strategy.

ENTO believes that all internal verifiers for all N/SVQs should have been at sometime a qualified and practicing assessor.

**19. Does my external verifier need to be a qualified assessor?**

For the assessment and verification units the external verifier must hold D32/33 or A1 and D35 or V2. For the full N/SVQs in Learning and Development this is also a requirement where the optional units selected include A and/or V units. In other N/SVQs this may not be the case but is subject to guidance from the Regulatory Authorities and will be documented in the relevant assessment strategy.

ENTO believes that all external verifiers for all N/SVQs should have been at sometime a qualified and practicing assessor.

**20. Do I need to have A1 to be an assessor for A1 candidates?**

The requirements of any assessor to assess the A1 unit is to be qualified as an assessor (either D32/33 or A1) and have occupational competence as detailed in the assessment strategy for Learning and Development and the additional assessment guidance for assessment and verification.



**21. Can the assessor of the A+V units be ‘working towards’?**

No all assessors and verifiers (internal and external) of the assessment and verification units must themselves hold the appropriate units.

**22. What can I do if my candidate cannot cover a performance criteria because the situation just does not arise?**

In most cases it should be possible to use hypothetical questioning to allow the candidate to explain what they would do if the situation arose. This clearly identified in the assessment strategy but currently there are no performance criteria specifically identified in the assessment and verification units which require hypothetical questioning.

**23. Is there a requirement for an element of independence in the singular units of assessment and verification (A1,A2,V1 and V2)?**

The additional guidance for the assessment of the A+V units requires a primary piece of outcome evidence for each unit to have been assessed by someone other than the primary assessor. Both of these assessors must be qualified (D32/33 or A1) and be occupationally competent and meet the demands for CPD as detailed in the assessment strategy. Further guidance on independence in these units will be available from your Awarding Body.

In addition the view of ENTO is that the Internal Verifier is not one of the two assessors but is a third party who meets the demands of occupational competence as defined by the assessment strategy. This view is supported by the Awarding Bodies.

**24. The Learning and Development N/SVQs, Certificate Awards and the individual units of assessment and verification require an element of independent assessment. At what stage in the process should this occur?**

There are no explicit requirements but the decision as to when the independent part of the qualification is assessed should be part of the effective assessment planning process.

**25. Do you need to do both A1 and A2?**

No if you do unit A1 then there is no requirement to do unit A2. However if you do A2 first because you only observe performance in the workplace then you may wish to undertake unit A1 if you are required to use additional assessment methods and evidence at a later date. The unit you decide to undertake is based on your role and the assessment methods to be used for a particular award, the best source of this information is the assessment strategy for the sector you assess in and the evidence requirements for the N/SVQ.



**26. What evidence is required to prove competence?**

The Awarding Bodies who offer the assessment and verification units have developed one set of evidence requirements for the four units of A1, A2, V1 and V2. These are known as the 'Agreed Common Evidence' and are available from your Awarding Body. The development of these evidence requirements was facilitated by ENTO and therefore has our total support.

**27. Can other methods of assessment than those given as guidance by the Awarding Body be used to meet the demands of independent assessment?**

Yes other methods can be used, but should be agreed with the Internal Verifier and subsequently the External Verifier prior to their use

**28. Can non-N/SVQ evidence be used to achieve the assessment and verification units?**

In some cases non-N/SVQ evidence may be accepted where this evidence is gathered in the workplace. However, you must seek the approval of your Awarding Body prior to using this type of evidence.

**29. Can I achieve V1 using non-NVQ assessed evidence where there is no External Moderator?**

*New!* To achieve V1 using non-N/SVQ assessed evidence there must be external quality control. It is not possible to achieve V1 unless there is some external quality control provision.

**30. Where non-N/SVQ evidence is to be used for the achievement of the assessment and verification units and the evidence must come from the workplace, whose workplace is that?**

The requirement is that the evidence being assessed by the assessor-candidate must come from the workplace of the person being assessed. The workplace is deemed to be the normal place of work of the individual. Where the individual is involved in working at different locations then the evidence must come from normal work activity of that person.



**31. Do I have to have been a qualified Assessor before I can commence my award to become an Internal Verifier?**

To become an Internal Verifier in Learning and Development you need to have been practising (deemed to be following qualification) for one year in the activities you are verifying.

However the requirements for other sectors will vary according to the Assessment Strategy for that sector and it may be possible that you can be doing both your assessor and verifier award at the same time or in other cases commence the V1 award immediately following completion of the A1 award. You **MUST** check the assessment strategy for the sector.

In some sectors you may be able to undertake V1 without having any experience of assessment although the view of ENTO is that verifiers should be assessors themselves.

**32. Do newly qualified assessors have to have their judgements countersigned?**

Once qualified the assessor does not need to have their decisions countersigned but should be supported by their Internal Verifier. Equally there is no sound rationale for new assessors to be subject to 100% internal verification of their work. In fact 100% sampling is deemed to be poor practice. The Internal Verification strategy for the qualification should clearly determine the level of sampling based on a number of criteria including experience of the assessor.

**33. What does 'Contributing to the internal quality assurance process' refer to? (A1.4)**

The above element refers to the internal quality assurance process of the accredited centre which the assessor is undertaking assessments for. This requirement does not refer to quality assurance of the location/workplace/establishment of the N/SVQ candidate.

**34. Element A1.4 requires the assessor-candidate to contribute to the internal quality assurance processes. What does this actually require the assessor-candidate to do?**

In the main this requires the assessor-candidate to comply with internal procedures relating to quality assurance. It also requires the assessor-candidate to contribute to an internal standardisation meeting. An internal standardisation meeting will normally involve all assessors for a particular qualification and their internal verifier. At the meeting evidence produced by candidates and judgements made by the assessors will be compared to ensure that there is a level of consistency and that the decisions being made meet national standards across the team. Equally there will be consideration of evidence that has been deemed not to have met the national standard. The meeting might focus on a particular unit, an assessment method or a type of evidence.



**35. If an assessor or verifier who currently holds D32/33/34/35 wishes to achieve A1/A2/V1/V2 do they need to have their judgements/decisions countersigned?**

No, as the assessor or verifier is already qualified there would be no requirement for their judgements/decisions to be countersigned for their N/SVQ candidate.

**36. Do current holders of the D units 32, 33, 34 and 36 have to re-qualify to the new assessment and verification units A1, A2, V1 and V2?**

There is **NO** requirement for current D unit holders to re-qualify. In accordance with the NVQ Code of Practice, all assessors and verifiers should be familiar with and working to the requirements of the new standards.

The view of ENTO is that all practicing assessors and verifiers should, as part of a CPD plan, re-qualify to the revised standards.

**37. If I do not practice as an assessor for two years do I need to re-qualify?**

There is no requirement for those who do not practice for two years to re-qualify, but the demands for occupational competence will have to be met and in addition some CPD activity should take place to ensure that you are able to practice to current expectations as an assessor.

**38. Does the A1 assessor of the A1 assessor-candidate need to have the occupational competence/experience/qualifications of the N/SVQ being assessed by the assessor-candidate?**

The A1 assessor does not need to have the occupational competence /experience /qualifications of the N/SVQ being assessed by the assessor-candidate. However all assessment judgements of the assessor-candidate have to be countersigned by an assessor who is qualified (A1 or D32/33) and does have the necessary occupational competence/experience/qualifications as defined in the relevant assessment strategy. The assessor of the assessor-candidate must have the occupational competence as detailed in the assessment strategy for Learning and Development and the additional assessment guidance for assessment and verification.

**39. In the evidence requirements for V1.3 the internal verifier candidate must be observed by the external verifier or a qualified second internal verifier? Who is the second internal verifier?**

If the external verifier is unable to observe the Internal Verifier candidate then the Internal Verifier who is countersigning the trainee IVs work is perfectly placed to be the second internal verifier referred to in the evidence requirements. This internal verifier must be a D34 or V1 holder with occupational competence in the relevant field.



**40. Is L20 an assessment unit?**

L20 is NOT an assessment unit but is suited to those individuals working with candidates in the workplace who are able to ensure that the candidate has the breadth of experience and opportunity to achieve the units of their chosen qualification. In addition the unit supports the role of witness testimony but is not required for a witness testimony to be valid.

The view of ENTO is that where possible those supporting candidates' in the workplace and as a result providing vital witness testimony should achieve unit L20

**41. Several of the L units require the candidate to work with groups; how many learners constitute a group?**

A group is defined as 4 or more learners.

**42. What does ILT refer to in the assessment strategy for Learning and Development?**

ILT refers to Information Learning Technology

**43. What must be included in an Internal Verifier's sampling strategy for an N/SVQ?**

Over a period of time the following must be sampled by the Internal Verifier:

- All candidates
- All units including those that have been assessed by the independent assessor
- All locations where assessment occurs
- All assessment methods
- All assessors responsible to the Internal Verifier

**44. Is giving a presentation professional discussion?**

*New!* Professional discussion is not giving a presentation. A professional discussion is a two way communication between the assessor and their candidate

**45. Is professional discussion a formative and summative means of assessment?**

*New!* Professional discussion can be used as both a formative and summative assessment method, although in many cases the most effective use of a professional discussion is to ensure complete coverage of knowledge and performance criteria.

**46. Can video evidence be used for observation?**

*New!* Observation can be undertaken through viewing of video evidence and does not necessarily require the assessor to be present although it is the preferred option.



**47. If A1 appears in an award or qualification and I hold D32/33 do I have to achieve A1 to claim the award/qualification?**

*New!*

Where the A1 unit appears in awards/qualifications you are required to achieve this unit to gain the certificate for that award or qualification.