



# GQA Qualifications Guide to Centre Approval

[www.glassqualificationsauthority.com](http://www.glassqualificationsauthority.com)



The Glass Qualifications Authority (GQA) is an awarding body approved nationally for vocational qualifications, including NVQs and SVQs and is subject to the external auditing procedures of the relevant regulatory authorities.

GQA is an important part of the UK national qualifications framework providing primary craft related NVQ and SVQ qualifications for those in the glass and related industries.

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## Equality of Opportunity

Provision of equality of opportunity should be regardless of a candidate’s gender, age, racial origin, religious persuasion, sexual orientation or special needs’ requirements imposed by disability. Glass Qualifications Authority Ltd aims to overcome any inequality of opportunity in respect of:

- candidates entered for assessment under the provision of its schemes
- the communication and marketing of its schemes
- the preparation and production of its guidelines and materials
- the monitoring of approved centres and providing bodies’ practices, procedures and data
- guidance and training regarding assessor and verifier/auditor selection
- all external verifier/auditor activity

*A copy of Glass Qualifications Authority Ltd’s comprehensive equal opportunities policy is available on request. Glass Qualifications Authority Ltd is an equal opportunities organisation.*

## Introduction

This guide provides information and guidance for organisations that wish to attain, and maintain, approval by the Glass Qualifications Authority (GQA) to offer its qualifications.

GQA is responsible for assuring the quality of all qualifications offered in its name and is subject to close scrutiny by the relevant regulatory authorities. These are:

- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
- the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (Awdurdod Cymwysterau Cwricwlwm Ac Aesu Cymru; ACCAC)
- the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

# SECTION A

## Getting approval from GQA – the process

1. **Contact GQA for information.** We will send you details about the qualifications we offer and what you need to do to get approval to deliver them (approved centre criteria). Information is also available at [www.glassqualificationsauthority.com](http://www.glassqualificationsauthority.com)
2. **Apply for approval.** Complete GQA's centre approval documentation and submit this to GQA as a formal application for centre approval. GQA staff can offer guidance as required
3. **Identify key personnel.** In order to attain approved centre status, a potential centre must identify and appoint appropriate personnel. They will be responsible for others likely to be involved in the assessment process and for ensuring the quality and consistency of the delivery of GQA qualifications. Suitable training must be given  
Personnel will include:
  - The centre co-ordinator
  - Internal verifier/s/auditor/s
  - Assessor/s
  - Candidate/sMore information about these roles and relevant qualifications is included in section B – 'Key roles in the delivery of GQA awards'
4. **Centre co-ordinator is expected to read and understand this guide** as he/she is the main point of contact between the centre and GQA. GQA staff can offer guidance as required. The centre co-ordinator is the individual to whom invoices and GQA reports are forwarded as they represent the senior management of the centre
5. **Request a visit from a GQA External Verifier/Auditor.** A licensed GQA external verifier/auditor must visit all potential centres in order to authorise approved status
6. **Approval granted** – subject to the acceptance of an action plan to ensure that all the approved centre criteria are met (or will be satisfied in a reasonable time period). These criteria are provided to potential centres prior to their application for approval and are listed in this guide in appendix 2. GQA informs all centres of the approval decision in writing. Approval is subject to satisfactory ongoing external verifier/auditor reviews  
**GQA issues all approved centres with an Approved Centre Certificate. The validity of such certificates can be authenticated by contacting the GQA office**

## Once you are approved by GQA

1. **Register candidates with GQA** using GQA registration documentation/arrangements
2. **Ensure that all assessors and internal verifiers/auditors are licensed by GQA.** Further information about GQA licensing procedures is in section B – 'GQA licensing procedures'
3. **Utilise the appropriate Assessment strategy** All standards setting bodies provide an assessment strategy that is contributory to the qualification implementation process
4. **Candidates demonstrate competence against GQA qualifications** and are assessed according to national assessment principles. The quality and consistency of assessments are monitored by internal verification practices that adhere to national internal verification principles
  - All assessors and internal verifiers/auditors must hold the relevant assessor/internal verifier national award
  - All assessors must be occupationally competent in the area they're assessing
  - All internal verifiers/auditors must have an acceptable level of expertise in the area they're monitoring
5. **GQA external verifier/auditor monitors centre operations on a regular basis** in accordance with GQA procedures
6. **Centre submits claims for certification of GQA qualifications.** Certificates are issued provided all centre approval criteria continue to be met when audited by GQA's external verification process

## An approved centre's responsibilities

As the criteria for centre approval indicate, centres are responsible for:

- ensuring that assessment of NVQ/SVQ candidates conforms to the assessment guidance set out in GQA NVQ/SVQ standards and the appropriate standards setting body (SSB) assessment strategy. **All members of the assessment team must have direct access to the appropriate Assessment Strategy e.g. the joint strategy of the CITB/GTL SSB or the GTL glass sector strategy**
- registering all NVQ/SVQ candidates with GQA as early as possible. Centres must inform candidates of their registration status
- making candidates aware of the value and availability of unit certification
- ensuring that each registered NVQ/SVQ candidate has a personal original copy of the relevant GQA standard
- providing sufficient competent assessors and internal verifiers/auditors
- internally verifying/auditing the quality and consistency of assessment practices and decisions within the centre
- maintaining records of:
  - all candidates, including candidate name, date of birth, contact address, workplace address and contact details, assessor(s) name, internal verifier(s) name and the date of the confirmed registration with GQA
  - assessment records (assessment plans and records showing who assessed what and when, the assessment decision, the assessment methods used for each unit/element and the location of the supporting evidence)
  - internal verification activity detailing who verified what and when, details of the sample selected and its rationale, records of internal verifier standardisation meetings, records of assessor support meetings, assessor and verifier competence records and monitoring records of assessor/internal verifier/auditor progress towards achievement of the relevant assessor and internal verifier/auditor national awards
  - all certificates claimed, including who claimed the certificate and when
  - The Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) in respect of candidates who achieve GQA qualifications awarded with the approval of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
  - particular assessment requirements (PAR) of candidates
  - assessment and verification/audit team records (eg CVs, appropriate qualifications/licences, minutes of meetings, training records, CPD records)
- ensuring all records are:
  - accurate
  - legible
  - up-to-date
  - securely stored and not disclosed to any unauthorised persons
  - made available for external verification and auditing by relevant regulatory authorities and that they allow for candidates' achievements to be monitored and reviewed in relation to the centre's equal opportunities policy
- identifying candidates who have particular assessment requirements (PAR) and applying to GQA for authorisation to implement special assessment arrangements. GQA publishes current guidance about this on its web site
- retaining assessment materials and representative samples of candidates' work sufficient to monitor provision over time and contribute, under the guidance of the regulatory authorities, to national archives
- complying with any requests by GQA external verifiers/auditors for access to premises, records, information, candidates and staff as requested for the purposes of external verification. Where a centre fails to provide such access, GQA must take appropriate remedial action in line with the requirements of the tariff of sanctions and penalties specified in appendix 3 in this guide
- reporting any suspected malpractice to GQA. GQA publishes current guidance about its malpractice arrangements on the GQA web site

- **retaining records for a minimum of three years** and make them available for the purposes of resolving any issues arising from external verification/auditing or appeals

**Centres must inform GQA of any changes that affect their ability to meet all the centre approval criteria, in particular staff turnover that results in the loss of assessor/s and/or internal verifiers/auditors.**

**Without appropriately qualified people, a centre's candidates cannot be awarded NVQs/SVQs or certificates of unit credit.**

The obligations of GQA approved centres are detailed in appendix 2 – 'Approved centre criteria'.

## GQA's responsibilities

### GQA is responsible for:

- approving and monitoring all centres approved to offer qualifications in its name. GQA external verifiers/auditors visit centres to monitor their operation and inform centres immediately at the end of a centre approval/monitoring visit whether all approved centre criteria are met etc.
- ensuring that all GQA approved centres are visited on a regular basis by a licensed GQA external verifier. Where a centre cancels a pre-arranged external verification visit at short notice, GQA must be satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for this. Where this cannot be established, GQA reserves the right to withhold any claims for certification until a monitoring visit has been completed. Centres should also be aware that GQA, and the regulatory authorities, reserve the right to perform such visits at short notice or without prior notification in order to minimise the risk of unsubstantiated claims for certification
- providing feedback to centres at the end of each visit. This is followed by a written report which:
  - records the date of the visit
  - details the monitoring and verification activities undertaken, including information on the sample, any audits conducted and who was interviewed during the visit
  - details any changes in centre staff or their competence since the last visit
  - provides explicit feedback to the centre on the quality and consistency of the assessment process and the effectiveness of its internal verification arrangements
  - highlights areas of good practice against the requirements of the approved centre criteria
  - specifies any actions to be taken by the centre where its performance does not meet the requirements of the approved centre criteria along with timescales for their implementation and the names of those individuals responsible for their implementation (see appendix 3)
- providing feedback to centres where centre approval is withdrawn: GQA gives centres full and clear feedback on the grounds for withdrawing approved centre status
- taking appropriate action in line with the sanctions and penalties (specified in appendix 3 of this guide) when a centre is consistently failing to meet the requirements of the approved centre criteria or has not implemented previously agreed action points
- investigating alleged malpractice: GQA has a formal malpractice procedure and publishes current guidance about its malpractice arrangements on the GQA web site
- ensuring that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment that prevent candidates from effectively demonstrating their attainment. GQA has a formal procedure for authorising special assessment arrangements for those candidates with identified particular assessment requirements and publishes current guidance about this on its web site
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for appeals to be made against assessment decisions and, where appropriate, other decisions affecting centres and individual candidates. GQA monitors its approved centres to ensure that appropriate appeals procedures are in place. Centres are responsible for promoting appeals procedures to candidates and must ensure that candidates are aware that the procedures exist to protect candidates' interests until certification has been achieved

## GQA's aims

### GQA aims to:

- respond to all written and verbal enquiries within one working week
- process all satisfactorily completed and authorised NVQ/SVQ registration forms within two working weeks
- Issue all authorised certificates within four working weeks of receipt of correctly completed and authorised certification claim forms
- respond to all complaints and suggestions within five working days
- ensure that all centres are visited for formal audit purposes by a licensed external verifier:
  - a minimum of twice annually for single-site centres
  - normally four times annually for partner and multi-site centres

**GQA requests feedback from all its approved centres on a regular basis in order to evaluate and improve upon service and performance.**

**EVs are expected to monitor operations at a reasonable sample of multi-site locations often by carrying out additional visits.**

**NB When a partnership centre starts up, it may have one partner location and a small number of candidates (and therefore may not justify four visits per year). Additionally/alternatively, a multi-site/partnership centre may become relatively inactive at some stage and the EV in co-operation with the centre co-ordinator may agree to reduce the number of formal review visits to the minimum of two.**

### Points of contact and communication mechanisms:

Suggestions and complaints can be addressed via:

- your external verifier
- the GQA Chief Executive
- the GQA Office Manager

External verifiers and office staff will involve other staff/associates of the awarding body as appropriate, depending on the nature of the complaint/suggestion.

## Complaints against GQA

GQA has a formal complaints procedure. Individuals who have a complaint they wish to make against GQA can instigate this. Current guidance about the complaints procedure is published on the GQA web site. Individuals can also request information about GQA's complaints procedure from their normal GQA contact or GQA's office.

## Appeals against GQA decisions

If a centre wishes to appeal against a decision taken by GQA, it can instigate GQA's formal appeals procedure. Current guidance about the appeals procedure is published on the GQA web site. Centres can also request information about GQA's appeals procedure from their normal GQA contact or GQA's office.

# SECTION B

## Key roles in the delivery of GQA awards

<b>Candidate</b>	Works towards a GQA qualification eg an award (NVQ/SVQ) or specified units, and provides evidence of their competence
<b>Assessor</b>	Makes judgements about candidates' competence by assessing their performance/knowledge
<b>Internal verifier/auditor</b>	Ensures that candidates and assessors clearly understand what is required by the relevant standards and that all assessors' judgements are fair, reliable, valid and consistent
<b>Centre co-ordinator</b>	Is approved by a GQA external verifier/auditor to co-ordinate the assessment processes and practices within a centre and liaise with GQA/the external verifier/auditor This person is the single named point of accountability for the overall quality assurance, management and administration of GQA awards. The centre co-ordinator is regarded as the individual with the influence to determine the financial viability of the centre
<b>External verifier/auditor</b>	Appointed by GQA. An external verifier/auditor approves assessment centres and regularly monitors their operation; she, or he, is the quality assurance link between the approved centre and the awarding body

The chart below shows the basic components of the NVQ/SVQ assessment process:

<b>WHO?</b>	Candidate, assessor, verifiers/auditors
<b>WHAT?</b>	Skills, knowledge, understanding – assessed across a range of circumstances over time
<b>WHEN?</b>	Appropriate times and opportunities for assessment
<b>HOW?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria for achievement</li> <li>• Procedures for informing the candidate of requirements</li> <li>• Procedures for assessment</li> <li>• Procedures for informing the candidate of results of assessment</li> <li>• Procedures for documenting the results of assessment</li> <li>• Procedures for monitoring that the assessment process is fair, reliable, valid and consistent</li> </ul>
<b>WHERE?</b>	Usually in the workplace, under normal working conditions

The points relative to attaining and retaining GQA approved centre status are listed in HOW above. Operating as an approved centre is about ensuring that the assessment of all NVQ/SVQ candidates is fair, reliable, valid, consistent and in accordance with the requirements of the relevant standards.

### Candidate

Candidates are actively involved in the assessment process and are responsible for identifying and collecting evidence for assessment. At level 2 it is not unusual for candidates to do this with support from assessors.

The role includes:

- identifying evidence which may prove existing competence (identifying where prior experience has current relevance)
- agreeing, usually with an assessor, a plan of action for assessment and identifying any training needs. Holistic assessment is encouraged
- gathering evidence to satisfy an NVQ/SVQ standard. This involves deciding what is relevant, sufficient, valid and authentic

Assessors and candidates must provide a written declaration that all evidence is authentic and that the assessment was conducted under the specified conditions or context as laid down by the relevant standards.

## Assessor

The best way to judge whether someone is competent in a particular area of work is to watch them doing it. A glass cutter may write a report about cutting glass and produce job-sheets which show that the person has carried out the activity – and this would be good evidence – but the clearest way of telling if someone is competent is to observe them actually carrying out the task. An observer must be able to make accurate judgements about a candidate's performance; **assessors need to be occupationally competent in the area they are assessing and must fully understand the relevant NVQ/SVQ standards. The standards setting bodies' assessment strategy specifies the requirements for assessors.**

Assessors are responsible and accountable for:

- managing the system of assessment planning
- making and recording assessment decisions
- assessing evidence of candidate competence against the relevant GQA standard
- ensuring the validity, authenticity and sufficiency of evidence produced by candidates
- maintaining accurate and verifiable candidate assessment and achievement records

The role includes:

- explaining the requirements of the relevant NVQ/SVQ standards
- guiding candidates about their responsibilities in the assessment process
- identifying opportunities for candidates to collect evidence and demonstrate competence
- working out a plan of action with each candidate
- advising candidates on suitable evidence to present for assessment
- making accurate, fair, reliable and valid judgements about the evidence that candidates present for assessment and providing them with full and clear feedback
- advising candidates where evidence does not fully meet the criteria in the NVQ/SVQ standards
- making sure assessments are conducted so that they are fair, reliable, valid and consistent
- keeping accurate records of candidates' progress and achievement
- liaising with other people involved in the assessment and accreditation process

Usually the centre co-ordinator and/or internal verifier/auditor will identify appropriate people to become assessors.

Centres must:

- provide appropriate training and development opportunities to enable assessors to meet the requirements of the role and to ensure that they have a common understanding of relevant standards and any other assessment requirements that apply
- keep relevant records of such activity (for example, staff development and CPD records) as evidence
- provide assessors with information and guidance which ensures that they understand their responsibilities in relation to the assessment requirements of the qualification
- ensure assessors have access to specialist advice and guidance on the assessment of NVQs/SVQs
- ensure that all assessors maintain a continued professional development record with at least two significant entries per year

## National qualifications for assessors

All assessors must hold a national qualification approved by the regulatory authorities that qualifies them to assess. This is often the A1 Level 3 Award in Assessing Candidates Using a Range of Methods (and in exceptional circumstances the A2 Level 3 Award in Assessing Candidates' Performance Through Observation). In Scotland, the Teacher Qualification Further Education (TQFE) may be an acceptable alternative.

GQA requires that all assessors who are not qualified with the A1 Award:

- receive formal training on how to achieve the Award
- register on the qualification via an approved centre with an approved awarding body and work towards its achievement

All assessment decisions of candidate-assessors (those working towards the AI Award) must be authenticated and validated by an assessor who is qualified with the AI Award and fully licensed by GQA. It is expected that all assessors achieve the AI Award within 12 months of registering on the qualification. GQA can provide comprehensive guidance on the achievement of AI and A2 Awards. GQA is also an awarding body for the AI and A2 Awards.

## D Units

The AI and A2 Awards replace the previously recognised national qualifications for NVQ/SVQ assessors known as D units (D32/D33).

D units are still valid as assessor qualifications. **However, practising assessors must demonstrate that they are assessing according to the criteria of the AI Award. D unit qualified assessors do not need to achieve the AI Award but GQA monitors assessment practice to ensure that it adheres to AI principles.**

## Internal verifier/auditor

This role is important in the quality assurance of NVQs/SVQs. Centres may have several different assessors working with a variety of NVQs/SVQs. In all situations, it is vital that assessment is consistent and reliable and conforms to the national principles of assessment.

The internal verifier/auditor is responsible for ensuring that:

- all staff have undergone relevant training, including becoming accredited with the relevant national award for assessors
- assessors are given the necessary support and guidance to ensure effective assessment
- the quality of assessment is monitored on a regular basis
- assessors have access to the necessary resources as required by the relevant GQA standard/s

In large, or multi-site centres, there may be more than one internal verifier/auditor; they must communicate effectively to ensure that assessment decisions are consistent. Internal verifiers/auditors provide the main link between assessors and external verifiers/auditors (who represent GQA) and often undertake the job of centre co-ordinator.

Internal verifiers can also act as assessors. **However, it is not acceptable for one person to act as assessor and internal verifier for the same NVQ/SVQ candidate: an internal verifier/auditor cannot internally verify his, or her, own assessment activity.**

Internal verification must ensure:

- the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between assessors operating within the centre
- that assessors are consistent in their interpretation and application of the national occupational standards contained within the relevant GQA award

Internal verifiers are responsible for:

- regularly sampling evidence of assessment decisions made by all assessors across all aspects of NVQ/SVQ assessment in order to monitor and ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of standards within the centre. Sampling must include direct observation of the assessment practice
- maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activity and ensuring that these are available for the purposes of external verification
- establishing procedures to develop a common interpretation of the GQA standards between assessors
- facilitating appropriate staff development and training for assessors
- providing feedback to the external verifier on the effectiveness of assessment
- ensuring that any corrective actions required by the awarding body are implemented within agreed timescales

The role includes:

- co-ordinating the provision of the qualification/s within the centre
- ensuring the centre's quality assurance mechanisms are operating effectively by internally verifying/auditing the assessment process
- observing the assessment process and providing timely feedback to assessors
- monitoring the centre's equal opportunities practice with regard to open access to assessment and in relation to the centre's own published equal opportunities policy
- ensuring that particular assessment requirements (PAR) are met as appropriate
- ensuring that assessor duties are allocated clearly
- ensuring that the recording of achievement is carried out accurately and that assessment and verification records are kept in accordance with an approved centre's responsibilities

The internal verifier/auditor also has responsibility for each candidate in ensuring that:

- responsibilities with regard to their own assessment are understood
- encouragement is provided to develop competence in the required elements of competence relevant to the chosen NVQ/SVQ
- appeals are dealt with fairly, promptly and follow agreed procedures

An internal verifier must be sufficiently knowledgeable about:

- the relevant occupational area
- the requirements of the relevant NVQ/SVQ standards

so that the performance of assessors can be accurately judged. GQA recommends that internal verifiers also hold the national award for assessors. The standards setting bodies' assessment strategy specifies the requirements for internal verifiers.

Centres must:

- provide appropriate training and development opportunities to enable internal verifiers to meet the requirements of the role and to ensure that they have a common understanding of relevant standards
- keep relevant records of such activity (for example, staff development and CPD records) as evidence
- provide internal verifiers with information and guidance which ensures that they understand their responsibilities in relation to the verification requirements of the qualification
- ensure internal verifiers have access to specialist advice and guidance on the internal verification of NVQs/SVQs
- ensure that all internal verifiers/auditors maintain a continued professional development record with at least two significant entries per year

## **Standardisation**

To ensure accurate and consistent assessment, internal verifiers are expected to ensure effective standardisation. This can be done through:

- carrying out standardisation exercises with a group of assessors which may include the following:
  - selecting specific/problem units
  - focusing on types/sources of evidence and assessment methods used
  - comparing the requirements between old and new/revised qualification requirements
  - considering alternative forms of evidence
- holding regular standardisation meetings with the assessment team, including satellite site assessment teams (where applicable). These meetings should include matters concerning:
  - access and fair assessment
  - health and safety
  - qualification last registration and last certification dates
  - issues arising from internal verification
  - issues arising from external verification
  - candidate achievement – difficulties

- changes in qualification requirements
- resources
- workplace practice
- difficulties in interpretation of qualification requirements
- alternative assessment methods
- qualification specific updates from GQA
- assessor workload, including candidate to assessor ratios

The external verifier will expect to see recorded evidence that the internal verifier has observed the assessment activities of each assessor over a period of time. Evidence should demonstrate that the internal verifier has witnessed a number of different assessors, each judging evidence against the same evidence requirements.

Where a centre has more than one internal verifier, benchmarking or standardisation exercises must be extended to include all internal verifiers so that consistency of verification judgments is monitored across all team members.

### **Internal verifier sampling:**

The sampling strategy for each centre will vary according to the needs of the centre and the particular NVQ/SVQ programme, but in *all* cases must be agreed with the external verifier. In defining the sampling strategy all the following should be taken into account:

- size of sample needed to ensure reliability
- assessment methods used by centre (this may vary between awards)
- assessors – number, experience, workload and location
- range (if any) of assessment sites, satellites
- the NVQs/SVQs – particularly if new/revised
- all units and particularly focusing on any problem unit(s)

GQA publishes guidance on sampling methods on its web site.

### **National qualifications for internal verifiers**

All internal verifiers must hold a national award approved by the regulatory authorities that qualifies them to internally verify and audit the assessment process. This is usually the VI Level 4 Award in Conducting Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment.

GQA requires that all internal verifiers who are not qualified with the VI Award:

- receive formal training on how to achieve the Award
- register on the qualification via an approved centre with an approved awarding body and work towards its achievement

All verification decisions of candidate-internal verifiers (those working towards the VI Award) must be authenticated and validated by an internal verifier who is qualified with the VI Award and fully licensed by GQA. It is expected that all internal verifiers achieve the VI Award within 12 months of registering on the qualification. GQA can provide comprehensive guidance on the achievement of the VI Award. GQA is also an awarding body for the VI Award.

### **D Units**

The VI Award replaces the previously recognised national qualification for NVQ/SVQ internal verifiers known as D34.

D34 is still valid as an internal verifier qualification. **However, practising internal verifiers must demonstrate that they are verifying according to the criteria of the VI Award. D unit qualified internal verifiers do not need to achieve the VI Award but GQA monitors verification practice to ensure that it adheres to VI principles.**

## **Centre co-ordinator**

The centre co-ordinator is the single named point of accountability for the overall quality assurance, management and administration of GQA awards. The centre co-ordinator must be of sufficient stature to be an authoritative figure and representative of senior management. An internal verifier often, but not exclusively, undertakes this role.

The centre co-ordinator co-ordinates the provision of all NVQs/SVQs within a centre by:

- ensuring that internal verification/auditing is effective and objective
- ensuring that procedures/action points agreed with GQA are implemented effectively and promptly
- ensuring that all appropriate documentation, records, evidence and personnel are available at the centre for the external verifier/auditor visit
- liaising effectively with the assessment and verification team
- ensuring that all GQA documentation and materials are disseminated to appropriate personnel
- making sure that GQA requirements for financial and administrative arrangements are carried out effectively
- acting as the centre's formal point of contact for GQA on administrative and financial matters

Centre co-ordinators do not need to be occupationally competent in the relevant areas of the national standards being delivered. However, a general working knowledge of the occupational area is required and access to technical support as necessary.

## **GQA external verifier/auditor**

As NVQs/SVQs and the A and V Awards are part of the national qualification framework, it is necessary to monitor quality and consistency at a national level. This is done through a network of external verifiers/auditors appointed by GQA.

The external verifier/auditor role involves visiting approved centres and monitoring assessment and verification activity to ensure that it is being carried out in accordance with NVQ/SVQ principles and GQA requirements.

As the external verifier/auditor is the main link with GQA, she, or he, is also the person who can give definite answers to queries from centres. Eg on the acceptability of evidence, the interpretation of criteria/standards and advice on the requirements of candidates with particular assessment requirements (PAR).

External verifiers are responsible for:

- visiting centres to monitor the quality and consistency of assessment practices and procedures against the national occupational standards contained within the qualification
- providing feedback to the awarding body on the performance of its centres in maintaining the consistent application of the national occupational standards
- providing assurance to the awarding body that approved centres are continuing to operate in accordance with the requirements of the approved centre criteria
- recommending to the awarding body the imposition of an appropriate sanction or penalty, as specified in Appendix 3, in cases where a centre is failing to comply with the requirements of the approved centre criteria

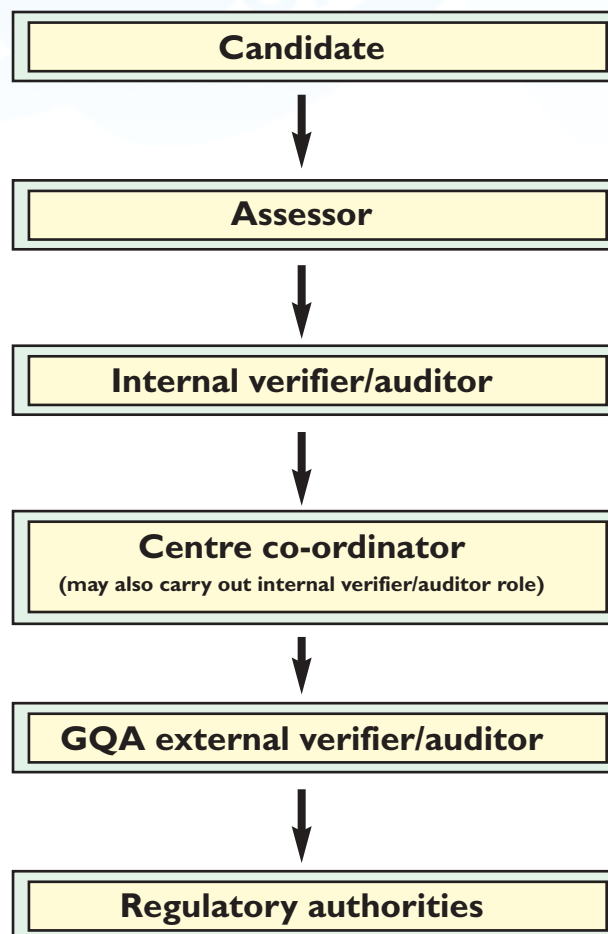
This is done by:

- confirming that centres continue to meet the requirements of the approved centre criteria
- confirming that assessments are conducted by appropriately qualified and occupationally expert assessors
- sampling assessment decisions to confirm that they are authentic, valid and that the national standards are being consistently maintained

- confirming that assessment decisions are regularly sampled through internal verification to ensure the accuracy of assessment decisions against the national standards
- checking claims for certification to ensure that they are authentic, valid and supported by auditable records
- confirming that centres have implemented any corrective actions required by the awarding body
- advising centres on the interpretation of national standards
- advising centres on awarding body requirements and procedures, including access to fair assessment and appeals against awarding body decisions
- providing centres with up-to-date information and advice in line with awarding body and regulatory authority guidance and requirements

GQA appoints and licences its external verifiers, all of whom are subject to GQA's recruitment, training and Continuing Professional Development procedures. GQA ensures that all of its external verifiers/auditors hold the appropriate national award for external verification/auditing and that all external verifier/auditor practice adheres to the principles of the V2 Level 4 Award in Conducting External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process.

### The NVQ/SVQ quality assurance chain



If a centre is in receipt of funds to implement nationally recognised qualifications, it may also be subject to the auditing regulations and procedures of the funding organisation/s.

## GQA licensing procedures

GQA operates a licensing system for all assessors, internal verifiers/auditors and external verifiers/auditors. This helps to ensure that qualified, competent practitioners conduct the assessment and verification process. The table below outlines GQA's licensing procedures:

<b>Provisional assessor licence</b>	<p>Issued to candidate-assessors once:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– assessor has undergone training for the national award for assessment</li> <li>– assessor is working towards the national award for assessment</li> <li>– GQA external verifier is satisfied that the candidate-assessor has the necessary occupational background to assess against GQA standards and clearly understands the role of an assessor. Centres must provide evidence that assessors have the necessary competence (typically a CV or job history)</li> </ul>
<b>Provisional internal verifier/auditor licence</b>	<p>Issued to candidate internal verifiers/auditors once:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– internal verifier/auditor has undergone training for the national award for internal verification/auditing</li> <li>– internal verifier/auditor is working towards the national award for internal verification/auditing</li> <li>– GQA external verifier is satisfied from evidence provided by the centre that the candidate-internal verifier/auditor has the necessary level of occupational expertise to verify using GQA standards and clearly understands the role of an internal verifier/auditor</li> </ul>
<b>Full assessor licence</b>	<p>Issued once:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– assessor is accredited with the national qualification for assessment</li> <li>– assessor is practised in conducting assessment of NVQ/SVQ candidates against GQA standards</li> <li>– assessor is fully conversant with the relevant GQA standards and associated GQA procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Full internal verifier/auditor licence</b>	<p>Issued once:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– internal verifier/auditor is accredited with the national qualification for internal verification/auditing</li> <li>– internal verifier/auditor is practised in conducting verification of NVQ/SVQ candidates using GQA standards</li> <li>– internal verifier/auditor is fully conversant with the role and associated GQA procedures</li> </ul>

All licences specify which GQA qualifications a practitioner is licensed to assess/internally verify/audit. GQA requires centres to record licence numbers against candidate details when claiming certificates and does not award qualifications to candidates unless they have been assessed and internally verified/audited by personnel who are fully licensed against the relevant qualification.

GQA licences are renewed on an annual basis, provided that a GQA external verifier/auditor is satisfied that practitioners continue to conduct their role satisfactorily. It is expected that a candidate assessor/internal verifier/auditor achieves the relevant national qualification and becomes fully conversant with GQA procedures and standards within the life of the one year provisional licence.

A candidate assessor/internal verifier/auditor licence can be upgraded to full status as soon as full licence criteria are satisfied.

Centres must retain on record, and make available to the GQA external verifier/auditor and regulatory authorities, documentation (CV/job history) that clearly shows the related experience of all assessors/internal verifiers/auditors.

Licence issue may only be authorised by a *fully* licensed GQA external verifier/auditor.

## Unit certification

Units of NVQs/SVQs are qualifications in their own right and unit achievement can be recognised by the issue of certificates of unit credit.

A centre may apply for approval to offer a selection of units or one individual unit. **Roles, responsibilities and procedures do not differ from when full NVQs/SVQs are being delivered.**

Accrediting unit achievement in this way is termed 'unit certification'.

For example, a potential centre may wish to assess candidates against a specific unit of competence, such as health and safety, and would apply for approved centre status in relation to that particular unit.

Alternatively, a candidate may have registered on a full NVQ/SVQ qualification and for a variety of reasons may have only been successfully assessed and verified on one or two units, eg the candidate may change occupational roles or leave the company/centre. In such circumstances, the centre is expected to request the awarding of a Certificate of Unit Credit.

**GQA approved centres are responsible for ensuring candidates are aware of the value and availability of unit certification.**

## Centre models

An approved centre can be one organisation, or a partnership of a collection of several. Centres may be spread over several sites. For example, one site may provide the majority of administrative functions while another may be chiefly concerned with delivering NVQ/SVQ assessment.

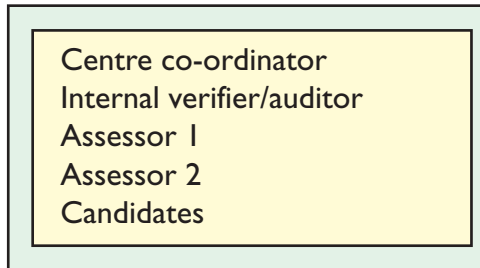
### Examples of possible models

The diagrams below show possible centre models; not all possibilities are illustrated as combinations of roles vary to suit different organisations' needs.

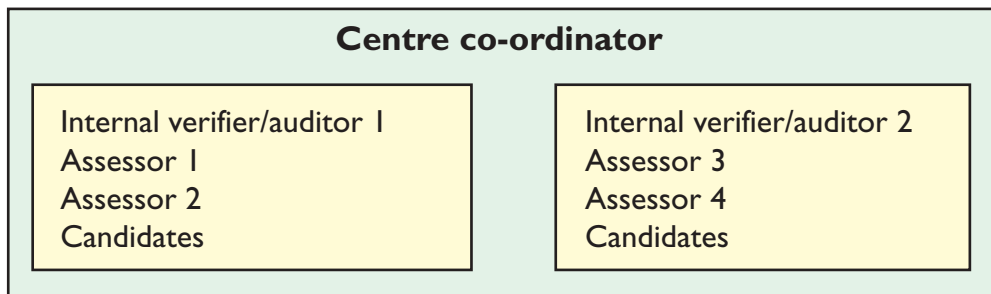
## SINGLE SITE CENTRES

(Typically an employer-based centre)

### Model A



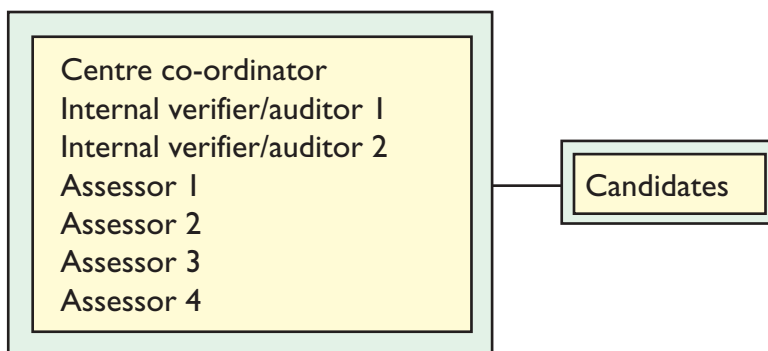
### Model B



## PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

(Typically, a college, national employer organisation or training provider)

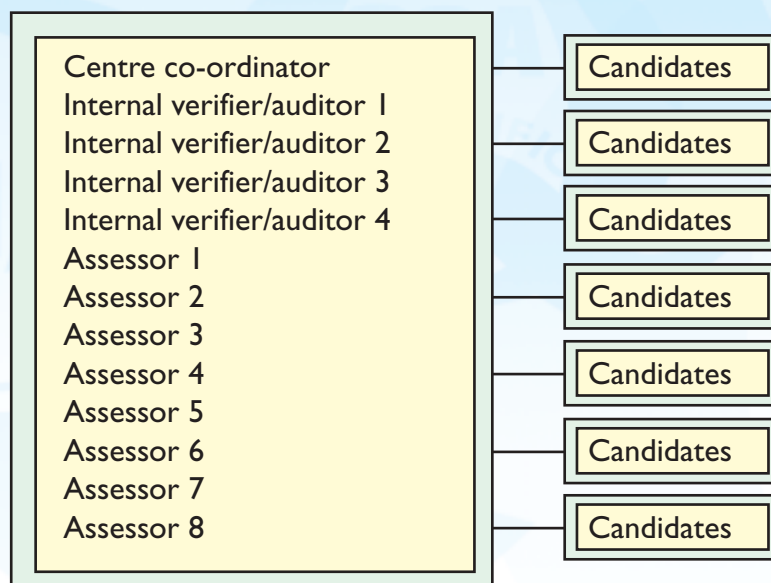
### Model C



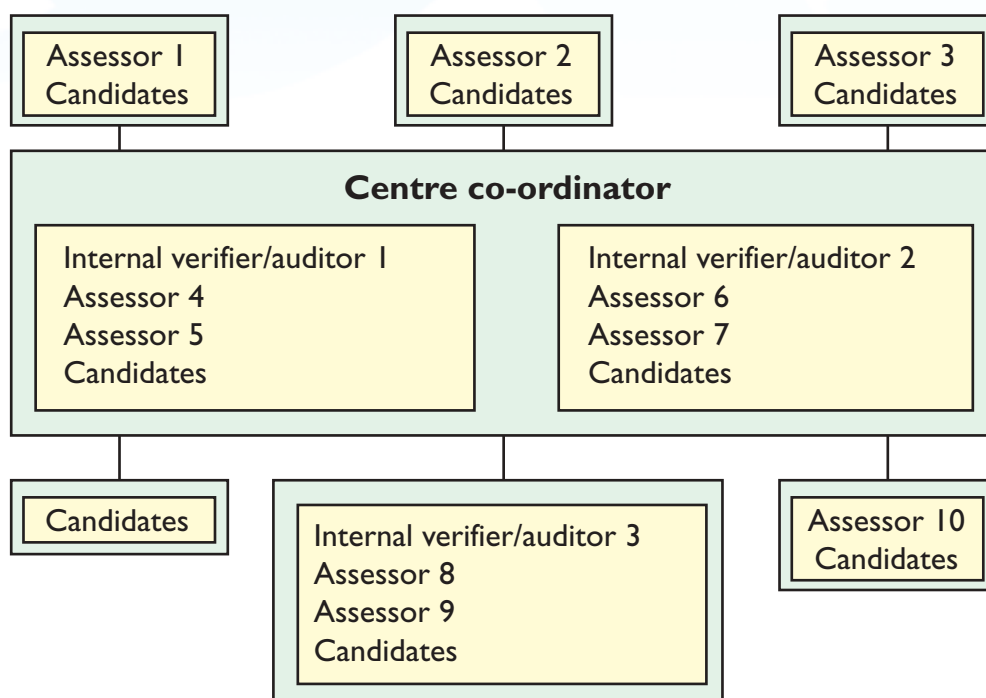
## MULTI-SITE CENTRES

(Model D - typically, a college, national employer organisation or training provider  
 Model E – typically a multi-site employer)

### Model D



### Model E



Assessors and internal verifiers/auditors do not need to be based within an assessment location and may operate on a mobile basis. It is not a requirement for centres to employ members of the assessment team.

**Where a centre applying for approval is a partnership/multi-site arrangement between organisations, respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities must be clearly documented in relation to the assessment, quality assurance and administration of the award and clear lines of communication between all partners must be established. Systems and procedures must ensure that implementation of GQA qualifications is consistent and must support equality of opportunity.**

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I: frequently asked questions

### ***How long does it take to gain approval?***

This depends on how much needs to be done for a potential centre to satisfy the approved centre criteria and how quickly any necessary measures are implemented. A GQA external verifier/auditor will visit a potential centre to monitor approval criteria and this usually takes one day.

### ***What happens if we don't meet all the approval criteria during a centre approval visit?***

Your external verifier/auditor will advise you on future action and will need to visit you again to grant approval.

It is not expected that a new centre will fully satisfy all criteria. For example, candidate-assessors may have been identified but not yet trained and qualified. If any shortfall is within expectations, the external verifier/auditor can approve the centre and provide an agreed action plan that will be monitored. An initial visit may be regarded as a support visit for the potential centre to help staff prepare a formal application.

### ***How long does approval last?***

Centre approval is subject to continued satisfactory external verifier/auditor reports.

### ***What if a candidate disagrees with a decision made by an assessor?***

The centre must implement its appeals procedures. GQA external verifiers/auditors can advise on this. All approved centres must have formal appeals procedures in place and they must be documented and promoted to candidates.

### ***Are GQA approved centres audited by any other organisations?***

Yes. The Regulatory Bodies audit GQA and this involves visits to a random selection of GQA approved centres. These visits can occur at short notice – this is to minimise the risk of unsubstantiated claims for NVQ/SVQ certificates. Centres in receipt of funds to deliver NVQs/SVQs will also be subject to audits by the funding organisations.

### ***Does GQA charge for its services?***

Yes. A current price list can be provided on request or can be accessed at GQA's web site. GQA external verifiers/auditors can also forecast estimated costs involved in the delivery of GQA qualifications and provide tailored estimates as required.

### ***What is the ten week rule?***

A centre cannot claim certificates for candidates who have been registered for less than ten weeks with GQA (within ten weeks of the confirmed GQA database registration date). This is to help combat any unsubstantiated claims for certification.

### ***What documentation is available from GQA?***

GQA has a variety of literature available to help centres operate smoothly. As this is regularly updated, GQA publishes information about its documentation on its web site to ensure that GQA stakeholders can access current and valid information. Support materials are available for centres, assessors and internal verifiers/auditors.

### ***What about candidates who don't speak English, Welsh or Irish?***

Assessment is allowable in languages other than English, Welsh or Irish but it must ensure that:

- it is comparable to assessment that is offered in English, Welsh or Irish
- lack of proficiency in English, Welsh or Irish does not prevent the candidate from properly carrying out the role that is supported by the qualification

GQA also allows, under prescribed circumstances, assessment to be conducted in British Sign Language in accordance with its *Reasonable Adjustments* and *Particular Arrangements* procedures.

### **Are the assessment decisions of candidate-assessors/provisionally licensed assessors valid?**

They are valid only as long as they are checked, authenticated and countersigned by an assessor who is recognised and fully licensed by GQA. Internal verifiers must sample an increased ratio of assessment decisions by candidate-assessors and must be responsible, and accountable, for arranging the checking and countersigning process.

The same applies for candidate-internal verifiers/auditors: all centres must ensure that the decisions of candidate-internal verifiers/auditors/provisionally licensed internal verifiers/auditors are checked, authenticated and countersigned by an internal verifier/auditor who is recognised and fully licensed by GQA.

### **Is it the internal verifier's job to countersign assessments?**

The internal verifier's role is one of conducting internal quality assurance of the assessment process. This involves advising and supporting assessors, maintaining and monitoring arrangements for processing assessment and verifying assessment practice. This requires the internal verifier to know his/her assessors intimately and to conduct observations of them at work at planned intervals. The internal verifier is not just a countersigning officer; he/she will need to plan and implement the quality assurance role. Inevitably they will sign assessment documentation to support the implementation of their internal verifying sampling records etc.

## APPENDIX 2: approved centre criteria

### I. Planning

#### Ia Management systems

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible sources of evidence</b>
<b>I.1.1</b>	The centre's aims and policies in relation to NVQs/SVQs are supported by senior management and understood by the assessment team.	Documented quality procedures.  Progress reports and staff updates.
<b>I.1.2</b>	The centre's access and fair assessment policy and practice is understood and complied with by candidates and assessors.	Documented policies and procedures.  Access and fair assessment policy review mechanisms.
<b>I.1.3</b>	Guidance services must be clearly and appropriately allocated	Organisation/Responsibilities chart.  Job Descriptions (showing staff responsibilities).
<b>I.1.4</b>	The roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment and verification team across all assessment sites are clearly defined, allocated and understood.	Documented quality assurance procedures.  An organisational chart (regularly updated as necessary).

		<p>Documented and signed agreements indicating the lines of accountability of partner organisations in relation to the management of assessment and internal quality assurance.</p> <p>Records of all assessment sites and personnel.</p> <p>CVs of the assessment team and internal verifiers.</p>
<b>1.1.5</b>	Internal verification procedures and activities are clearly documented, consistent with national requirements and ensure the quality and consistency of assessment.	<p>Internal verification plans and reports.</p> <p>A sampling strategy and schedule of activity.</p> <p>Records of assessment team meetings.</p> <p>Assessor networking opportunities.</p>
<b>1.1.6</b>	There is effective communication within the assessment team and with the awarding body.	<p>Staff handbooks and updates (regularly updated as necessary).</p> <p>Organisational charts.</p> <p>Minutes of team meetings.</p> <p>Records of communication with the awarding body.</p>

## ***Ib Resources***

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible sources of evidence</b>
<b>1.2.1</b>	Resource needs are accurately identified in relation to the specific award and resources are made available.	<p>Records of resource availability.</p> <p>Evidence of any additional resources obtained.</p>
<b>1.2.2</b>	Equipment and accommodation used for the purposes of assessment comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety acts.	<p>Public employee liability certificates.</p> <p>Records of equipment and accommodation.</p> <p>Maintenance schedules.</p> <p>Health and safety policies.</p>

<p><b>1.2.3</b></p>	<p>There are sufficient competent and qualified assessors and internal verifiers to meet the demand for assessment and verification activity.</p>	<p>CVs and development plans for the assessment team.</p> <p>A list of qualified assessors and internal verifiers.</p> <p>A list of active GQA licenced personnel</p> <p>Assessor/candidate ratios.</p>
<p><b>1.2.4</b></p>	<p>A staff development and CPD programme is established for the assessment and verification team in line with identified needs.</p>	<p>Staff induction and guidance materials.</p> <p>Records of meetings/briefings/ updates.</p> <p>Individual development and CPD records.</p> <p>Action plans to acquire the national qualifications for assessors and internal verifiers/auditors.</p>
<p><b>1.2.5</b></p>	<p>Assessors and verifiers have sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively.</p>	<p>A record of assessor/candidate allocation.</p> <p>Candidate/assessor ratios and time allocation.</p> <p>Oral confirmation from assessors/verifiers.</p>
<p><b>1.2.6</b></p>	<p>Awarding bodies are notified of any changes which may affect the centre's ability to meet the approved centre criteria.</p>	<p>Notification of changes to the assessment and verification team.</p> <p>Notification of changes to resources.</p>

## 2. Planning

### 2a Candidate support

Criteria	Possible sources of evidence
<p><b>2.1.1</b></p> <p>Information, advice and guidance about qualification procedures and practices are provided to candidates and potential candidates.</p>	<p>Candidate guidance and induction materials.</p> <p>Details of support services available.</p> <p>Appeals procedures.</p> <p>Oral confirmation by candidates.</p>

<b>2.1.2</b>	Candidates' development needs are matched against the requirements of the award and an agreed individual assessment plan is established.	Candidate initial assessment procedures.  Candidate assessment plans.  Learner/trainee contracts.
<b>2.1.3</b>	Candidates have regular opportunities to review their progress and goals and to revise their assessment plan accordingly.	Candidate assessment plan, frequency of review meetings; examples of revisions to assessment plans.  Candidate signature on appropriate documents.
<b>2.1.4</b>	Particular assessment requirements of candidates are identified and met where possible.	Materials/equipment/facilities to support candidates with particular requirements.  GQA advised of any special or particular requirements
<b>2.1.5</b>	There is an established appeals procedure which is documented and made available to all candidates.	Documented appeals procedure, including details of grounds for appeal and timescales.  Records of appeals made and their outcomes.
<b>2.1.6</b>	Pre-exit guidance should be provided to support progression from achievement status (whether full qualification or unit credits).	Procedure for pre-exit guidance.  Future options list.

## **2b Assessment and verification**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible sources of evidence</b>
<b>2.2.1</b> Access to assessment is encouraged through the use of a range of valid assessment methods.	Assessment plans and candidate assessment records.  Provision for candidates with particular assessment requirements.
<b>2.2.2</b> Queries about the qualification specification, assessment guidance or related awarding body material are resolved and recorded.	Records of queries raised with awarding bodies.  Records/minutes of queries raised with the internal verifier.

<p><b>2.2.3</b></p>	<p>Assessment is conducted by qualified and occupationally expert staff.</p>	<p>Details of the assessment team including occupational background, experience, records of achievement of the national qualification/s for assessors.</p> <p>Details of countersigning arrangements for any assessment decisions made by unqualified assessors.</p>
<p><b>2.2.4</b></p>	<p>Assessment decisions and practices are regularly sampled and findings are acted upon to ensure consistency and fairness.</p>	<p>Sampled assessments (observation, candidate portfolios, knowledge evidence etc).</p> <p>Internal verification plans and records of internal verification activity (including observations of assessors/candidates).</p> <p>Records of assessment sampling strategies.</p> <p>Minutes of assessment team meetings.</p> <p>Records of networking/ standardisation events.</p>
<p><b>2.2.5</b></p>	<p>Internal verification is conducted by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.</p>	<p>Details of internal verifier occupational background, experience and accreditation of the national qualification for internal verification.</p> <p>Details of countersigning arrangements for any internal verification decisions made by unqualified internal verifiers/ auditors.</p>
<p><b>2.2.6</b></p>	<p>Requests are complied with for access to premises, records, information, candidates and staff for the purpose of external verification.</p>	<p>Data and information management systems.</p> <p>Candidate tracking systems.</p> <p>Assessment and internal verification records.</p>
<p><b>2.2.7</b></p>	<p>Unit certification is made available to candidates (and when appropriate guidance is provided on how the units can contribute to future development).</p>	<p>Records of units registered/ claimed/awarded.</p> <p>Induction materials.</p> <p>Pre-exit guidance document.</p>

### 3. Monitoring and review

#### 3a Records

	Criteria	Possible sources of evidence
3.1.1	Candidate records and details of achievements are accurate, kept up-to-date, securely stored in line with awarding body requirements, and available for external verification and auditing.	Candidate registration details. Candidate assessment records. Evidence files/portfolios. Security and access arrangements.
3.1.2	Records of internal verification activity are maintained in line with awarding body requirements and made available for the purposes of auditing.	Internal verification plan and sampling records. Minutes of assessment team meetings.
3.1.3	Information supplied to the awarding body for the purposes of registration and certification is complete and accurate.	Records of candidate entry/registration details and certificate claims.
3.1.4	Information and recording systems enable candidates' achievements to be monitored and reviewed in relation to the centre's equal opportunities policy.	Achievement records in relation to the access and fair assessment policy. Statistical information on achievement and certification rates analysed by factors such as ethnic origin, disability and gender.

#### 3b Review

	Criteria	Possible sources of evidence
3.2.1	Actions identified by external verification visits are disseminated to appropriate staff and corrective measures are implemented.	External verifier report(s) circulated to the assessment team and senior management. Action plans.
3.2.2	The effectiveness of the internal verification strategy is reviewed against national requirements and corrective measures are implemented.	Internal reviews of sampling strategies. External verifier reports. Evidence of corrective actions taken.

<b>3.2.3</b>	Candidate, employer and other feedback is used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of qualification provision against the centre's stated aims and policies, leading to continuous improvement.	Evaluation forms/surveys.  Users' charter/customer service statements.
<b>3.2.4</b>	The centre's achievements are monitored and reviewed and used to inform future centre qualification developmental activity.	Internal audit/self-assessment arrangements.  Records of findings against the approval criteria.  Evidence of corrective actions taken/implemented.

## APPENDIX 3: tariff of sanctions

The tariff of sanctions links five levels of transgression against the requirements of the approved centre criteria with a required sanction. These are set out in detail in Table I below, together with a rationale for the sanction, and represent the minimum response required of an awarding body to a particular shortcoming or problem.

Table I

<b>Tariff/Level of transgression</b>	<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>1</b>	Entry in action plan	Non-compliance with approved centre criteria but no threat to the integrity of assessment decisions
<b>2</b>	Removal of direct claims status, ie claims for certification must be individually authorized by the external verifier	Close scrutiny of the integrity of assessment decisions required
<b>3</b>	(a) Suspension of registration  (b) Suspension of certification	(a) Threat to candidates  (b) Loss of the integrity of assessment decisions – danger of invalid claims for certification
<b>4</b>	Withdrawal of centre approval of specific NVQs/SVQs	Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality assurance of specific NVQs/SVQs
<b>5</b>	Withdrawal of centre approval for all NVQs/SVQs	Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality assurance of all NVQs/SVQs run by the centre

## Sanctions and approved centre criteria

### Tariff levels 1-3

For tariff levels 1-3, Table 2 links specific failure to meet criteria (non-compliances) with specific sanctions. With some criteria, more than one level of sanction may apply depending on the gravity of the infringement as indicated in the table.

### Tariff levels 4 and 5

For tariff levels 4 and 5 the non-compliances may be evidenced across a range of the approved centre criteria. These would need to indicate significant faults in the management and quality assurance which result in an ongoing failure to meet the core requirements for the conduct of assessment. This would apply to a specific GQA qualification at tariff level 4, or across all GQA qualifications at tariff level 5. A failure to rectify non-compliances at tariff level 4 constitutes a reason for applying a sanction at tariff level 5.

### Guidance on interpretation

The above sanctions represent a minimum tariff of response to identified non-compliances, but there will be circumstances in which an awarding body may judge that a higher level of tariff is appropriate and justified.

### Combinations

A combination of non-compliances at a particular tariff might call for a more serious response. A judgement should be made against the rationale of the sanction. Thus a combination of infringements at tariff 2 could be such as to give rise to a loss of integrity of assessment decisions and thus merit a response at tariff 3.

### Persistence

A failure to implement action plan requests at tariff level 1 should invoke a tariff level 2 response.

Similarly a failure to rectify faults that have given rise to a level 2 sanction must invoke a tariff level 3 response.

### Recurrence

A centre may temporarily rectify non-compliances in response to action plans (or higher level sanctions) only to display the same weakness again at a later date. An awarding body must take into account the track record of a centre in considering whether to impose a higher level sanction.

### Malpractice

Where the circumstances and nature of non-compliance indicate that fraudulence is involved, the procedures for dealing with malpractice should be invoked.

## Table 2

Tariff of sanctions for non-compliance – based on QCA guidelines but applicable to NVQs and SVQs.

<b>Non-compliance and reference to approved centre criteria</b>	<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<p><b>0.1</b> Centre’s aims, policies and assessment practices, and responsibilities of personnel are not clear or well understood by assessment team (1.1.1-1.1.3)</p> <p><b>0.2</b> Internal verification procedures and activities not clearly documented (1.1.4)</p> <p><b>0.3</b> Communication within the assessment team and with the awarding body is ineffective (1.1.5)</p> <p><b>0.4</b> Equipment and accommodation do not comply with health and safety acts (1.2.2)</p> <p><b>0.5</b> Insufficient qualified assessors (1.2.3)</p> <p><b>0.6</b> Assessors/internal verifiers do not have adequate development plans (1.2.4)</p> <p><b>0.7</b> Candidates are not aware of their rights and responsibilities, eg no appeals procedure for candidates (2.1.1, 2.1.5)</p> <p><b>0.8</b> There is inadequate assessment planning with candidates (2.1.2-3)</p> <p><b>0.9</b> Queries are not resolved or recorded (2.2.2)</p> <p><b>0.10</b> Range of assessment methods is insufficient to encourage access (2.2.1)</p> <p><b>0.11</b> Changes to personnel of the assessment and verification team are not notified to the awarding body (1.2.6)</p> <p><b>0.12</b> Unit certification is not made available to candidates (2.2.7)</p> <p><b>0.13</b> There is inadequate monitoring or review of procedure (3.2.1-4)</p>	<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p>Entry in action plan</p>	<p>Non-compliance with approved centre criteria but no threat to the integrity of assessment decisions</p>
<p><b>1.1</b> Assessors have insufficient time, resources or authority to perform their role (1.2.5)</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Decisions of unqualified assessors have not been countersigned by qualified assessor (2.2.3)</p> <p><b>1.3</b> Assessment decisions are not consistent (2.2.4)</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Insufficient qualified internal verifiers (1.2.3)</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Decisions of unqualified internal verifier have not been countersigned by qualified internal verifier (2.2.5)</p> <p><b>1.6</b> Records are insufficient to allow audit of assessment (3.1.2)</p>	<p><b>Level 2</b></p> <p>Removal of direct claims status, ie claims for certification must be individually authorised by the external verifier</p>	<p>Close scrutiny of the integrity of assessment decisions required</p>

Non-compliance and reference to approved centre criteria	Sanction	Rationale
<p><b>1.7</b> Previously agreed corrective measures relating to level 1 are not implemented (3.2.1)</p>		
<p><b>2A.1</b> Assessment process disadvantages candidates (2.1.1-5)  <b>2A.2</b> Assessment decisions are unfair (1.1.2, 2.1.1-5, 2.2.1, 2.2.4)  <b>2B.1</b> No qualified internal verifier (1.2.3)  <b>2B.2</b> Assessment does not meet national standards (2.2.1-4)  <b>2B.3</b> The centre fails to provide access to requested records, information, candidates and staff (2.2.6)  <b>2B.4</b> Assessed evidence is not the authentic work of candidates (3.1.1)  <b>2B.5</b> Records of assessment show serious anomalies (3.1.1-3.1.4)  <b>2B.6</b> Certification claims made before all the requirements of assessment are satisfied (3.1.3)  <b>2B.7</b> Previously agreed corrective measures relating to level 2 noncompliance are not implemented (3.2.1)</p>	<p><b>Level 3A/3B</b>   Suspension of Registration/  Certification</p>	<p>3A – threat to candidates   3B – loss of the integrity of assessment decisions – danger of invalid claims for certification</p>
<p><b>3.1</b> Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of the NVQ/SVQ programme which result in an ongoing failure to meet the core requirements for the conduct of assessment  <b>3.2</b> Previously agreed corrective measures relating to a level 3 noncompliance have not been implemented</p>	<p><b>Level 4</b>   Withdrawal of centre approval for specific NVQs/SVQs</p>	<p>Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality assurance of specific GQA qualifications</p>
<p><b>4.1</b> Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of all NVQ/SVQ programmes</p>	<p><b>Level 5</b>   Withdrawal of centre approval for all NVQs/SVQs</p>	<p>Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality</p>
<p><b>4.2</b> Previously agreed corrective measures relating to a level 4 noncompliance have not been implemented</p>	<p><b>Level 5</b>   Withdrawal of centre approval for all NVQs/SVQs</p>	<p>Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality</p>

## Notes

## Notes





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