



SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness

Qualification Handbook

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July 2026	13	Updated unit links	1.1
	16-18	Added trainer and quality assurance requirements, including counter-terrorism experience for trainers and IQA qualification expectations for QA staff.	

1. Introduction

1.1. About SFJ Awards

SFJ Awards is part of the Workforce Development Trust group, together with Skills for Justice, Skills for Health, People 1st International and ICQ Awards. The Workforce Development Trust is a not-for-profit organisation helping employers to continually improve their workforce through increasing productivity, improving learning solutions and helping to boost the skills for staff across a wide range of industries throughout the UK and internationally.

SFJ Awards is an independent Awarding Organisation (AO), regulated by the UK qualifications regulators, including Ofqual, CCEA, Qualifications Wales and Qualifications Scotland, to assess, quality assure and certificate learners and employees, helping training providers and employers to continue developing a highly skilled workforce for the future. Our values are 'For Skills, For Flexibility and For Jobs' and our work embodies the core charitable aims of the wider Workforce Development Trust group that ultimately supports better jobs. We add value to employers and training providers by delivering a wide range of sector-specific regulated qualifications, bespoke learner certification and quality assurance; SFJ Awards is also an Assessment Organisation for Apprenticeships in England.

Whilst predominantly delivering qualifications and assessments to meet the needs of Policing, Fire and Rescue, Community Justice, Custodial Care, Armed Forces, Security and Emergency Services, we continue to grow into markets that require a robust, and quality assured certification solution.

1.2. Customer Service Statement

Our Customer Service Statement is published on the SFJ Awards [website](#) giving the minimum level of service that centres can expect. The Statement will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary in response to customer feedback, changes in legislation, and guidance from the qualifications regulators.

1.3. Centre Support

SFJ Awards works in partnership with its customers. For help or advice contact:

SFJ Awards
Consult House
4 Hayland Street
Sheffield
S9 1BY

Tel: 0114 284 1970

Email: info@sfjawards.com Website: www.sfjawards.com

2. The Qualification

2.1. Qualification Objective

This handbook relates to the following qualification:

SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness

The objective of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding needed to support terrorism protection awareness within venues, sites and organisations. Learners will develop an understanding of the terrorism threat context, common terrorist attack methods, the intent and key organisational requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, and the role of vigilance, reporting and immediate response actions in supporting organisational preparedness. The qualification supports staff to contribute timely observations and information to the responsible person and/or colleagues with formal counter terrorism and protective security responsibilities.

2.2. Pre-entry Requirements

There are no pre-entry requirements for this qualification. However, centres must ensure that learners are able to complete this qualification, for example, through completing a skills scan to ensure they can work at the appropriate level.

2.3. Qualification Structure

To be awarded this qualification the learner must achieve **1** mandatory unit as shown in the table below:

Unit Number	Odyssey Reference	Unit Title	Level	GLH
1	6943	Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness	2	7

2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Values for Total Qualification Time¹, including Guided Learning, are calculated by considering the different activities that Learners would typically complete to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes of a qualification. They do not include activities which are required by a Learner's Teacher based on the requirements of an individual Learner and/or cohort. Individual Learners' requirements and individual teaching styles mean there will be variation in the actual time taken to complete a qualification. Values for Total Qualification Time, including Guided Learning, are estimates.

Some examples of activities which can contribute to Total Qualification Time include:

- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning
- All Guided Learning.

Some examples of activities which can contribute to Guided Learning include:

- Classroom-based learning supervised by a Teacher
- Work-based learning supervised by a Teacher
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a Teacher in real time
- E-learning supervised by a Teacher in real time
- All forms of assessment which take place under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including where the assessment is competence-based and may be turned into a learning opportunity.

The Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours for this qualification are as follows:

Qualification Title	TQT	GLH
SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness	7	7

¹ Total Qualification Time, Ofqual
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>

2.5. Grading

This qualification is graded pass / fail.

2.6. Age Range and Geographical Coverage

This qualification is recommended to learners aged **16** years and over and is regulated in England and Wales.

2.7. Opportunities for Progression

This qualification creates a number of opportunities for progression into further learning and development in counter-terrorism awareness, protective security, organisational preparedness and related security roles.

Learners may progress to further SFJ Awards qualifications, including the **SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security and Preparedness**, where appropriate to their role and responsibilities. The qualification may also support progression within employment by helping learners develop the awareness needed to contribute to organisational preparedness, follow site procedures, report concerns appropriately and support colleagues with more formal counter-terrorism and protective security responsibilities.

Typical progression routes may include further training or development in protective security, security operations, event safety, facilities management, emergency preparedness, business continuity, risk management or leadership and supervision within venues, sites and organisations.

2.8. Use of Languages

SFJ Awards' business language is English, and we provide assessment materials and qualification specifications that are expressed in English. Assessment specifications and assessment materials may be requested in Welsh or Irish and, where possible, SFJ Awards will try to fulfil such requests. SFJ Awards will provide assessment materials and qualification specifications that are expressed in Welsh or Irish and support the assessment of those learners, where the number of learners makes it economically viable for SFJ Awards to do so. More information is provided in the SFJ Awards' Use of Language Policy.

For learners seeking to take a qualification and be assessed in British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language, please refer to SFJ Awards' Reasonable Adjustments Policy. A learner may be assessed in British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted by SFJ Awards for the purpose of Reasonable Adjustment.

Policies are available on our website sfjawards.com or on request from SFJ Awards.

3. Qualification Units

3.1. Mandatory Units

Title	Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness		
Level	2		
Unit Number	1		
GLH	7		
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>		Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand terrorism threats and common attack methods relevant to venues, sites and organisations	1.1	Define terrorism	• Meaning of terrorism (UK context) • Why terrorism risk matters for venues, sites and organisations
	1.2	State the purpose of the UK terrorism threat level system	• What the system is used for (broad indication of likelihood) • What threat levels do and do not indicate
	1.3	Identify the UK national terrorism threat levels	• Low, Moderate, Substantial, Severe, Critical
	1.4	Identify common terrorist attack methods relevant to venues, sites and organisations	• Physical Attack types: Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA); Vehicle as a Weapon (VAW); Improvised Explosive Device (IED); Fire as a Weapon (FAW); Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN)

			Non-physical attack types: Cyber Terrorism
2. Understand the scope and intent of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 and how it applies to premises and events	2.1	State the purpose and intent of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 in relation to public safety and preparedness	- Why the Act exists (preparedness and harm reduction) - Who may hold accountability (responsible person)
	2.2	Identify the key requirements the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 places on organisations	- Key requirements, including terrorism risk assessment and preparedness planning - Keeping arrangements under review
	2.3	Identify key factors under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 that determine the duties placed on organisations	- Duties vary by premises/event type and expected attendance - Awareness that the law differentiates between different duty levels without needing detailed tier knowledge
	2.4	Identify examples of organisational arrangements that support preparedness and compliance	- Staff awareness, briefing and engagement arrangements that promote a positive security culture - Reporting routes and escalation arrangements - Response procedures (site dependent) - Basic protective security measures (site dependent) for example access control, CCTV, barriers, screening/search, locks/doors and lighting

			• Shared responsibility for counter-terrorism protective security across the organisation, not only security teams or venue management • Benefits of a positive security culture, including improved vigilance, earlier reporting of concerns, better adherence to procedures and stronger organisational preparedness
	2.5	Identify how staff awareness and vigilance support the responsible person	• Every employee's role in supporting a positive security culture through awareness, vigilance and following site procedures • Reporting concerns promptly and accurately through agreed routes • Clear communication and appropriate information sharing • Sharing timely observations that may support the responsible person and/or colleagues with formal counter-terrorism and protective security responsibilities to review arrangements

3. Understand vigilance and reporting to support protective security at venues, sites and organisations	3.1	Define hostile reconnaissance	- What hostile reconnaissance is and why it matters (pre-attack information gathering) - Insider and information risks (including social media exposure)
	3.2	Identify indicators of hostile reconnaissance and probing behaviour in venues, sites and organisations	- Examples of suspicious behaviours and context cues (e.g. repeated visits, timed observation, unusual interest in security routines/access points, testing staff responses, photography/filming) - Online information gathering that may support physical reconnaissance
	3.3	Identify the steps in a recognised approach to observing, checking and reporting suspicious behaviour	- Example approach: See, Check and Notify (SCaN) - Proportionate, safe action aligned to site policy
	3.4	Identify security risks associated with insider activity and poor information handling	- Insider threat (awareness level): what it is and why it matters - Social media exposure and oversharing (layouts, routines, protective measures) - Handling sensitive information appropriately (site expectations)
	3.5	Identify appropriate reporting and escalation routes for suspicious activity, information or concerns	- Internal reporting routes (site procedures) - When and how to escalate concerns appropriately

			What “good information” looks like when reporting (clear, factual and timely)
4. Understand immediate response principles and site procedures for terrorism-related incidents and emergencies	4.1	Identify personal safety actions during an ongoing attack, aligned to current national guidance	- Personal safety priorities and following site instructions - Example national guidance principles
	4.2	Distinguish between evacuation, invacuation and lockdown	What each option means and why it may be used
	4.3	Identify the steps for assessing and managing a suspected suspicious item safely	- Safe behaviours (do not touch, create distance and report) - Example approaches: Hidden, Obviously suspicious, Typical (HOT) and Confirm, Clear, Communicate, Control (4Cs)
	4.4	Identify immediate actions to reduce exposure and limit contamination during a suspected hazardous substance attack	- Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents - Example principle: “Remove, Remove, Remove” - Follow instructions and emergency services guidance
	4.5	Identify key information to communicate when reporting an incident to security teams and/or emergency services	What to pass on: location, nature of incident, descriptions, injuries, hazards, access points, updates

	4.6	Identify the purpose of public access trauma first aid provision and immediate life-saving first aid readiness	- Why immediate trauma care matters - Example provision: Public Access Trauma (PACT) kits
Additional information about the unit			
Links	Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025		

4. Centre Requirements

4.1. Centre Responsibilities

Centres must be approved by SFJ Awards and also have approval to deliver the qualifications they wish to offer. This is to ensure centres have the processes and resources in place to deliver the qualifications. Approved centres must adhere to the requirements detailed in the SFJ Awards Centre Handbook, which includes information for centres on assessment and internal quality assurance processes and procedures.

When a centre applies to offer a qualification, they will need to provide evidence that they have sufficient resources and infrastructure in place for delivery of that qualification, for example:

- evidence of assessor and IQA competence
- sample assessment materials and mark schemes
- scheme of work
- details of available resources.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that their assessor and internal quality assurance staff:

- are occupationally competent and/or knowledgeable as appropriate to the assessor or IQA role they are carrying out
- have current experience of assessing/internal quality assuring as appropriate to the assessor or IQA role they are carrying out
- have access to appropriate training and support
- are independent and any conflicts of interests are managed and monitored appropriately by SFJ Awards.

Information on the induction and continuing professional development of those carrying out assessment and internal quality assurance must be made available by centres to SFJ Awards through the external quality assurance process.

This handbook should be used in conjunction with the following SFJ Awards documents:

- Assessment Guidance
- Centre Handbook
- Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Sanctions Policy
- Examinations and Invigilation Policy
- Risk and Centre Monitoring Policy

- Fair Access and Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy
- Standardisation Policy
- Direct Claims Policy
- Centre Approval Process.

All documents referenced in the strategy are available to centres on Odyssey, SFJ Awards learner management system, or on request from SFJ Awards.

4.2. Facilities

Training and assessment for approved qualifications must take place in a suitable environment that has been approved by SFJ Awards. The environment must be adequately equipped for training, conducive to effective learning, and must comply with current Health and Safety requirements. Equipment for practical activities must be readily available and fit for purpose. All examination venues must comply with the policy, standards, and regulations specified by SFJ Awards to gain approval for knowledge-based assessment.

Training and assessment facilities must comply with the ongoing approval arrangements of SFJ Awards.

5. Assessment

5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods

The assessment method² that must be used for the **SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security Awareness** is as follows:

- Multiple Choice Examination.

SFJ Awards sets the assessment for the assessment method above and this is delivered by approved centres.

Centres must carry out assessment and quality assurance activity for their learners. SFJ Awards will Externally Quality Assure centre delivery.

5.1.1. Multiple Choice Examination

The Multiple-Choice Examination is set by SFJ Awards and delivered by approved centres in examination conditions. The test consists of **25 questions** and has a pass mark of **80%**. Learners will have **40 minutes** to complete the assessment.

The examination is administered through SFJ Awards *e-assessment platform*. Centres must give SFJ Awards a minimum of **5 working days'** notice before the intended examination date to allow the assessment to be scheduled through the SFJ Awards e-assessment

² Selected from assessment methods listed on Ofqual's regulatory system (Portal)

platform.

5.2. Invigilation

When booking the test, you must select either Centre Invigilation or the SFJ Awards Invigilation Service.

If you choose Centre Invigilation, your centre must have an approved invigilator set up in the Odyssey Contact Manager before the test can be delivered. Centres are responsible for ensuring invigilation arrangements comply with the [SFJ Awards Examinations and Invigilation Policy](#).

If you choose the SFJ Awards Invigilation Service, additional charges will apply as outlined in the current fees list.

5.3. Resits

One free resit is included in the registration fee. Further resits are chargeable by SFJ Awards. Please contact info@sfjawards.com if additional resits are required.

6. Trainer Requirements

6.1. Occupational Knowledge

Centres must ensure that individuals responsible for delivering the qualification are occupationally knowledgeable and competent in the subject area(s) for which they are responsible.

They must have current knowledge and experience relevant to the qualification and understand the occupational context in which learners will apply their knowledge and skills. They should have experience of working in, supervising or training within the relevant sector.

Trainers delivering this qualification must have relevant counter-terrorism and/or counter-terrorism protective security experience appropriate to the qualification content. Centres must be able to evidence that trainers have the occupational knowledge and experience required to deliver the qualification accurately and in context. This may include relevant experience in counter-terrorism protective security, venue or site security preparedness, security management, policing, emergency services, military, or other relevant protective security roles.

6.2. Qualification Knowledge

Individuals responsible for delivering and internally quality assuring the qualification must understand the content, structure and requirements of the qualification, together with any assessment or delivery guidance issued by SFJ Awards.

Centres must ensure that trainers receive an appropriate induction to the qualification and have access to current qualification documentation and updates issued by SFJ Awards.

6.3. Training and Quality Assurance Competence

Centres must ensure that trainers are competent to plan, deliver and support learning, and formative assessment. Ideally trainers should hold a relevant teaching or training qualification or equivalent experience.

6.4. Continuing Professional Development

Centres must ensure that trainers actively engage in continuing professional development (CPD) to maintain:

- current occupational knowledge and competence
- knowledge of relevant legislation, standards and industry best practice
- familiarity with SFJ Awards' qualification requirements, policies and procedures.

Centres must maintain records demonstrating the qualifications, occupational competence and CPD of staff involved in the delivery of the qualification and make these available to SFJ Awards upon request.

7. Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

7.1. Occupational Knowledge

Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) 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, particularly in the justice, community safety and security sectors, and the legal implications of the assessment process, they must understand the nature and context of the assessors' work and that of their learners. This means that they must have worked closely with staff who carry out the functions covered by the qualifications, 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 units.

7.2. Qualification Knowledge

IQAs must understand the content, structure and assessment requirements for the qualification(s) they are internally quality assuring.

Centres should provide IQAs with an induction to the qualifications that they are responsible for quality assuring. IQAs should also have access to ongoing training and updates on current issues relevant to these qualifications.

7.3. Internal Quality Assurer Competence

IQAs must occupy a position in the organisation that gives them the authority and resources to:

- coordinate the assessment process
- provide authoritative advice
- call meetings as appropriate
- conduct pre-delivery internal quality assurance on centre assessment plans, for example, to ensure that any proposed examinations meet relevant requirements
- visit and observe assessment practice
- review the assessment delivery process
- ensure that assessment has been carried out by invigilators who are properly trained and understand the requirements for invigilation set out by SFJ Awards
- Maintain accurate and secure assessment records
- lead internal standardisation activity
- resolve differences and conflicts.

To demonstrate their competence, IQAs must be:

- qualified with a recognised internal quality assurance qualification, or
- working towards a recognised internal quality assurance qualification.

However, there may be circumstances when IQAs have the equivalent competence through training to appropriate national standards, and SFJ Awards will agree this on a case-by-case basis. Recognised IQA qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- RQF/QCF Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- RQF/QCF Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- An appropriate IQA qualification in the SCQF as identified by SQA Accreditation
- V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process
- D34 Internally verify the assessment process.

Where IQAs hold an older qualification e.g. D34 or V1, they must provide evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to demonstrate current competence. Approved centres will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each IQA meets these requirements, for example certificates of achievement.

Centres must have in place a procedure to ensure that their trainee IQAs have a representative sample of their IQA decisions counter signed by a qualified IQA who holds a minimum of the **Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice**. SFJ Awards will provide centres with guidance on the ratio of qualified/trainee IQAs.

Trainee IQAs working towards one of the above qualifications must be registered for the qualification with a regulated AO and achieve it within 18 months. IQA competence will be checked through annual External Quality Assurance checks.

8. External Quality Assurers

External quality assurance is carried out by SFJ Awards to ensure that there is compliance, validity, reliability and good practice in centres. External Quality Assurers (EQAs) are appointed by SFJ Awards to approve centres and to monitor the assessment and internal quality assurance carried out by centres.

SFJ Awards are responsible for ensuring that their external quality assurance team have:

- sufficient and appropriate occupational knowledge
- current experience of external quality assurance
- access to appropriate training and support.

9. Standardisation

Internal and external standardisation is required to ensure the consistency of evidence, assessment decisions and qualifications awarded over time.

10. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the process of recognising previous formal, informal or experiential learning so that the learner avoids having to repeat learning/assessment within a new qualification. RPL is a broad concept and covers a range of possible approaches and outcomes to the recognition of prior learning (including credit transfer where an AO has decided to attribute credit to a qualification).

The use of RPL encourages transferability of qualifications and/or units, which benefits both learners and employers. SFJ Awards support the use of RPL and centres must work to the principles included in Section 6 Assessment and Quality Assurance of the SFJ Awards Centre Handbook and outlined in SFJ Awards [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

11. Equality and Diversity

Centres must comply with legislation and the requirements of the RQF relating to equality and diversity. There should be no barriers to achieving a qualification based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that learners who are disabled or who have additional learning needs are not disadvantaged in any way. Learners must declare their

needs prior to the assessment and all necessary reasonable adjustment arrangements must have been approved by SFJ Awards and implemented before the time of their assessment.

All cases where reasonable adjustment has been used must be fully documented, made available for external quality assurance and retained for a minimum of 3 years.

Further information is available in the SFJ Awards [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy](#) and the SFJ Awards [Fair Access and Equality of Opportunity Policy](#).

SFJ Awards will conduct Equality Impact Assessments in the design and development of qualifications to minimise as far as possible any impact on learners with a protected characteristic, disability or additional learning needs.

12. Health and Safety

SFJ Awards are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners, employees and volunteers and expect everyone to share this commitment.

SFJ Awards foster an open and supportive culture to encourage the safety and well-being of employees, learners and partner organisations to enable:

- learners to thrive and achieve
- employees, volunteers and visitors to feel secure
- everyone to feel assured that their welfare is a high priority.

Assessment of competence-based qualifications in some sectors can carry a high risk level due to the nature of some roles. Centres must therefore ensure that due regard is taken to assess and manage risk and have procedures in place to ensure that:

- qualifications can be delivered safely with risks to learners and those involved in the assessment process minimised as far as possible
- working environments meet relevant health and safety requirements.

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**The
Workforce
Development
Trust**

