SFJ Awards Level 5 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment

Qualification Handbook

Qualification Number: 610/7674/0

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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 and People 1st International. 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, regulated by the UK qualifications regulators, including Ofqual, CCEA and Qualifications Wales, 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 End-Point 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:

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2. The Qualification

2.1. Qualification Objective

This handbook relates to the following qualification:

SFJ Awards Level 5 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment

The Level 5 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment is designed to develop and validate the competence of individuals undertaking fire risk assessments in line with the expectations set out in BS 8674:2025. It aims to equip practitioners with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to carry out consistent, proportionate and defensible fire risk assessments across a range of premises, including complex and higher-risk environments.

The qualification supports the strengthening of professional standards within the fire risk assessment sector in response to the Building Safety Act 2022 and wider post-Grenfell reforms. It provides a structured pathway for advanced practitioners to demonstrate competence, supports quality and consistency in practice, and contributes to improved safety outcomes in the built environment.

It is intended for individuals operating, or aspiring to operate, at an advanced level, in line with the expectations set out in BS 8674, enabling progression within the profession and alignment with current regulatory and industry requirements.

2.2. Pre-entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification. However, given the advanced level and complexity of the content, centres must carry out a robust initial assessment or skills scan to confirm that learners can work at Level 5 and can meet the demands of the programme.

As a minimum, centres should only enrol learners who can demonstrate one or more of the following:

- a relevant fire risk assessment qualification at Level 4 (or an accepted equivalent), and/or
- substantial recent experience independently conducting fire risk assessments across a range of premises types, and/or
- a current role that provides access to complex or higher-risk premises and enables the collection of appropriate workplace evidence.

Centres must also ensure that learners have sufficient underpinning knowledge of fire safety legislation, building construction, fire protection systems, and risk assessment methodologies.

Where a learner does not meet the above expectations, the centre must clearly record and justify how the learner will be supported to meet the demands of the qualification without compromising assessment standards.

Achievement of this qualification alone does not confirm competence as a Fire Risk

Assessor. In line with BS 8674:2025, competence must be demonstrated through a combination of qualifications, relevant experience, supervised practice, and ongoing continuing professional development.

2.3. Qualification Structure

To be awarded this qualification the learner must achieve **both** mandatory units and at least **three** optional units as shown in the tables below.

Mandatory Units					
Unit Number	**Odyssey Reference**	**Unit Title**	**Level**	**GLH**	**TUT**
1	6937	Advanced Principles of Fire Risk Assessment	5	30	50
2	6938	Fire Risk Assessment in High-Risk Residential & Mixed-Use Buildings	5	40	80

Optional Units					
Unit Number	**Odyssey Reference**	**Unit Title**	**Level**	**GLH**	**TUT**
3	6948	Advanced Methods in Personal Development	5	30	60
4	6949	Fire Risk Assessment in Shopping Complexes, Railway Stations & Transport Hubs (incl. Underground)	5	50	100
5	6950	Fire Risk Assessment in Sports Grounds, Stadia, Events & Festivals	5	50	90
6	6951	Fire Risk Assessment in Industrial & Hazardous Sites (incl. COMAH, Warehouses, Manufacturing, Data Centres)	5	50	90

2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Values for Total Qualification Time[1], 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

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

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 5 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment	370-400	200-220

2.5. Grading

This qualification is graded pass / fail.

2.6. Age Range and Geographical Coverage

This qualification is recommended to learners aged **18** years and over and is regulated in England and Wales.

2.7. Opportunities for Progression

This qualification supports progression within the fire risk assessment and wider fire safety sector, particularly for practitioners operating at an advanced level.

Learners who achieve this qualification may progress to:

- more complex or specialist fire risk assessment roles, including those involving higher-risk or complex premises
- third-party certification schemes or professional registers aligned to BS 8674:2025
- related roles in fire safety management, auditing, enforcement or consultancy

- further professional development, including specialist qualifications in areas such as fire engineering, building safety, or risk management

The qualification also supports progression towards demonstrating competence in line with industry frameworks and may contribute to recognition by professional bodies or registration schemes, where applicable.

Progression will typically require a combination of further experience, ongoing professional development, and evidence of competence in practice.

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	Advanced Principles of Fire Risk Assessment			
Level	5			
Unit Number	1			
GLH	30			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand when life safety risks are intolerable	1.1	Analyse indicators of intolerable risk requiring immediate evacuation/closure.	Trigger points: failed compartmentation, impaired critical systems, compromised egress; decant thresholds and temporary measures.	8(a)1; 8(a)5; B.3.1(a); B.3.2(b)
	1.2	Distinguish interim measures vs prohibition of occupation.		
	1.3	Justify escalation pathways to dutyholder and enforcing authority.		
2. Understand strategic fire safety planning principles	2.1	Analyse inputs (occupancy, hazards, socio-economic constraints).	Blend codes with performance expectations; specify outcomes not detailed design.	8(a)4; 8(a)2; 8(d)2; B.3.2(e)
	2.2	Evaluate trade-offs between prescriptive and engineered approaches.		
	2.3	Define performance requirements when recommending measures.		
3. Understand external wall risks and (FRAEW) Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls triggers	3.1	Analyse façade/attachment typologies and red flags.	Recognise systems (rainscreen, composites, cavities) and when PAS 9980 FRAEW is needed.	8(c)2; 7(d)4; B.3.2(g)
	3.2	Define FRAEW referral criteria and assessor boundaries.		
	3.3	Specify documentation required for referral.		

4. Understand smoke control and suppression systems	4.1	Evaluate objectives and limitations of smoke control and suppression.	Interactions: alarms, dampers, AHU shutdown, door releases; impairment planning and resilience.	7(d)1; 8(d)3; B.2.2(f); B.3.2(a),(f)
	4.2	Explain impairment management principles and impacts.		
	4.3	Interpret cause-and-effect matrices affecting other systems.		
5. Understand socio-economic constraints on fire safety interventions	5.1	Evaluate affordability/operational constraints and (ALARP) As Low As Reasonably Practicable.	Balance ALARP and practicality; phased works; lifecycle deterioration and resilience.	8(c)1; 8(d)4–5; B.3.2(d)
	5.2	Explain proportionate phased solutions.		
	5.3	Evaluate sustainability and lifecycle impacts.		
6. Understand legal and regulatory obligations for complex premises	6.1	Interpret statutory duties and enforcement powers.	Legal duties; engaging with authorities; firefighting access/facilities integration.	8(b)1–3; 7(b)4; B.2.2(h); B.3.2(b)
	6.2	Translate obligations into actionable recommendations.		
	6.3	Evaluate firefighting access and facilities.		
7. Understand fire strategies and performance-based approaches	7.1	Analyse principles underpinning fire strategies and their objectives.	Strategy documents; objectives hierarchy; verification concepts; boundaries to non-design role.	8(a)4; B.3.2(e)
	7.2	Evaluate how performance requirements are set and verified at a high level.		
	7.3	Justify when fire engineering methods are appropriate over prescriptive guidance.		
8. Understand system interactions, impairment management and digital dependencies	8.1	Analyse critical interfaces and single points of failure (BMS/SCADA/EVC/PA).	System-of-systems view; commissioning evidence expectations; competence limits and referrals.	B.3.2(f); 5; 8(a)2
	8.2	Evaluate fallback modes and manual overrides conceptually.		
	8.3	Determine when specialist advice (e.g., cyber) is required.		

Title	Fire Risk Assessment in High-Risk Residential & Mixed-Use Buildings			
Level	5			
Unit Number	2			
GLH	40			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand Building Safety Act & Governance in higher-risk residential buildings (HRBs) & golden thread (Building Safety Act)	1.1	Analyse the Building Safety Act 2022 requirements for Higher-Risk Buildings.	HRB definition and scope (Height and what constitutes as a separate section) HRB (descriptions and supplementary building regulations 2023)	8(b)1; Annex C; B.3.2(b) B.3.3(j); 8(b)3
	1.2	Describe HRB characteristics and dutyholder responsibilities.	Roles of Accountable Person and Principal Accountable Person	
	1.3	Explain accountable responsibilities and reporting obligations.	Safety Case Reports and risk control	
	1.4	Evaluate the duties and responsibilities of the Building Safety Regulator.	Golden Thread of information	
2. Understand Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 operational duties	2.1	Explain the scope and application of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, including which premises and responsible persons are affected.	Learners should demonstrate understanding of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 by explaining their scope and application, including which premises and responsible persons are affected; describing operational duties for high-rise residential buildings such as providing floor plans, fire safety instructions, and wayfinding signage; outlining requirements for sharing information with Fire and Rescue	8(b)1–3; B.3.3(j)
	2.2	Describe operational duties for high-rise residential buildings, such as providing floor plans, fire safety instructions, and wayfinding signage.		
	2.3	Outline requirements for information sharing with Fire and Rescue Services, including electronic submission of building plans and firefighting equipment details.		

	2.4	Summarise ongoing compliance obligations, including fire door inspection requirements, resident communication, and record-keeping under the Regulations.	Services, including electronic submission of building plans and firefighting equipment details; and summarising ongoing compliance obligations such as fire door inspection schedules, resident communication, and accurate record-keeping.	
3. Understand resident engagement and risk communication in HRBs	3.1	Describe effective communication of risk findings to residents.	Accessible messaging; anxiety management; behaviour change and trust-building. Evacuation lift procedures (BSEN:8176)	6(a)d,g; 8(f)2; B.3.1(h)
	3.2	Evaluate interim measures (e.g., waking-watch alternatives).		
	3.3	Define accessibility needs and inclusion requirements.		
	3.4	Explain evacuation options for residents.	RPEEPS Person Centred assessment	
4. Understand external wall systems and FRAEW triggers	4.1	Identify cladding systems and fire-spread concerns.	PAS 9980 referral; non-invasive scope; document packs and photographic evidence.	8(c)2; 7(d)4; B.3.2(g)
	4.2	Define FRAEW referral criteria and assessor boundaries.		
	4.3	Explain evidence collation for referral.		
5. Understand passive and active systems in HRBs	5.1	Explain the relationship of fire compartmentation, fire doors and building height and buildings specific risks.	Responses should show how compartmentation and fire doors limit fire spread, especially in taller HRBs where stay-put strategies rely on these measures, while considering mixed-use risks. Learners should outline advanced flat layout principles, such as open-plan impacts and protected lobbies, referencing BS 9991. Fire detection explanations should cover suitable	B.3.2(b, c)
	5.2	Describe advanced principles in relation to internal flat layouts.		
	5.3	Evaluate the type of fire warning and detection for mixed-use residential HRBs.		

	5.4	Evaluate the specification and designs of means of escape in HRB residential areas.	systems for mixed-use HRBs, including BS 5839 standards, zoning, and integration challenges. Finally, evaluations of means of escape should address compliance with Approved Document B and BS 9999, considering travel distances, stair widths, smoke control, accessibility, and conflicts between residential and commercial needs.	
	5.5	Evaluate the specification and designs of means of escape in ancillary accommodation		
6. Understand Safety Systems for the protection of firefighters and Persons with restricted mobility.	6.1	Explain the requirements for firefighting shafts, including dimensions, access provisions, ventilation, and the associated equipment such as fire mains, and firefighter lifts.	Firefighting shafts, Evacuation lifts (BSEN:8176) (Cat A & B concepts); Differences between 9991 and ADB vol1	7(d)1; 8(d)3; B.3.2(a),(f)
	6.2	Describe protection objectives for evacuation lifts.		
7. Understand smoke control and defend-in-place/phased strategies	7.1	Evaluate defend-in-place versus full evacuation constraints.	Mechanical, pressure differential, natural AOVs; pressurisation; triggers and management of strategy transitions; resident behaviours.	7(d)1; 8(d)2; B.3.2(a)
	7.2	Describe type of different smoke control systems and their component parts fitted within in HRBs.		
	7.3	Identify when engineering strategies are required for smoke control objectives that are outside guidance standards.		
	7.4	Explain Smoke control for ancillary accommodation and car parks		
	7.5	Evaluate smoke control cause and affect strategies.		
8. Understand mixed-use interfaces and	8.1	Describe risks at residential/retail/parking interfaces.	Service penetrations; refuse rooms; car parks; FM coordination and controls.	7(c)1; 6(d)4; 6(e)1–3

shared-space management	8.2	Explain compartmentation and fire-stopping controls.		
	8.3	Identify management regimes for shared facilities.		
9. Be able to evaluate socio-economic constraints on remediation strategies	9.1	Analyse affordability and operational impacts of phased works.	Cost, feasibility, access and decant needs; interim risk reduction and monitoring.	B.3.2(d); 8(a)4
	9.2	Recommend proportionate interim measures aligned with ALARP.		
	9.3	Evidence prioritisation decisions (risk vs benefit).		
10. Be able to assess transient-occupancy accommodation.	10.1	Profile behaviours and supervision constraints.	Cooking risks; night behaviour; tailored comms and drills; management rules.	6(a)7–8; 6(e)2; 7(b)2
	10.2	Evaluate alarm zoning and false alarm management.		
	10.3	Recommend targeted occupant communications.		
11. Be able to produce a HRB residential/mixed-use fire risk assessment report	11.1	Compile integrated report with performance requirements.	Timelines, responsibilities and KPIs; accessible resident briefings and governance.	8(a)5; 8(a)3; B.3.1(o)
	11.2	Prioritise actions with a resident engagement plan.		
	11.3	Present phased delivery strategy to dutyholders.		
12. Be able to design a resident engagement strategy	12.1	Create accessible comms and training materials.	Inclusive methods; KPI tracking; continuous improvement and feedback loops.	8(f)2; B.3.1(n); B.3.3(m)
	12.2	Report outcomes and refine engagement plan.		

Additional information about the unit
HRB Statement

This unit equips learners with the advanced knowledge and practical competence required to carry out fire risk assessments in Higher-Risk Residential Buildings (HRBs) and complex mixed-use developments. It focuses on interpreting and applying the legal duties established by the Building Safety Act 2022, including the responsibilities of dutyholders, the Accountable Person, and the requirements of the safety case regime. Learners will study the key principles of fire strategy design for HRBs, including evacuation approaches, smoke control, active and passive fire protection, external wall systems, and resident-profile considerations. The unit emphasises assessing real-world building conditions, management arrangements, human behaviour, and the interaction between residential and commercial components. By completing this unit, learners will be able to critically evaluate HRB fire-safety measures, identify significant deviations from statutory and best-practice expectations, and produce robust, evidence-based fire risk assessments that support resident safety and regulatory compliance.

3.2. Optional Units

Title	Advanced Methods in Personal Development			
Level	5			
Unit Number	3			
GLH	30			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand advanced professional ethics and codes of conduct	1.1	Explain ethical duties including anti-bribery, conflicts and whistleblowing.	Use Annex A principles; set internal procedures; protect parties, records and data.	Clause 4; Annex A (Principles 1–10); B.3.4(d), (e)
	1.2	Apply confidentiality and data protection principles to assessment work.		
	1.3	Define dispute/complaints resolution pathways.		
2. Understand strategic CPD planning for advanced practice	2.1	Build a CPD plan aligned to high-risk practice.	Structured CPD objectives; evidence logs; conference/webinar outputs and reflective notes.	8(g)1–3; B.3.3(b), (d)
	2.2	Evidence reflective learning and peer feedback loops.		
	2.3	Maintain currency with new research and standards.		
3. Understand mentoring and leadership responsibilities	3.1	Describe mentoring models for Foundation/Intermediate assessors.	Coaching frameworks; supervision checklists; stage-gate QA; standards of conduct.	8(f)3; 8(g)4; B.3.1(e), (l),(m),(o)
	3.2	Define QA approaches for composite reports.		
	3.3	Set expectations for behaviour and performance.		
4. Understand stakeholder	4.1	Analyse stakeholder needs and risk perceptions.		8(f)2; 8(f)4; B.3.1(h), (j)

engagement and influencing strategies	4.2	Tailor communication strategies to drive compliance.	Residents/operators/regulators; meeting leadership; evidence-based persuasion; comms plans.	
	4.3	Facilitate multi-agency collaboration.		
5. Understand governance and audit requirements for risk management	5.1	Map governance responsibilities in regulated organisations.	Align to policy frameworks, risk registers, impairment controls and record retention.	8(b)3; B.1.2(i); B.3.3(j)
	5.2	Integrate fire risk assessment into management systems.		
	5.3	Define audit and evidence-retention requirements.		
6. Be able to critically reflect on personal competence and limits	6.1	Perform a gap analysis against advanced criteria.	Use Clause 5; prepare competence statements; referral triggers and supervision plans.	5; 8(f)1; B.3.1(g)
	6.2	Set development actions for specialist scenarios.		
	6.3	Document limits of competence and escalation routes.		
7. Be able to design and contribute improvement projects in assessment practice	7.1	Plan and implement a practice improvement initiative.	QI cycles; pilots; dissemination via webinars, papers, peer reviews and communities of practice.	8(a)7–8; 8(d)6; B.3.1(n); B.3.3(m)
	7.2	Evaluate outcomes and embed new methods.		
	7.3	Share learning via networks or publications.		
8. Be able to work in partnership with agencies for complex risk outcomes	8.1	Identify and secure partnerships with agencies and specialists.	MoUs; agendas; actions/owners/timescales; periodic review and KPI tracking.	8(f)4; B.3.1(f), (j); B.3.3(k)
	8.2	Evaluate partnership effectiveness.		

Title	Fire Risk Assessment in Shopping Complexes, Railway Stations & Transport Hubs (incl. Underground)			
Level	5			
Unit Number	4			
GLH	50			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand risk features of stations and underground environments	1.1	Analyse subsurface hazards (tunnels, shafts, smoke migration).	BS 9992 concepts; smoke spread pathways; interfaces between evacuation routes, enclosed platforms, shaft ventilation and pressure differentials.	8(a)4; 8(d)2; B.3.2(a),(e)
	1.2	Apply platform–train interface risks.		
	1.3	Define ventilation/pressurisation concepts for life safety.		
2. Understand multi-level shopping/transport concourses and zoning	2.1	Differentiate public/restricted/airside/service zones.	Zoning frames hazard review and management controls across uses; security screening and FM interfaces.	7(c)1; 6(d)4; 8(b)4; B.3.2(c)
	2.2	Evaluate fire load variability across retail/food/plant areas.		
	2.3	Describe separation/compartmentation needs at interfaces.		
3. Understand large-space smoke control strategies in malls and hubs	3.1	Analyse smoke reservoir/AOV objectives and limitations.	Performance objectives, cause-and-effect and impairment management; coordination with evacuation lifts and EVC.	7(d)1; 8(d)3; B.3.2(a),(f)
	3.2	Define dependencies with alarms/EVC/power.		
	3.3	Describe impairment planning and resilience.		
4. Understand crowd movement and human factors in transport hubs	4.1	Analyse peak-flow dynamics and congestion triggers.	Crowd science; signage; voice alarm; inclusive design and (PRM) Person(s) with Reduced Mobility provisions.	6(a)7–8; 8(f)2; B.3.2(b)
	4.2	Describe wayfinding/PA/intelligibility roles.		
	4.3	Define vulnerable groups in crowded environments.		

5. Understand high-risk areas such as fuel storage and airside interfaces	5.1	Identify fuel/vehicle servicing hazards.	Define boundaries of competence; early referral triggers; non-invasive evidence requirements.	5; 8(b)4; B.3.2(c)
	5.2	Describe separation/monitoring controls.		
	5.3	Evaluate when process safety specialists must be engaged.		
6. Understand multi-agency roles and international practices in hubs	6.1	Map operator/regulator/emergency responsibilities.	Governance protocols; joint-operating procedures; decision logs and accountability.	8(b)1–3; 8(f)4; B.3.1(j)
	6.2	Evaluate how international practice informs local decisions.		
	6.3	Describe escalation routes for intolerable findings.		
7. Understand digital systems resilience (BMS/SCADA/EVC/PA) and cyber dependencies	7.1	Evaluate critical interfaces and single points of failure.	System-of-systems view; cause-and-effect matrices; evidencing commissioning tests; competence limits.	B.3.2(f); 5; 8(a)2
	7.2	Analyse fallback modes, manual overrides and testing regimes.		
8. Be able to assess crowd capacity and egress adequacy	8.1	Profile occupant loads (normal vs peak).	Conservative assumptions; stewarding; gating strategies; temporary barriers and lane management.	8(a)5; 8(f)2; B.3.1(i)
	8.2	Compare route capacities to demand and identify pinch points.		
	8.3	Recommend operational mitigations (marshalling/metering).		
9. Be able to produce an integrated station/mall fire risk report	9.1	Compile multi-system findings with performance requirements.	Composite, auditable, action-oriented reporting and stakeholder briefings.	8(a)5; 8(a)3; B.3.1(o)
	9.2	Prioritise phased actions and impairment contingencies.		
	9.3	Communicate the plan to operators and regulators.		
10. Be able to evaluate socio-economic	10.1	Analyse cost–benefit trade-offs for smoke control and evacuation upgrades.	Financial/operational constraints; whole-life considerations; prioritisation matrices.	B.3.2(d); 8(a)4

constraints on interventions	10.2	Recommend proportionate phased solutions balancing ALARP and operational feasibility.		
	10.3	Evidence decision-making with lifecycle and sustainability impacts.		
11. Be able to Assist with multi-agency governance for intolerable findings	11.1	Attend emergency planning meetings with regulators and operators.	Command structures; readiness reviews; auditable governance and communications plans.	B.3.1(f); B.3.3(k); 8(b)1–3
	11.2	Evaluate escalation pathways (temporary closure/interim measures).		
	11.3	Maintain decision logs, owners and timelines.		
12. Understand digital systems resilience (BMS/SCADA/EVC/PA) and cyber dependencies	12.1	Evaluate critical interfaces and single points of failure.	System-of-systems view; cause-and-effect matrices; evidencing commissioning tests; competence limits.	B.3.2(f); 5; 8(a)2
	12.2	Analyse fallback modes, manual overrides and testing regimes.		
	12.3	Evaluate when specialist cyber risk advice is required.		
13. Be able to plan, run and review exercises/drills for continuous improvement	13.1	Design multi-agency tabletop/live exercises for peak scenarios.	Exercise design; after-action reviews; continuous improvement cycles and publication of findings.	B.3.1(n); B.3.3(m); 8(a)7–8
	13.2	Capture data, near-misses and lessons learned.		
	13.3	Implement improvement actions and track KPIs.		

Title	Fire Risk Assessment in Sports Grounds, Stadia, Events & Festivals			
Level	5			
Unit Number	5			
GLH	50			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand Green Guide–aligned mass ingress/egress and evacuation	1.1	Evaluate crowd behaviour and transient characteristics.	Surge/bottlenecks; strategy selection; voice alarm intelligibility and roles.	8(a)4; 8(f)2; B.3.2(b)
	1.2	Define evacuation strategies (phased/sector).		
	1.3	Identify stewarding and voice alarm roles.		
2. Understand structural fire protection of bowls, tiers and concourses	2.1	Describe structural fire resistance needs and interfaces.	Materials; compartmentation; roof vents/smoke clearance; impairment control.	8(d)5; 7(d)1; B.3.2(a)
	2.2	Evaluate concourse fire load and spread pathways.		
	2.3	Determine smoke control considerations in bowl/roof forms.		
3. Understand risks of temporary event infrastructure	3.1	Evaluate hazards of stages/tents/pop-ups.	Permits to work; festival-specific controls; competence limits and referral.	5; 8(b)2; B.3.2(c)
	3.2	Describe electrical/pyrotechnic/catering controls.		
	3.3	Determine when specialist approvals are required.		
4. Understand communications, signage and wayfinding for large crowds	4.1	Describe PA/EVC intelligibility needs.	Intelligibility metrics; refuge communication; accessibility and inclusion.	6(b)5; 7(a)4–5; B.1.2(g)
	4.2	Explain redundancy/backup requirements.		
	4.3	Identify accessible signage for diverse audiences.		

5. Understand inter-agency emergency coordination for events	5.1	Explain joint operating arrangements with emergency services.	Command structures; rendezvous points; rehearsal planning and documentation.	8(b)3; 8(f)4; B.3.3(d)
	5.2	Describe exercising/drill requirements.		
6. Understand concession/retail fire loads and decorative materials	6.1	Identify high fire load concessions/materials.	Kiosks; drapes; pop-ups; routine checks and records; procurement controls.	6(c)2–3; 6(d)2,4; B.1.2(e)
	6.2	Evaluate controls (selection, separation).		
	6.3	Explain control measures and course of action methodologies.		
7. Understand sustainability and lifecycle impacts of temporary structures	7.1	Evaluate environmental and fire safety trade-offs for temporary structures.	Material selection; embodied risk; de-rig controls; waste and environmental constraints.	B.3.2(d)
	7.2	Describe sustainable procurement, reuse and disposal strategies.		
	7.3	Evidence whole-life risk considerations in event planning.		
8. Understand pyrotechnics and special effects boundaries and referrals	8.1	Identify fire/explosion hazards from SFX and pyro.	Competence limits; liaison with licensed contractors; documentation checks.	5; 8(b)2; B.3.3(j)
	8.2	Explain approval, licensing and permit requirements.		
	8.3	Set specialist referral triggers and evidence expectations.		
9. Be able to implement inclusive evacuation plans for Persons with Restricted Mobility (PRMs).	9.1	Design refuge communication and assisted egress procedures.	Inclusive design; event-specific PEEPs alternatives; training and equipment staging.	6(a)7–8; 6(b)5; B.1.2(g)
	9.2	Test accessibility of signage/PA and marshal support.		
	9.3	Monitor performance with PRM-focused KPIs.		
10. Be able to analyse crowd flow and mitigate bottlenecks	10.1	Assess route geometry and capacity limits.	Queueing theory basics; steward placement; lane management; dynamic signage.	8(a)5; 8(f)2; B.3.1(i)
	10.2	Identify conflict areas including: Stairs		

		Gates Turnstiles	e.g. queuing barriers	
	10.3	Recommend operational mitigations		
11. Be able to produce a stadium/event fire risk assessment and action plan	11.1	Compile risks across crowd, structure and operations.	Integrated plan; readiness checks; auditable actions and responsibilities.	8(a)5; 8(a)3; B.3.1(o)
	11.2	Prioritise mitigations for pre-event and live operations.		
	11.3	Communicate to operators and regulators with timelines.		
12. Be able to design and lead post-event performance reviews	12.1	Analyse incident/near-miss and evacuation timing data.	After-action reviews; KPI dashboards; dissemination via briefings/webinars.	B.3.1(n); B.3.3(m); 8(a)7–8
	12.2	Develop improvement actions and share learning.		
	12.3	Embed changes into Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and steward training.		

Title	Fire Risk Assessment in Industrial & Hazardous Sites (incl. COMAH, Warehouses, Manufacturing, Data Centres)			
Level	5			
Unit Number	6			
GLH	50			
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment Criteria The learner can:**		**Guidance and/or Indicative Content**	**BS 8674 Mapping**
1. Understand hazards from large quantities of flammables and explosion risks	1.1	Explain hazardous inventories and zoning (DSEAR/ATEX context).	Referral triggers; interim non-invasive controls pending specialist study.	5; 8(b)4; B.3.2(c)
	1.2	Analyse ignition control and separation principles.		
	1.3	Identify boundaries for specialist process safety input.		
2. Understand COMAH dutyholder responsibilities and emergency planning interfaces	2.1	Map COMAH roles and liaison protocols.	On-site/off-site plans; control rooms; command structures and drills.	8(b)1–3; 8(f)4; B.3.3(d)
	2.2	Analyse alignment of site emergency plans with FRA findings.		
	2.3	Describe multi-agency exercise requirements.		
3. Understand high fire load warehouses and automated systems	3.1	Describe racking/storage fire-load implications.	Sprinklers; smoke control; shutdowns; manual overrides and cause-effect.	7(d)1; B.2.2(f); B.3.2(a),(f)
	3.2	Evaluate suppression/detection options and limits.		
	3.3	Identify automated systems interactions (ASRS, conveyors).		
4. Understand special manufacturing	4.1	Explain process hazards (hot works, ovens, coatings).	Isolation; ventilation; monitoring; incident escalation and learning.	6(e)1–3; 8(b)2; B.3.3(j)
	4.2	Describe safe systems of work and permits.		

processes and hazardous materials	4.3	Determine escalation routes for defects/incidents.		
5. Understand data centre and critical infrastructure fire risks	5.1	Analyse criticality (redundancy/uptime) and fire sources.	Agent hold times; hot/cold aisles; compartmentation; emergency interfaces and SLAs.	7(d)1; 8(d)3; B.3.2(a),(f)
	5.2	Evaluate detection/suppression (clean agents/water mist) constraints.		
	5.3	Identify resilience and impairment management practices.		
6. Understand egress and compartmentation in plant/process layouts	6.1	Explain route continuity challenges with machinery/plant.	Muster points; lock-out/tag-out; staged movement and supervision.	7(c)1; 6(d)4; 6(e)1–3
	6.2	Describe fire wall/door/penetration controls.		
	6.3	Identify operational mitigations during shutdown/startup.		
7. Understand resilience and business continuity for critical operations	7.1	Evaluate redundancy and uptime requirements in fire safety planning.	BCP integration; alternate facilities; impairment permits and communications.	B.3.2(f); B.3.1(o)
	7.2	Explain strategies for maintaining operations during impairment.		
	7.3	Document recovery sequencing and stakeholder roles.		
8. Understand battery energy storage systems (BESS) and lithium-ion hazards	8.1	Identify thermal runaway, off-gassing and explosion risks.	Non-invasive scope; hydrogen/flammable vapour risks; emergency interfaces and shutdowns.	5; 8(d)3; B.3.2(a),(f)
	8.2	Evaluate ventilation, detection and separation concepts (performance requirements).		
	8.3	Explain referral triggers for specialist engineering and DSEAR studies.		
9. Be able to review commissioning / certification evidence for fire safety systems	9.1	Verify documentation for testing and commissioning (non-design role).	Performance-based adequacy; request evidence; avoid detailed specification writing.	7(d)2–3; 1(k); 8(a)2
	9.2	Judge adequacy against performance requirements.		

	9.3	Flag limits requiring designer involvement.		
10. Be able to evaluate hazardous area classification and integrate into FRA	10.1	Review (HAC) hazardous area classification documents (zones, sources of release) for adequacy (non-design).	Interface with DSEAR/ATEX; competence limits; evidence and record-keeping.	8(b)2–3; B.3.3(j); 5
	10.2	Analyse management controls for ignition sources and maintenance.		
	10.3	Recommend governance, training and audit actions.		
11. Be able to produce an industrial site composite Fire Risk Assessment report	11.1	Compile multi-hazard findings and action plan.	Prioritisation; interim measures; auditable tracking and periodic reviews.	8(a)3,5; 8(f)2; B.3.1(o)
	11.2	Define performance requirements and phased mitigations.		
	11.3	Communicate to dutyholders/regulators with governance.		
12. Be able to assist in multi-disciplinary risk reviews and innovation projects	12.1	Assist in multi-disciplinary risk review meetings	Facilitation skills; pilot projects; dissemination via toolbox talks and briefings.	B.3.1(n); B.3.3(m); 8(a)7–8
	12.2	Implement innovative assessment methods for emerging hazards.		
	12.3	Integrate learning and changes into Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).		

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:

- 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. Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy

Awarding Organisations are required by Ofqual to have a CASS Strategy in place to improve the controls where an assessment is devised and marked by a centre.[2] In line with our CASS Strategy, SFJ Awards will determine the most appropriate CASS approach for each qualification / qualification suite using a risk based approach.

Any Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) used by centres to develop and/or mark assessments must declare any conflict of interest and centres must ensure that any such conflicts are mitigated. All details of such conflicts of interest must be recorded by the centre.

SFJ Awards will require sample assessments from centres to maintain confidence with our centres' approach to maintaining the integrity of our quality assurance strategy defined within the CASS strategy. Centre marking will be subject to external quality assurance.

Centres are permitted to develop and mark assessments for the qualification(s) in this handbook, in line with our CASS Strategy.

4.3. 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.

4.4. Trainers

Some sectors specify trainer requirements for qualification delivery, for example first aid and security. Details of any specific trainer requirements are included in this qualification handbook. Centres should therefore check the handbook, or with SFJ Awards, for any trainer requirements that apply to the qualification(s) they wish to deliver. Centres applying for approval with SFJ Awards will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each trainer meets the requirements, for example certificates of achievement, CV or CPD records.

[2] Condition H2 - Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny where an assessment is marked by a Centre

5. Assessment

5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods

Assessment methods[3] that can be used for the **SFJ Awards Level 5 Diploma in Fire Risk Assessment** are as follows:

- Aural Examination
- E-assessment
- Multiple Choice Examination
- Portfolio of Evidence (including for example records of professional discussions, question and answer sessions, work products)
- Practical Demonstration / Assignment
- Practical Examination
- Task-based Controlled Assessment
- Written Examination
- Observation
- Professional Discussion
- Interview
- Presentation and Questioning
- Project

5.2. Assessing Competence

The purpose of assessing competence is to make sure that an individual is competent to carry out the activities required in their work.

Assessors gather and judge evidence during normal work activities to determine whether the learner demonstrates their competence against the standards in the qualification unit(s). Competence should be demonstrated at a level appropriate to the qualification. The skills required at the different qualification levels are defined in Ofqual's level descriptors.[4] Further information on qualification levels is included in the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance.

Evidence must be:

- Valid
- Authentic
- Sufficient
- Current
- Reliable

Assessment should be integrated into everyday work to make the most of opportunities that arise naturally within the workplace.

[3] Selected from assessment methods listed on Ofqual's regulatory system (Portal)
[4] Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition, Section E - Design and development of qualifications www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications

5.3. Methods for Assessing Competence

Qualifications may be assessed using any method, or combination of methods, as stipulated either by SFJ Awards or within specific qualifications, and which clearly demonstrate that the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. Some sectors may have specific assessment requirements that apply to their qualifications and where these apply, details will be included in the qualification-specific handbook.

Assessors need to be able to select the right assessment methods for the competences that are being assessed, without overburdening the learner or the assessment process, or interfering with everyday work activities. SFJ Awards expect assessors to use a combination of different assessment methods to make a decision about an individual's occupational competence. Assessment methods which are most likely to be used are outlined below. However, these are included for guidance only and there may be other methods which are suitable. Further information on assessment methods is included in the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance.

5.3.1. Observation

SFJ Awards believe that direct observation in the workplace by an assessor or testimony from an expert witness is preferable as it allows for authenticated, valid and reliable evidence. Where learners demonstrate their competence in a real work situation, this must be done without the intervention from a tutor, supervisor or colleague.

However, SFJ Awards recognise that alternative sources of evidence and assessment methods may have to be used where direct observation is not possible or practical.

5.3.2. Testimony of Witnesses and Expert Witnesses

Witness testimonies are an accepted form of evidence by learners when compiling portfolios. Witness testimonies can be generated by peers, line managers and other individuals working closely with the learner. Witnesses are defined as being those people who are occupationally expert in their role.

Testimony can also be provided by expert witnesses who are occupationally competent **and** familiar with the qualification unit(s). Assessors will not need to spend as long assessing expert witness testimony as they would a witness testimony from a non-expert. Therefore, if expert witnesses are involved in the assessment strategy for a qualification a greater number of learners can be managed by a smaller number of assessors.

The assessor is however responsible for making the final judgement in terms of the learner meeting the evidence requirements for the qualification unit(s).

5.3.3. Work Outputs (Product Evidence)

Examples of work outputs include plans, reports, budgets, photographs, videos or notes of an event. Assessors can use work outputs in conjunction with other assessment methods, such as observation and discussion, to confirm competence and assure authenticity of the evidence presented.

5.3.4. Professional Discussion

Discussions allow the learner to describe and reflect on their performance and knowledge in relation to the standards. Assessors can use discussions to test the authenticity, validity and reliability of a learner's evidence. Written/audio records of discussions must be maintained.

5.3.5. Questioning the Learner

Questioning can be carried out orally or in written form and used to cover any gaps in assessment or corroborate other forms of evidence. Written/audio records of all questioning must be maintained.

5.3.6. Simulations

Simulations may take place in a non-operational environment which is not the learner's workplace, for example a training centre. The assessment guidance attached to each unit in section 3 of the handbook will specify where simulations are authorised. Please note that proposed simulations **must** be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose as part of the IQA's pre-delivery activity.

Simulations can be used when:

- the employer or assessor consider that evidence in the workplace will not be demonstrated within a reasonable timeframe
- there are limited opportunities to demonstrate competence in the workplace against all the assessment criteria
- there are health and safety implications due to the high-risk nature of the work activity
- the work activity is non-routine and assessment cannot easily be planned for
- assessment is required in more difficult circumstances than is likely to happen day to day.

Simulations must follow the principles below:

1. The nature of the contingency and the physical environment for the simulation must be realistic
2. Learners should be given no indication as to exactly what contingencies they may come across in the simulation
3. The demands on the learner during the simulation should be no more or less than they would be in a real work situation

4. Simulations must be planned, developed and documented by the centre in a way that ensures the simulation correctly reflects what the specific qualification unit seeks to assess and all simulations should follow these documented plans
5. There should be a range of simulations to cover the same aspect of a unit and they should be rotated regularly.

5.4. Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

Knowledge-based assessment involves establishing what the learner knows or understands at a level appropriate to the qualification. The depth and breadth of knowledge required at the different qualification levels are defined in Ofqual's level descriptors.[5] Further information on qualification levels is included in the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance.

Assessments must be:

- Fair
- Robust
- Rigorous
- Authentic
- Sufficient
- Transparent
- Appropriate

Good practice when assessing knowledge includes use of a combination of assessment methods to ensure that as well as being able to recall information, the learner has a broader understanding of its application in the workplace. This ensures that qualifications are a valid measure of a learner's knowledge and understanding.

A proportion of any summative assessment may be conducted in controlled environments to ensure conditions are the same for all learners. This could include use of:

- Closed book conditions, where learners are not allowed access to reference materials
- Time bound conditions
- Invigilation.

Where assessment in controlled environments is considered appropriate for qualifications, or the use of specific assessment materials (for example, exemplars or scenarios) is required, information will be included in the qualification handbook.

[5] Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition, Section E - Design and development of qualifications www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications

5.5. Methods for Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

SFJ Awards expect assessors to use a variety of different assessment methods to make a decision about an individual's knowledge and understanding, which are likely to include a combination of the following:

a) Written tests in a controlled environment
b) Multiple choice questions (MCQs)
c) Evidenced question and answer sessions with assessors
d) Evidenced professional discussions
e) Written assignments (including scenario-based written assignments).

Where written assessments are centre-devised and centre-assessed, centres must:

- maintain a sufficient bank of assignments which are changed regularly
- record how risks in tests/exams conducted in controlled environments are mitigated
- conduct assessments in line with SFJ Awards Examination and Invigilation Policy.

Centres must take into account the qualification when selecting knowledge assessment methods to ensure they are appropriate and allow the learner to evidence the assessment criteria. For example, MCQs are unlikely to be appropriate for higher levels qualifications or assessment criteria which require learners to 'explain', 'describe', 'evaluate' or 'analyse'.

5.6. Assessment Planning

Planning assessment allows a holistic approach to be taken, which focuses on assessment of the learner's work activity as a whole. This means that the assessment:

- reflects the skills requirements of the workplace
- saves time
- streamlines processes
- makes the most of naturally occurring evidence opportunities

Planning assessment enables assessors to track learners' progress and incorporate feedback into the learning process; assessors can therefore be sure that learners have had sufficient opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to perform competently and consistently to the standards before being assessed. The assessment is therefore a more efficient, cost-effective process which minimises the burden on learners, assessors and employers.

6. Assessor Requirements

6.1. Occupational Knowledge and Competence

Due to the risk-critical nature of the work, particularly when assessing in the public and security sectors, and the legal implications of the assessment process, assessors must understand the nature and context of the learners' work. This means that assessors must be occupationally competent. Each assessor must therefore be, according to current sector practice, competent in the functions covered by the unit(s) they are assessing. They will have gained their occupational competence by working within the sector relating to the unit(s) or qualification(s) they are assessing.

Assessors must be able to demonstrate consistent application of the skills and the current supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the qualification unit(s) they are assessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager.

Where assessors are assessing knowledge-based qualifications, they must be occupationally knowledgeable in the sector they are assessing in.

6.2. Qualification Knowledge

Assessors must be familiar with the qualification unit(s) they are assessing. They must be able to interpret and make judgements on current working practices and technologies within the area of work.

6.3. Assessor Competence

Assessors must be able to make valid, reliable and fair assessment decisions. To demonstrate their competence, we expect assessors to be:

- qualified with a recognised assessor qualification, or
- working towards a recognised assessor qualification.

However, there may be circumstances when assessors have the equivalent competence through training to appropriate national standards, and SFJ Awards will agree this on a case-by-case basis. Assessors' experience, knowledge and understanding could be verified by a combination of:

- curriculum vitae and employer endorsement or references
- possession of a relevant NVQ/SVQ, or vocationally related qualification
- corporate membership of a relevant professional institution
- interview (the verification process must be recorded and available for audit).

Recognised assessor qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- RQF/QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
- RQF/QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- RQF/QCF Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- An appropriate Assessor qualification in the SCQF as identified by SQA Accreditation
- A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods

- D32/33 Assess candidate performance, using differing sources of evidence.

Where assessors hold an older qualification e.g. D32/33 or A1, they must provide evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to demonstrate current competence.

Assessors must hold an assessor qualification, or equivalent competence if agreed by SFJ Awards, relevant to the type of qualification(s) they are assessing e.g.

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment:
  For assessors who assess **competence in a work environment**, which requires the use of the following assessment methods: observation, examining work products or outputs, oral questioning, discussion, use of witness testimony, learner statements and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement:
  For assessors who assess **knowledge and/or skills in vocationally related areas** using the following assessment methods: tests of skills, oral questioning, written questions, case studies, assignments, projects and RPL.

To be able to assess both knowledge and competence-based qualifications, new assessors should be working towards the **Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement.**

Centres must have in place a procedure to ensure that their trainee assessors have a representative sample of their assessment decisions counter signed by a qualified and competent assessor. SFJ Awards will provide centres with guidance on the ratio of qualified/trainee assessors.

Trainee assessors working towards a qualification must be registered for the qualification with a regulated AO and achieve it within 18 months. Assessor competence will be checked through annual External Quality Assurance checks.

Centres must check the qualification handbook for assessor requirements for the qualification(s) they are approved to deliver as some sectors have different requirements e.g. security, education and training, assessor and quality assurance, and learning and development.

Centres applying for approval with SFJ Awards will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each assessor meets these requirements, for example certificates of achievement. Centres who apply for approval to offer additional qualifications will be required to provide evidence of assessor competence for the qualifications they wish to offer.

6.4. Continuing Professional Development

Assessors must actively engage in continuous professional development activities to maintain:

- occupational competence and knowledge by keeping up-to-date with the changes taking place in the sector(s) for which they carry out assessments
- professional competence and knowledge as an assessor.

It is the centre's responsibility to retain the CPD information of assessors. Assessor competence and CPD will be checked by External Quality Assurers at the centre's annual compliance visit.

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 internal 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 work of assessors
- provide authoritative advice
- call meetings as appropriate
- conduct pre-delivery internal quality assurance on centre assessment plans, for example, to ensure that any proposed simulations are fit for purpose
- visit and observe assessment practice
- review the assessment process by sampling assessment decisions
- ensure that assessment has been carried out by assessors who are occupationally competent, or for knowledge-based qualifications occupationally knowledgeable, in the area they are assessing
- lead internal standardisation activity
- resolve differences and conflicts on assessment decisions

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 assessors.

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.

7.4. Continuing Professional Development

IQAs must actively engage in continuous professional development activities to maintain:

- occupational knowledge by keeping up-to-date with the changes taking place in the sector(s) for which they carry out assessments
- professional competence and knowledge as an IQA.

Centres must check the qualification handbook for IQA requirements for the qualification(s) they are approved to deliver as some sectors have different requirements e.g. security, education and training, assessor and quality assurance, and learning and development.

8. Expert Witnesses

Expert witnesses, for example line managers and supervisors, can provide evidence that a learner has demonstrated competence in an activity. Their evidence contributes to performance evidence and has parity with assessor observation. Expert witnesses do not however perform the role of assessor.

8.1. Occupational Competence

Expert witnesses must, according to current sector practice, be competent in the functions covered by the unit(s) for which they are providing evidence.

They must be able to demonstrate consistent application of the skills and the current supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the qualification unit that they are witnessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager.

8.2. Qualification Knowledge

Expert witnesses must be familiar with the qualification unit(s) and must be able to interpret current working practices and technologies within the area of work.

9. 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.

9.1. External Quality Assurer Competence

To demonstrate their competence, EQAs must be:

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

Relevant qualifications include:

- Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

Trainee EQAs working towards one of the above qualifications must be registered for the qualification with a regulated AO and aim to achieve it within 18 months. Whilst working towards a qualification, trainee EQAs will be supported by qualified EQA and receive training, for example by shadowing the EQA on compliance visits. EQA competence will be checked and monitored by SFJ Awards.

9.2. Continuing Professional Development

EQAs must maintain their occupational and external quality assurance knowledge. They will attend training and development designed to keep them up-to-date, facilitate standardisation between staff and share good practice.

10. Standardisation

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

10.1. Internal Standardisation

IQAs should facilitate internal standardisation events for assessors to attend and participate, in order to review evidence used, make judgments, compare quality and come to a common understanding of what is sufficient.

10.2. External Standardisation

SFJ Awards will enable access to external standardisation opportunities for centres and EQAs over time.

Further information on standardisation is available in the SFJ Awards Quality Assurance (Internal and External) Guidance and the SFJ Awards Standardisation Policy.

11. 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 Awarding Organisation 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.

12. 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 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.

13. 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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