



# Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement

SFJ Awards Level 3

Qualification Handbook

Ofqual Qualification Number: 601/2853/7

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# Contents

Contents.....	2
1. Introduction .....	5
1.1. About SFJ Awards.....	5
1.2. Customer Service Statement.....	5
1.3. Centre Support .....	6
2. The Qualification .....	7
2.1. Qualification Objective.....	7
2.2. Pre-entry Requirements .....	7
2.3. Qualification Structure .....	8
2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT).....	8
2.5. Grading.....	9
2.6. Age Range and Geographical Coverage.....	9
2.7. Opportunities for Progression.....	9
2.8. Use of Languages .....	10
3. Qualification Units .....	11
3.1. Mandatory Units .....	11
4. Centre Requirements .....	28
4.1. Centre Responsibilities.....	28
4.2. Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy.....	29
4.3. Facilities .....	29
4.4. Trainers .....	30
5. Assessment .....	31
5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods .....	31
5.2. Assessing Competence.....	31
5.3. Methods for Assessing Competence.....	32
5.3.1. Observation.....	32
5.3.2. Testimony of Witnesses and Expert Witnesses .....	32
5.3.3. Work Outputs (Product Evidence).....	33
5.3.4. Professional Discussion .....	33
5.3.5. Questioning the Learner .....	33
5.3.6. Simulations .....	33

5.4. Assessing Knowledge and Understanding .....	34
5.5. Methods for Assessing Knowledge and Understanding .....	35
5.6. Assessment Planning .....	35
6. Assessor Requirements .....	36
6.1. Occupational Knowledge and Competence.....	36
6.2. Qualification Knowledge .....	36
6.3. Assessor Competence .....	36
6.4. Continuing Professional Development.....	38
7. Internal Quality Assurer Requirements .....	39
7.1. Occupational Knowledge.....	39
7.2. Qualification Knowledge .....	39
7.3. Internal Quality Assurer Competence.....	39
7.4. Continuing Professional Development.....	40
8. Expert Witnesses .....	41
8.1. Occupational Competence .....	41
8.2. Qualification Knowledge .....	41
9. External Quality Assurers.....	42
9.1. External Quality Assurer Competence.....	42
9.2. Continuing Professional Development.....	42
10. Standardisation .....	43
10.1. Internal Standardisation .....	43
10.2. External Standardisation .....	43
11. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).....	43
12. Equality and Diversity .....	44
13. Health and Safety .....	45

## Document Control

### Revisions and Amendment Register

Date of Issue	Page No	Revision	Version
14.12.2015	Various	Update SFJ Awards contact details, remove references to QCF and add SFJ Awards unit numbering	V2
03.08.2017	6-18 & 31	Added total qualification time, use of languages, centre requirements, assessment and copyright	V3
16.12.2024	All	Updated to new branding and amendments to indicative content / a few assessment criteria	V4

# 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 qualification's regulators.

### 1.3. Centre Support

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

SFJ Awards  
Consult House  
Meadowcourt Business Park  
4 Hayland Street  
Sheffield  
S9 1BY

Tel: 0114 284 1970

Email: [info@sfjawards.com](mailto:info@sfjawards.com)

Website: [www.sfjawards.com](http://www.sfjawards.com)

## 2. The Qualification

### 2.1. Qualification Objective

This handbook relates to the following qualification:

#### **SFJ Awards Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement**

The objective of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of a warranted Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (IFCO).

The qualification covers:

- The UK and EU legislation governing a wide range of marine activities
- The powers and jurisdiction of the role(s)
- The procedures to be followed when carrying out inspections of vessels, vehicles or premises for compliance with UK and EU marine environmental legislation
- The procedures and legislative requirements when conducting fisheries and marine enforcement investigations

### 2.2. Pre-entry Requirements

To undertake this qualification learners will need to:

- be a warranted MEO or IFCO as appointed under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 or working towards becoming warranted.

Centres must also 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 all **4 mandatory** units as shown in the table below equalling a total of **27 credits**.

Mandatory Units					
Unit Number	Odyssey Reference	Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit Value
1	805	Understanding fisheries and marine environmental legislation	3	40	9
2	806	Understanding fisheries and marine enforcement powers	3	15	3
3	807	Conduct fisheries and marine enforcement compliance inspections	3	20	8
4	808	Conduct fisheries and marine enforcement investigations	3	30	7

## 2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Values for Total Qualification Time<sup>1</sup>, 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

<sup>1</sup> Total Qualification Time, Ofqual

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>



- 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 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement	270	105

## 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, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## 2.7. Opportunities for Progression

Achievement of this qualification will provide the holder with skills that contribute towards the successful execution of roles and responsibilities of a MEO or IFCO. It could be taken into account by employers of MEOs or IFCOs advertising enforcement positions and allow holders to demonstrate their transferable knowledge and skills when applying for similar positions with other external enforcement agencies.

## 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](http://sfjawards.com) or on request from SFJ Awards.

### 3. Qualification Units

#### 3.1. Mandatory Units

<b>Title</b>	Understanding fisheries and marine environmental legislation		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	1		
<b>Credit Value</b>	9		
<b>GLH</b>	40		
<b>Unit Aim</b>	<p>This unit is about the learner demonstrating knowledge of the legislation that they are employed to enforce. This includes knowledge of different types of legislation at national and European level, and the differences between primary and secondary legislation. The learner should have knowledge of the main components of fisheries legislation, where to find specific details or offences, and be able to describe the underlying principles behind key pieces of legislation. The learner should also have knowledge of the main pieces of marine environmental legislation that regulate the wide range of marine activities that Marine Enforcement Officers (MEOs) / Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) have enforcement responsibility for.</p>		
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>		<b>Guidance and/or Indicative Content</b>
1. Understand legislative frameworks and fisheries and marine environmental legislation	1.1	Classify different forms of legislation	<p>Learners need to understand difference between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK and EU legislation</li> <li>• Primary and secondary legislation</li> <li>• MMO and IFCA byelaws</li> </ul>

	1.2	Explain the origins and purpose of the Fisheries Act	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the act is</li> <li>• When the act came into force</li> <li>• Why the act was needed</li> <li>• The 8 key objectives</li> <li>• The Joint Fisheries Statement</li> </ul>
	1.3	Explain regulations concerning fisheries access	<p>Learners need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK fishery limits (exclusive economic zone, territorial waters &amp; inshore waters)</li> <li>• Foreign (including EU) access to each UK fishery limit</li> <li>• Access to non-UK waters for UK vessels</li> <li>• Access across IFCA jurisdictions</li> </ul>
	1.4	Explain regulations concerning catch limits	<p>Learners need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The background of Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and what they are</li> <li>• Quota sharing agreement(s) between UK and neighbouring fishing nations</li> <li>• How quotas are allocated, managed and monitored within the UK</li> <li>• Where to find current UK quota limits and allocations</li> <li>• Catch limits applicable through IFCA byelaws</li> </ul>
	1.5	Explain regulations concerning technical conservation measures	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of technical conservation measures</li> <li>• The principal legislation and a brief history of its</li> </ul>

			<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main technical conservation measures in place and the corresponding legislative references in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Catch restrictions</li> <li>○ Gear restrictions</li> <li>○ Spatial restrictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Technical conservation measures applicable through IFCA byelaws</li> </ul>
	1.6	Explain regulations concerning the Landing Obligation	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the landing obligation and the legislation behind it</li> <li>• The general rules around what must be retained and discarded</li> <li>• The two main types of exemptions</li> <li>• Stowage requirements of species retained under the landing obligation</li> <li>• Potential impacts of the landing obligation on the fishing industry</li> </ul>
	1.7	Explain regulations concerning control measures	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of control measures</li> <li>• The principal legislation that outlines them</li> </ul> <p>They should also cover the main control measures in place, and the corresponding legislative references in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing vessels</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buyers and sellers of first-sale fish</li> <li>• Storage and transportation of fish</li> </ul>
	1.8	Explain regulations concerning fishing authorisations	<p>Learners need to cover (suitable to their role):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing vessel (domestic and foreign) licensing requirements, categories and licence conditions (including schedules &amp; annexes)</li> <li>• Types and requirements of IFCA permits</li> <li>• Requirements for Several Orders and Regulating Orders</li> </ul>
	1.9	Explain regulations concerning marine licensing	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of marine licensing regulations</li> </ul> <p>They should cover the following aspects and associated legislative references:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities requiring a marine licence, and the application process</li> <li>• Activities exempt from requiring a marine licence</li> <li>• Offences relating to marine licensable activities</li> <li>• Enforcement notices and sanctions</li> <li>• Defence of due diligence</li> </ul>
	1.10	Explain regulations concerning protected marine species	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why species are protected</li> <li>• Key legislation and protection measures in place for marine species at a European and national level</li> <li>• Prohibited species as outlined in fisheries legislation</li> </ul>

	1.11	<p>Explain regulations concerning Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)</p>	<p>Learners will need to understand what an MPA is and cover the regulations around the following types of MPA's and what they aim to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Conservation Zones</li> <li>• Special Protection Areas</li> <li>• Special Areas of Conservation</li> <li>• Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMA's)</li> <li>• MMO &amp; IFCA Byelaws and associated management measures</li> <li>• Non-statutory (voluntary) management measures</li> </ul>
2. Understand fisheries management responsibilities	2.1	<p>Explain who has responsibility for management of fisheries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at various levels</li> <li>• in different areas</li> </ul>	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries management responsibilities at an international, national and regional level</li> </ul> <p>They should cover the responsibilities of the following bodies/organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central UK Government (and its relationship with neighbouring fishing nations)</li> <li>• Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO's)</li> <li>• UK Fisheries Administrations and Managing Authorities</li> <li>• Environment Agency (EA)</li> <li>• Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's)</li> </ul>

<b>Title</b>	Understanding fisheries and marine enforcement powers		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	2		
<b>Credit Value</b>	3		
<b>GLH</b>	15		
<b>Unit Aim</b>	This unit is about the learner demonstrating their knowledge of their powers as a warranted Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) / Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (IFCO). This includes knowledge of the extent and limitations of their powers, where their jurisdiction lies, what offences there are in relation to their powers and where British Sea Fishery Officer (BSFO) powers are applicable to them.		
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>		<b>Guidance and/or Indicative Content</b>
1. Understand the legislative and organisational background to marine enforcement powers	1.1	Identify the legislation that affords powers to officers conducting marine enforcement	Learners need to understand the powers afforded to MEO's, BSFO's and IFCO's and the jurisdiction for each role in relation to enforcement of fisheries, nature and marine licensing regulations within, and outside of UK fishery limits
	1.2	Explain key components of organisational enforcement policy	Learners should focus on either MMO Compliance and Enforcement Strategy or Local IFCA Enforcement Policy.  Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation objectives</li> <li>• Key governing legislation</li> <li>• Enforcement approach and options</li> <li>• Codes of conduct</li> </ul>



2. Understand the applicability of marine enforcement powers	2.1	Explain the powers of officers conducting marine enforcement	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common enforcement powers</li> <li>• Fisheries enforcement powers</li> <li>• Licensing enforcement powers</li> </ul> <p>And which powers can be applied in enforcement of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries legislation</li> <li>• Nature Conservation legislation</li> <li>• Marine licensing regime</li> </ul>
	2.2	Explain own legal and organisational obligations and liabilities as an officer conducting marine enforcement	<p>Learners need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liability of enforcement officers when carrying out their duties</li> <li>• Current Human Rights legislation / circumstances a person's rights may be lawfully impacted during enforcement duties</li> <li>• Notices that must be served when exercising different enforcement powers</li> </ul>
	2.3	Explain legal obligations of regulated persons in relation to marine enforcement	Learners need to understand offences that may be committed by an individual when MEOs / IFCOs are conducting marine enforcement

<b>Title</b>	Conduct fisheries and marine enforcement compliance inspections		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	3		
<b>Credit Value</b>	8		
<b>GLH</b>	20		
<b>Unit Aim</b>	This unit is about the learner demonstrating the procedures to be undertaken when inspecting a vessel, vehicle or premises for compliance with UK and EU marine environmental legislation. This includes interrogating electronic databases prior to inspection, following correct procedures during different types of inspection and recording and reporting information obtained from inspections in the appropriate ways.		
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>		<b>Guidance and/or Indicative Content</b>
1. Be able to carry out the relevant procedures prior to compliance inspections	1.1	Interrogate relevant information systems prior to compliance inspections	<p>The learner will need to show that they can interrogate the appropriate systems (subject to their role and access) to locate relevant information relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessel positional data</li> <li>• Fishing logbooks / catch declarations</li> <li>• Previous inspection records</li> <li>• Previous offences and sanctions</li> <li>• Sales records</li> <li>• Intelligence</li> </ul>
2. Be able to conduct compliance inspections	2.1	Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and maintain	<p>The learner will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the correct PPE to be used in different inspection scenarios and demonstrate correct usage</li> </ul>

		personal health and safety whilst performing inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate safe and secure working practices whilst undertaking inspection activities in accordance with legal requirements and organisational health and safety policy</li> </ul>
	2.2	Carry out document compliance inspections on fishing vessels	<p>The learner will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and determine compliance of all the required documentation to be carried by fishing vessels</li> <li>• Be able to obtain the relevant information regarding master details and vessel ownership, catch retained onboard, gear used, areas fished and fishing effort declared</li> </ul>
	2.3	Carry out catch compliance inspections on fishing vessels	<p>The learner will need to correctly demonstrate the following (suitable to their role):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of common commercially fished species</li> <li>• Weighing procedures in accordance with organisational guidelines</li> <li>• Catch assessment based on check weighing, including correct application of conversion factors</li> <li>• Calculation of margin of tolerance to declared catch on board</li> <li>• Calculation of catch composition (where applicable) to determine compliance</li> <li>• Measuring procedures for determining minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) compliance</li> </ul>

	2.4	Carry out gear compliance inspections on fishing vessels	<p>The learner will need to correctly identify a range of gear types (passive and active) and demonstrate the following procedures (suitable to their role):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination of net geometry and construction, and identification of appropriate checks to be carried out</li> <li>• Determination of mesh size and competent use of an Omega gauge*</li> <li>• Determination of twine thickness*</li> <li>• Determination of codend circumference(s)</li> <li>• Determination of permitted attachments*</li> <li>• Determination of compliance to requirements for Acoustic Deterrent Devices</li> <li>• Determination of compliance of scallop dredges</li> <li>• Determination of correct gear marking</li> </ul> <p><i>* For these elements, learners should also correctly identify the legislation that outlines these procedures</i></p>
	2.5	Carry out vehicle compliance inspections	<p>The learner will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correctly demonstrate the procedure for determining compliance of a transporter of first sale fish</li> <li>• Identify required documentation</li> <li>• Verify declared catch and document compliance</li> </ul>
	2.6	Carry out premises compliance inspections	<p>The learner will need to demonstrate the procedure for determining compliance at premises dealing with fishery products, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessing catch on premises</li> <li>• Identifying origin of fishery products (first or second</li> </ul>

			<p>sale) to determine traceability compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verifying buyer/seller registration and assessing sales note submission compliance (where applicable)</li> </ul>
3. Be able to carry out the relevant procedures after compliance inspections	3.1	Take notes in accordance with organisational procedures	The learner will need to demonstrate good note taking practices in accordance with organisational best practice, and be able to demonstrate note taking from a range of inspection types
	3.2	Report inspections in accordance with organisational procedures	The learner will need to demonstrate the correct procedures for reporting details of a range of compliance inspections in the appropriate format(s)

<b>Title</b>	Conduct fisheries and marine enforcement investigations		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	4		
<b>Credit Value</b>	7		
<b>GLH</b>	30		
<b>Unit Aim</b>	This unit is about the learner demonstrating knowledge of the procedures and legislative requirements involved in conducting an investigation into alleged offences. This includes knowledge of the various legislation in place which investigators must adhere to and knowledge of organisational and national best practice guidance on a variety of investigative procedures, from initial gathering and handling of information, notebook management, conducting interviews and searches, handling evidence, writing and taking witness statements, through to completing a case file suitable for court proceedings. This unit also includes knowledge of providing evidence in court cases.		
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>The learner will:</i>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b> <i>The learner can:</i>		<b>Guidance and/or Indicative Content</b>
1. Understand legislative and organisational procedures for criminal investigations	1.1	Summarise the legislative framework that governs investigators of criminal offences	<p>The learner will need to cover the legislation that governs the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How investigations are conducted</li> <li>• Surveillance and sources of information</li> <li>• Conducting interviews under caution</li> <li>• Conducting searches</li> <li>• Seizing and handling of evidence</li> <li>• Disclosure of evidence/relevant material</li> <li>• Human rights</li> </ul>

	1.2	Explain organisational procedures for initiating an investigation	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process by which an investigation is initiated within their organisation</li> <li>• The different investigative tools available when conducting an investigation</li> <li>• The different roles fulfilled in an investigation</li> </ul>
	1.3	Explain organisational procedures for intelligence handling	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The difference between information and intelligence</li> <li>• What actions should be taken when receiving information</li> <li>• How the organisation handles and disseminates intelligence</li> </ul>
	1.4	Explain the procedures relating to observations and surveillance, use of informants and interception of communications	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What surveillance is and what can and cannot be carried out in relation to current legislation</li> <li>• The definition of Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) and legal requirements governing their use</li> <li>• Their organisation's stance on the use of CHIS</li> <li>• The legal requirements relating to interception of communications</li> </ul>
	1.5	Explain the procedures relating to searches	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice and the different roles fulfilled when conducting a search</li> <li>• Scenarios in which MEOs / IFCOs may or may not conduct a search</li> <li>• Procedures for seizure of evidence, including 'seize</li> </ul>

			<p>and sift'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement to produce a code B notice</li> </ul>
	1.6	Explain the procedures relating to evidence handling	The learner will need to demonstrate that they know how to create an exhibit, and how to maintain the integrity and continuity of evidence / exhibits
	1.7	Explain the procedures relating to disclosure	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What disclosure is and why it is important</li> <li>• The Disclosure Test</li> <li>• Used and unused material</li> <li>• Sensitive and non-sensitive material</li> <li>• The purpose of, and difference between, the MG6C, MG6D and MG6E forms</li> <li>• The role and responsibilities of the Disclosure Officer and the Investigating Officer in Disclosure</li> </ul>
	1.8	Explain the procedures when providing information in formal hearings	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The two prosecution tests</li> <li>• The differences between the Magistrates Court and Crown Court</li> <li>• The roles of those involved in court proceedings</li> <li>• The different offence categories</li> <li>• The process of entering a plea</li> <li>• The process of giving witness testimony for the prosecution at court</li> </ul>



	1.9	Explain the legislation and principles for interviewing suspects	<p>The learner will need to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-interview disclosure</li> <li>• The caution – what is it, and when should it be issued</li> <li>• Legal rights of suspects during an interview</li> <li>• The role of legal representation</li> <li>• The use of appropriate adults or interpreters</li> <li>• The Plan-Explain-Account-Challenge-Evaluate (PEACE) model of interviewing</li> <li>• The importance of appropriate timings, locations and environmental conditions</li> <li>• Dealing with vulnerable suspects</li> <li>• Use of significant statements</li> <li>• Identifying factors that can affect a suspect’s fitness for interview and how this might affect the interview</li> <li>• Incidents that might occur during interview (for example legal or welfare) and how to deal with them</li> <li>• The correct use of the following in an interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Audio recording equipment</li> <li>○ Exhibits</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The requirement to produce an interview transcript, and when a Short Descriptive Note (SDN) might be used</li> </ul>
	2.1	Interview suspects in accordance with procedures	<p>The learner will fulfil the role of lead interviewer, and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate good interview planning</li> </ul>

<p>2. Be able to carry out investigations and complete prosecution case files</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an interview under caution (<i>pocket notebook or recorded, relevant to their role</i>), correctly demonstrating the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Issuing and explaining the caution and suspect rights</li> <li>○ Application of the PEACE model of interviewing</li> <li>○ Introduction of significant statements (if applicable)</li> <li>○ Use of appropriate questions and styles of questioning</li> <li>○ Use of exhibits in interviews (<i>recorded interviews only</i>)</li> <li>○ Contemporaneous note taking (verbatim) (<i>pocket notebook interviews only</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conduct an evaluation of their interview, considering the interview plan and good interview technique</li> <li>• Create a full transcript of interview on the appropriate MG form</li> </ul>
	<p>2.2</p>	<p>Write witness statements in accordance with procedures</p>	<p>The learner will need to demonstrate good practice in statement writing, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their role and what they did</li> <li>• Any evidence (exhibits) produced</li> </ul> <p>The learner should also explain their rationale for any exhibits produced, and why they chose to exhibit them</p>

	2.3	Complete prosecution case files in accordance with procedures	<p>The learner will need to demonstrate that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what each of the main Manual of Guidance (MG) Forms are used for</li> <li>• Can produce a case file in accordance with their organisational procedures. It should include the following (relevant to their role): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IRG1</li> <li>○ MG5</li> <li>○ MG12</li> <li>○ MG15</li> <li>○ List of exhibits and unused material</li> <li>○ Time sheet</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> [Condition H2 - Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny where an assessment is marked by a Centre](#)

## 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.

## 5. Assessment

### 5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods

Assessment methods<sup>3</sup> that can be used for the SFJ Awards Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Selected from assessment methods listed on Ofqual's regulatory system (Portal)

<sup>4</sup> 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](http://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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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](http://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 assessors (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
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- 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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