



Level 2 Award in Introduction to Fire Investigation



Qualification Handbook

SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Introduction to Fire Investigation

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Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	About us	4
1.2	Customer Service Statement	4
1.3	Centre support	4
2	The Qualification	5
2.1	Qualification objective	5
2.2	Pre-entry requirements	5
2.3	Qualification structure	5
2.4	Total Qualification Time (TQT)	6
2.5	Age range and geographical coverage	6
2.6	Opportunities for progression	7
2.7	Use of languages	7
3	Qualification Unit	8
4	Centre Requirements	11
5	Assessment	12
5.1	Qualification assessment methods	12
5.2	Assessor and internal quality assurer and requirements	12
5.3	Expert witnesses	14
5.4	Assessing competence	14
5.5	Methods for assessing competence	15
5.6	Assessing knowledge and understanding	17
5.7	Methods for assessing knowledge and understanding	17
5.8	Assessment planning	18
5.9	Standardisation	18
5.10	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	18
5.11	Equality and diversity	19
5.12	Health and safety	19

1 Introduction

1.1 About us

SFJ Awards is part of the Workforce Development Trust, together with Skills for Justice and Skills for Health. For over 10 years Skills for Health and Skills for Justice have been working with employers, Governments of the UK and agencies within the skills system, to better equip workforces with the right skills now and for the future.

During this time both Skills for Health and Skills for Justice have earned an enviable reputation for their knowledge of the health and justice sectors and their proactive approach to the development of skills and qualifications, along with an ability to deliver genuinely workable solutions for the employers they represent.

SFJ Awards is an awarding organisation that builds upon this reputation. We work with employers in the policing, community safety, legal, armed forces, security, and health sectors and understand their specific challenges, enabling us to quality assure learning outcomes that are suited to the needs of the sectors.

Customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of our organisation, and is delivered through an efficient service, providing excellent value for money.

1.2 Customer Service Statement

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

1.3 Centre support

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

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

Tel: 0114 284 1970

E-mail: info@sfjawards.com

Website: www.sfjawards.com

2 The Qualification

2.1 Qualification objective

This handbook relates to the following qualification:

SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Introduction to Fire Investigation

The main objective of this qualification is to improve awareness of fire investigation amongst practitioners initially attending a fire scene, who are most likely to be Watch Managers, Crew Managers and Junior Scenes of Crime Officers (SOCOs). It provides learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out Tier 1 fire investigations and to be able to hand over the scene to other agencies or a Tier 2 Fire Investigation Officer.

It does not qualify individuals as competent Fire Investigators which is a much more advanced and specialised role. Achievement of the qualification will enable Watch Managers, Crew Managers and SOCOs to make more accurate and effective judgements, taking into account their professional and legal responsibility.

2.2 Pre-entry requirements

There are no pre-entry requirements to complete this qualification.

However, centres must ensure that learners are able to complete this qualification, for example, through completing a skills scan to ensure they can work at the appropriate level.

2.3 Qualification structure

This qualification is made up of one mandatory unit. To be awarded the qualification the learner must achieve two credits as shown in the table below.

Mandatory Units					
Unit Number	Odyssey Reference	Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit Value
1	5900	Introduction to Fire Investigation	2	8	2

2.4 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Qualification Title	TQT	GLH
SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Introduction to Fire Investigation	20	8

2.5 Age range and geographical coverage

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

¹ Total Qualification Time, Ofqual

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

2.6 Opportunities for progression

This qualification creates a number of opportunities for progression further study or qualifications in the fire and rescue sector. Learners who wish to specialise in fire investigation will need further training and can then undertake the [SFJ Awards Level 5 Certificate in Fire Investigation](#) which is aimed at Tier 2 Fire Investigation Officers.

2.7 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 www.sfjawards.com or on request from SFJ Awards.

3 Qualification Unit

Title	Introduction to Fire Investigation		
Level	2		
Unit Number	1		
GLH	8 hours		
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>		Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand the principles and responsibilities of fire investigation	1.1	Describe why fire investigation is needed	
	1.2	Explain the two tiers of fire investigation and the agencies involved	
	1.3	Identify the legal requirements for a fire investigation that apply to your organisation	
	1.4	Describe the limits of own responsibility as a Tier 1 Fire Investigator	
	1.5	Describe the levels of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be worn by a Tier 1 Fire Investigator when carrying out their duties	

2. Understand the methods used in fire investigation	2.1	Describe the relevance of post fire indicators	Physical and measurable changes that occur at a fire scene
	2.2	Describe different types of burn patterns	
	2.3	Compare the differences between arson and deliberate fires	Consider the differences between a property fire and a small refuse fire in the open
	2.4	Describe effective scene preservation by initial crews	
3. Understand the recording of evidence by a Tier 2 Fire Investigation Officer	3.1	Identify the types of evidence gathered by a Tier 2 Fire Investigation Officer	This refers to the types of evidence collected
	3.2	Explain the reasons for and importance of accurate contemporaneous notes at fire scenes	
	3.3	Describe what is meant by the 'chain of evidence'	Consider the continuity of evidence from 'scene to court'
	3.4	Summarise the information recorded by a Tier 2 Fire Investigation Officer	This refers to the information gathered at the fire scene
4. Be able to investigate a fire within own level of responsibility	4.1	Identify the point of origin of a fire	
	4.2	Investigate the cause of a fire	
	4.3	Explain the development of a fire	
	4.4	Record information relating to a fire	This should capture information which will be useful for handover e.g. names of possible witnesses, methods of extinction, BA wearers and actions taken Information should be relevant to own organisation or sector e.g. local authority

		FRS may use S10.4 in the Incident Recording System (IRS)
Additional information about the unit		
Delivery guidance	There is no definitive method of delivering the award within the prescribed qualification structure. However, all relevant course content must be delivered to the learners prior to assessments taking place.	
Assessment guidance	<p>This unit should be assessed using a variety of assessment methods.</p> <p>For the knowledge and understanding content (Learning Outcomes 1, 2 and 3) assessment methods may include a combination of: multiple choice questions, a written assignment, extended questions, professional discussion, assessor questioning of the learner.</p> <p>For the performance content (Learning Outcome 4) assessment methods may include: simulations, observation of performance by assessor, professional discussion, a written report and post course assessment (e.g. e-assessment). Simulated environments may be used as the basis of the fire investigation. However, it is understood that access to simulated environments may not always be possible, in which case photographs and film-based scenarios will be sufficient.</p>	
Links	Fire Investigation Competency Framework Fire Investigation Code of Practice	

4 Centre Requirements

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 (IQA) processes and procedures and is available in the centres' area of the SFJ Awards website <http://sfjawards.com/approved-centres>.

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, and
- have access to appropriate training and support.

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 qualification handbook should be used in conjunction with the SFJ Awards Centre Handbook, the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance and the SFJ Awards Quality Assurance (Internal and External) Guidance, available in the centres' area of the SFJ Awards website <http://sfjawards.com/approved-centres>.

5 Assessment

5.1 Qualification assessment methods

Assessment methods that can be used for the SFJ Awards Level 2 Award in Introduction to Fire Investigation are as follows:

- E-assessment
- Multiple Choice Examination
- Portfolio of Evidence (including for example records of professional discussions, question and answer sessions, reflective accounts)
- Practical Demonstration / Assignment
- Written Examination

5.2 Assessor and internal quality assurer and requirements

5.2.1 Occupational knowledge and competence

All assessors, internal and external quality assurers must:

- be occupationally knowledgeable across the range of units for which they are responsible prior to commencing the role
- 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.

Assessors must also:

- be occupationally competent in the functions covered by the units they are assessing
- have gained their occupational competence by working in the sector relating to the units or qualifications they are assessing. This means 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 units they are assessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager
- be able to interpret and make judgements on current working practices and technologies within the area of work.

Internal quality assurers (IQAs) must also:

- 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

- 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.*

Approved centres will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each member of their team meets these requirements, for example certificates of achievement or testimonials.

5.2.2 Assessor competence

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

- qualified with a recognised assessor qualification, or
- working towards a recognised assessor qualification, or
- able to prove equivalent competence through training to appropriate national standards, for example, National Occupational Standard 9: Assess learner achievement² or Police Sector Standard for the Training of Assessors, Assessor Standard.

Approved centres will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each assessor meets these requirements, for example certificates of achievement or testimonials.

5.2.3 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.

² National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development, LLUK 2010
<https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

To demonstrate their competence, IQAs must be:

- qualified with a recognised internal quality assurance qualification, or
- working towards a recognised internal quality assurance qualification, or
- able to prove equivalent competence through training to appropriate national standards, for example National Occupational Standard 11: Internally monitor and maintain the quality of assessment³ or Police Sector Standard for the Training of Internal Verifiers, Internal Verifier Standard.

Approved centres will be required to provide SFJ Awards with current evidence of how each IQA meets these requirements, for example certificates of achievement or testimonials.

5.3 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.

5.3.1 Occupational competence

Expert witnesses must, according to current sector practice, be competent in the functions covered by the units 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.

5.3.2 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.

5.4 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.

³ National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development, LLUK 2010
<https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

⁴ Qualification and Component Levels, Ofqual
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>

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.

5.5 Methods for assessing competence

Qualifications may be assessed using any method, or combination of methods in Section 5.1, which clearly demonstrate that the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met.

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 expects assessors to use a combination of different assessment methods to make decisions about an individual's occupational competence. Further information on assessment methods is provided below and in the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance.

5.5.1 Observation

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

5.5.2 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)/criteria. Expert witnesses are the preferred witness type recommended by SFJ Awards as they provide a stronger form of evidence which is more easily authenticated and verified.

The assessor should consider witness testimonies of either type as a typical form of evidence. Assessors are therefore responsible for making the final judgement in terms of the learner meeting the evidence requirements of the qualification/unit(s)/criteria.

5.5.3 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.

5.5.4 Professional discussion

Professional discussions are a free-flowing two-way dialogue between the assessor and learner. It should not be confused with questioning where the assessor asks specific questions and the learner provides answers. 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/electronic records of discussions must be maintained.

5.5.5 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/electronic records of all questioning must be maintained.

5.5.6 Simulations

Simulations may take place either in an operational or non-operational environment, for example a training centre, or in the learner's workplace. 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 Methods for assessing knowledge and understanding

Qualifications may be assessed using any method, or combination of methods in Section 5.1, which clearly demonstrate that knowledge-based learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. Evidence of assessment, examples listed below, can be included in a portfolio of evidence.

⁵ Qualification and Component Level, Ofqual

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

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

Where written assessments are used centres must maintain a bank of assessments that are sufficient to be changed regularly.

5.8 Assessment planning

Planning assessment allows a holistic approach to be taken. Holistic assessments are those which focus 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 and 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. By effectively planning 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. As a consequence the assessment is a more efficient, cost effective process which minimises the burden on learners, assessors and employers.

5.9 Standardisation

Internal and external standardisation is required to ensure the consistency of evidence, assessment decisions and qualifications awarded over time. Written/audio/electronic records of all standardisation must be maintained, including records of all involved parties.

IQAs should facilitate internal standardisation events for assessors to attend and participate to review evidence used, make judgments, compare quality and come to a common understanding of what is sufficient. In addition, it is also good practice to participate in external standardisation activities. SFJ Awards will facilitate external standardisation events which are open to centres and their teams.

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

5.10 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

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

5.11 Equality and diversity

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

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that learners who have specific 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.

Further information is available in the SFJ Awards Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and the SFJ Awards Equality of Opportunity Policy.

5.12 Health and safety

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

SFJ Awards fosters 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 the justice sector 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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