



# **Level 3 Award in Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse**



# Qualification Handbook

## SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse

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# Contents

Contents .....	3
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 .....	7
2.6 Opportunities for progression .....	7
2.7 Use of languages .....	7
3 Qualification Units .....	8
4 Centre Requirements .....	24
5 Assessment .....	25
5.1 Qualification assessment methods .....	25
5.2 Assessor and internal quality assurer and requirements .....	25
5.3 Expert witnesses .....	27
5.4 Assessing competence .....	27
5.5 Methods for assessing competence .....	28
5.6 Assessing knowledge and understanding .....	30
5.7 Methods for assessing knowledge and understanding .....	30
5.8 Assessment planning .....	31
5.9 Standardisation .....	31
5.10 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) .....	31
5.11 Equality and diversity .....	32
5.12 Health and safety .....	32

# 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, justice and security 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](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 Award in Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour designed to establish power and control. It can take many forms, including those of psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 aims to raise awareness about the devastating impact of domestic abuse on victims and their families and to further improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice. The Act introduces a statutory definition to ensure that domestic abuse is properly understood, viewed as unacceptable and is actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes. It sets out who can be a victim of domestic abuse behaviours and establishes how victims need to be 'personally connected' to the perpetrator. It also makes clear that children are deemed to be victims of domestic abuse if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse.<sup>1</sup>

The objective of this qualification is to provide practitioners with the knowledge and skills to respond professionally to domestic abuse in all of its forms, including sexual abuse which is often not addressed in this context.

## 2.2 Pre-entry requirements

There are no pre-entry requirements for enrolling on this qualification. However, centres must ensure that learners are able to work at the appropriate level.

## 2.3 Qualification structure

This qualification is made up of 3 mandatory units. To be awarded this qualification the learner must achieve a total of 8 credits as shown in the following table.

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<sup>1</sup> Crown Prosecution Service <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse>

Mandatory Units				
Unit Reference Number	Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit Value
Y/650/2517	Understanding the support implications for survivors of domestic abuse	3	16	3
A/650/2518	Understanding how to respond to the needs of survivors of domestic abuse	3	13	2
D/650/2519	Establishing the needs of survivors of domestic abuse	3	25	3

## 2.4 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Values for Total Qualification Time<sup>2</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
- 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

<sup>2</sup> Total Qualification Time, Ofqual

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

- 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.

Please note these are estimated hours. It is the responsibility of centres to decide the appropriate course duration, based on their learners' ability and level of existing knowledge. It is possible, therefore, that the number of guided learning hours will vary from one centre to another according to learners' needs.

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

Qualification Title	TQT	GLH
SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse	80	54

## 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.

## 2.6 Opportunities for progression

This qualification creates a number of opportunities for front-line, 'core' domestic abuse practitioners as well as roles in the wider workforce that are likely to come into contact with survivors of domestic abuse.

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

### 3 Qualification Units

<b>Title</b>	<b>Understanding the support implications for survivors of domestic abuse</b>		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	1		
<b>Credit Value</b>	3		
<b>GLH</b>	16		
<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 historical background of addressing domestic abuse in the UK	1.1	Describe the links between domestic abuse and equality and human rights issues for survivors	This could include links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Act 2010 (protected characteristics)</li> <li>• Human Rights Act 1998</li> <li>• Gender Equality Duty</li> <li>• International laws relating to human rights e.g., Universal Declaration of Human Rights</li> </ul>
	1.2	Outline the historical background of addressing domestic abuse in the UK	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisations that have made changes (e.g., Women’s Aid, Refuge)</li> </ul>
2. Understand how domestic abuse is currently addressed through legal measures in the UK	2.1	Summarise the legal measures put in place by current legislation to support and protect those affected by domestic abuse	<p>Examples of legal requirements could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic Abuse Act 2021</li> <li>Restraining orders</li> <li>Children and Families Act 2014</li> <li>Prohibited Steps Orders</li> <li>Non Molestation Orders</li> </ul>
	2.2	Explain the rights of those affected by domestic abuse	Those affected could include children
3. Understand the dynamics of domestic abuse and its impact on society	3.1	Analyse the impact upon society of domestic abuse	This could include funding and resources, and the broad range of services that they can impact
	3.2	Explain the Duluth ‘Power and Control’ wheel of domestic abuse and how it is used in practice	
4. Understand the inter-relationship between domestic and sexual abuse	4.1	Explain the different forms that adult sexual abuse can take	Learners may wish to consider definitions of adult sexual abuse
	4.2	Explain sexual abuse within the context of domestic abuse	For example, in an intimate relationship
5. Understand the relationship between gender roles and domestic abuse	5.1	Explain the myths within society regarding domestic abuse, including how cultural myths and beliefs about gender may be used to justify domestic abuse	

	5.2	Explain the relevance of gender for women and men as survivors and/or perpetrators of domestic abuse	Learners may consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• power dynamics</li> <li>• gender roles</li> </ul>
6. Understand the impact on all of those affected by domestic abuse	6.1	Describe the range of people who may experience domestic abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men, women or transgender people in straight / same-sex relationships</li> <li>• Children were formally recognised as victims of domestic abuse for the first time, in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021</li> </ul>
	6.2	Analyse the potential impact on those affected by domestic abuse	Those affected could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult and child survivors</li> <li>• Other family members, friends</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul> Impact could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical and psychological</li> <li>• Ill-health</li> <li>• Financial</li> <li>• Potential for loss of life</li> <li>• Substance misuse</li> <li>• Alcohol misuse</li> </ul>
	6.3	Describe the potential impact on children and how children may be used by abusers as part of the abuse	Learners may consider the age of children involved and interrelationships of young people

	6.4	Explain a range of coping strategies used by those affected by domestic abuse	Strategies may be positive and negative
7. Understand issues relating to diversity facing survivors of domestic abuse	7.1	Explain the barriers which survivors of domestic abuse with additional needs may experience in seeking support	Additional needs could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Non-mobile</li> <li>• Non-verbal</li> <li>• Learning difficulties</li> </ul>
	7.2	Identify minority groups of survivors	Groups could include those relating to gender, ethnicity, or sexuality
	7.3	Analyse the barriers which minority groups may face when seeking support	
	7.4	Describe appropriate actions that can be taken to overcome the barriers to seeking help facing survivors with additional needs	
8. Understand a coordinated community response to addressing domestic abuse	8.1	Explain a coordinated community response to addressing the risks associated with domestic abuse	
	8.2	Outline the criminal justice approach relating to providing support to survivors of domestic abuse	
	8.3	Explain own organisation's services and procedures relating to supporting survivors of domestic abuse	
	8.4	Describe own responsibilities when presented with domestic abuse	

	8.5	Explain the roles of the principal agencies and services providing support in the local area for survivors of domestic abuse	Learners should consider local area resources
9. Understand the processes of regaining empowerment for survivors of domestic abuse	9.1	Describe individual and social factors that may impact upon a survivor's potential to rebuild their lives following domestic abuse	
	9.2	Describe the support skills relevant to empowering survivors	
10. Understand the potential impact upon themselves of providing support to survivors of domestic abuse and the support available	10.1	Explain the potential for stress on themselves and the indicators of such stress	
	10.2	Describe the support mechanisms available to those supporting survivors of domestic abuse	
	10.3	Explain how support mechanisms can be accessed	
<b>Additional information about the unit</b>			
Delivery guidance	<p>This unit is suitable for learners whose work requires them to recognise and address domestic abuse. This includes those whose work involves providing support, often as part of a multi-agency response, to survivors. The unit also includes: understanding the dynamics and wider social context of domestic abuse; the impact upon those affected; and the rights of survivors.</p> <p>It is recognised that domestic abuse can occur without physical abuse and that other forms of abuse can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this unit, whenever the term 'domestic abuse' is used, it is taken to include instances involving abuse in all of its forms, including associated sexual abuse.</p>		
Assessment guidance	This may be assessed either in the workplace or through realistic assessment in a learning and development environment.		

Links	<p>Gov.UK - <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help</a></p> <p>Refuge - <a href="https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/">https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau - <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help</a></p> <p>NSPCC - <a href="https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/">https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/</a></p> <p>NHS - <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/">https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/</a></p> <p>Women's Aid - <a href="https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/">https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/</a></p> <p>Domestic Abuse Act 2021 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet</a>  <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents</a></p> <p>Crown Prosecution Service <a href="https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse">https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse</a></p>
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<b>Title</b>	<b>Understanding how to respond to the needs of survivors of domestic abuse</b>		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	2		
<b>Credit Value</b>	2		
<b>GLH</b>	13		
<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 issues facing survivors of domestic abuse and their associated needs	1.1	Describe the signs of domestic abuse	
	1.2	Explain the behaviours used by abusers to gain power and control	This could include issues relating to coercive control
	1.3	Describe the range of needs that survivors may have	Needs could be associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emotional well-being</li> <li>• financial well-being</li> <li>• health</li> <li>• legal advice</li> <li>• safety</li> <li>• coercive behaviour</li> </ul>
	1.4	Explain the reasons why some survivors feel loyalty to their abusers and remain in abusive relationships	

	1.5	Describe the principles of an effective needs assessment and of working with survivors in identifying appropriate support options	This could include tools such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessment</li> <li>• Support plans</li> </ul>
	1.6	Explain the overlapping nature of risk and need associated with domestic abuse	
	1.7	Describe the possible options of support available to survivors in meeting identified needs	
	1.8	Explain the importance of reviewing needs and support plans regularly	Why it is necessary to conduct these reviews?
2. Understand the nature of risk to survivors of domestic abuse	2.1	Define risk, its changing nature, and the overlapping nature of risk to survivors	Survivors may include children
	2.2	Describe the nature of the risk of serious harm relating to survivors of domestic abuse	
	2.3	Describe the types of vulnerability used when assessing risk and their indicators	Consider if low, medium, or high-risk levels are associated with types of vulnerability. Vulnerability could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD)</li> <li>• Substance misuse</li> <li>• English as a second language (ESOL)</li> <li>• Access to public funds</li> </ul>

	2.4	Describe the levels of harm used when assessing risk and their indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider if low, medium, or high-risk levels are associated with types of harm</li> <li>Harm could relate to types of abuse</li> </ul>
	2.5	Describe the circumstances where survivors are considered to be at high risk, requiring particular support	Survivors may include children
	2.6	Compare the range of options for addressing the risks to survivors	Survivors may include children
3. Understand the procedures for identifying the risks facing survivors of domestic abuse and the purpose of doing so	3.1	Describe the risk identification process, its purpose and associated legal requirements	
	3.2	Explain why identifying and assessing risks is not a straightforward process	A wide range of factors must be considered, and each incident must be assessed on a case-by-case basis as they are all unique
	3.3	Describe the nature of the links between a risk factor and the likelihood of harm to a survivor of domestic abuse	Survivors may include children
4. Understand the issues involved in establishing a supportive and professional relationship	4.1	Explain the importance of building trust and empathy with survivors and effective ways of achieving this	
	4.2	Explain the importance of empowering survivors and ways of doing this	For example, being non-judgmental and non-directive



with a survivor of domestic abuse	4.3	Explain the features and benefits of different styles and forms of communication that can be appropriate when talking to survivors	For example, use of non-verbal communication
	4.4	Analyse the possible barriers to communication for survivors	For example, feelings and reactions which survivors may have that hinder their ability to disclose abuse
	4.5	Explain methods for overcoming barriers to communication	
	4.6	Explain the importance of being aware of their own values and beliefs and the potential impact of these in influencing their response to survivors of domestic abuse	
	4.7	Explain the meaning of professional boundaries when working with a survivor	
5. Understand the importance of safety planning in supporting survivors of domestic abuse	5.1	Describe the process of working with survivors to develop safety plans	Safety plans are live documents that can be created via numerous avenues, such as verbal conversations over the telephone or via face-to-face meetings
	5.2	Explain the circumstances requiring the implementation of an immediate safety plan	Learners may wish to consider the need to ask for consent during a conversation to allow escalation e.g., for safeguarding
	5.3	Explain the steps that need to be taken to 'action' a safety plan	

	5.4	Explain the principles of best practice in identifying the options and interventions available in addressing risk factors and associated needs	
6. Understand own organisation's requirements and multi-agency arrangements relating to the support and safeguarding of survivors of domestic abuse	6.1	Explain own organisation's requirements relating to safeguarding survivors of domestic abuse	<p>Requirements could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own organisation's adult and child safeguarding policies and procedures</li> <li>• Sharing of information with other agencies and collaborative working to reduce the risk of harm</li> <li>• Data protection</li> </ul>
	6.2	Describe the role and responsibilities of the principal external support agencies and multi-agency arrangements, towards providing support and interventions for survivors	<p>Examples of external agencies could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)</li> <li>• Probation</li> <li>• Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs)</li> <li>• Courts</li> <li>• Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)</li> <li>• Substance misuse</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Children and adult safeguarding / social care</li> </ul>

**Additional information about the unit**

Delivery guidance

This unit is suitable for learners whose work involves them exploring the needs of and risks to survivors of domestic abuse. It includes: how to build the trust of survivors; the undertaking of risk assessments as well as wider needs assessments; and understanding the work of the principal agencies involved in this process.

It is recognised that domestic abuse can occur without physical abuse and that other forms of abuse can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this unit, whenever the term ‘domestic abuse’ is used, it is taken to include instances involving abuse in all of its forms, including associated sexual abuse.

Assessment guidance

This may be assessed either in the workplace or through realistic assessment in a learning and development environment.

Links

- Gov.UK - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>
- Refuge - <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>
- Citizens Advice Bureau - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help>
- NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>
- NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/>
- Women’s Aid - <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/>
- Crown Prosecution Service <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Establishing the needs of survivors of domestic abuse</b>		
<b>Level</b>	3		
<b>Unit Number</b>	3		
<b>Credit Value</b>	3		
<b>GLH</b>	25		
<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 gather information needed in identifying the needs of and risks to survivors of domestic abuse	1.1	Make sure that discussions with survivors take place in an appropriate and safe environment	
	1.2	Conduct support sessions correctly and effectively	
	1.3	Explain, with appropriate sensitivity, the purpose of the assessment process to survivors, including the information sought and its use in helping the survivor	
	1.4	Communicate in a manner and at a pace appropriate to the survivor	
	1.5	Establish the survivors' relevant circumstances	
	1.6	Identify the information necessary to progress the assessment in a manner which is sensitive to and supportive of the survivor	
	1.7	Listen actively and check for understanding	
	1.8	Treat survivors with dignity and respect	

	1.9	Remain non-judgmental in discussions with survivors, making sure that own words and actions are free from discrimination	
	1.10	Maintain accurate and up to date records, with all necessary details, in line with own organisation's procedures	
	1.11	Define risk and the overlapping nature of risk to survivors	Survivors may include children
2. Be able to determine and agree the risks faced by survivors	2.1	Explore the nature of the links between a risk factor and the likelihood of harm to a survivor of domestic abuse	Survivors may include children
	2.2	Explore the circumstances where survivors and their children are considered to be at high risk and the range of options for addressing this risk	
	2.3	Assess the survivor's potential risk factors	
	2.4	Explore the strength and nature of the link between these factors and the likelihood of further harm to the survivor, and any children	
	2.5	Evaluate with the survivor the significance of the survivor's overall situation, and of particular aspects of that situation	
	2.6	Identify circumstances which might cause the survivor and any children to be particularly vulnerable	
	2.7	Address immediately circumstances which might cause the survivor and any children to be particularly vulnerable	
	2.8	Establish the survivor's attitudes, beliefs and needs relating to the abuse they have experienced	

3. Be able to determine the survivor's needs	3.1	Identify priority areas of need to be addressed	
	3.2	Explain to the survivor the range of relevant support available and where appropriate the boundaries of the support that can be provided	
	3.3	Involve survivors in exploring the options available to them	For example, signposting to relevant agencies
	3.4	Enable discussions that are collaborative and supportive	
	3.5	Respond constructively to concerns and anxieties expressed by survivors	
	3.6	Respect the survivor's wishes, and agree preferred options with them	
4. Be able to take the necessary actions and progress interventions towards addressing identified risk and needs	4.1	Acknowledge a survivor's own coping mechanisms where relevant and agree those which might be developed	
	4.2	Use agreed procedures and protocols for multi-agency liaison	For example, safeguarding
	4.3	Agree relevant actions and procedures with the survivor and put these into place so that appropriate ongoing support can be provided	
<b>Additional information about the unit</b>			
Delivery guidance	This unit is suitable for learners involved in exploring with survivors of domestic abuse, the survivor's needs and the risks associated with the domestic abuse. It includes involving the survivor throughout the process of gathering information, in determining the survivors' needs and taking appropriate actions towards addressing the risks and needs identified.		

	It is recognised that domestic abuse can occur without physical abuse and that other forms of abuse can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this unit, whenever the term ‘domestic abuse’ is used, it is taken to include instances involving abuse in all of its forms, including associated sexual abuse.
Assessment guidance	This may be assessed either in the workplace or through realistic assessment in a learning and development environment.
Links	<p>Gov.UK - <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help</a></p> <p>Refuge - <a href="https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/">https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau - <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help</a></p> <p>NSPCC - <a href="https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/">https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/</a></p> <p>NHS - <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/">https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/</a></p> <p>Women’s Aid - <a href="https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/">https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/</a></p> <p>Crown Prosecution Service <a href="https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse">https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/domestic-abuse</a></p>

# 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<sup>3</sup> that can be used for the SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse are as follows:

- Portfolio of Evidence (including for example records of professional discussions, question and answer sessions, work products)
- Practical Demonstration / Assignment

## 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

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

- 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 achievement<sup>4</sup> 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.

To demonstrate their competence, IQAs must be:

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<sup>4</sup> National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development, LLUK 2010  
<https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

- 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 assessment<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> Further information on qualification levels is included in the SFJ Awards Assessment Guidance.

Evidence must be:

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<sup>5</sup> National Occupational Standards for Learning and Development, LLUK 2010

<https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

<sup>6</sup> Qualification and Component Levels, Ofqual

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

- 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.<sup>7</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.

## 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.

- 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).

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<sup>7</sup> Qualification and Component Level, Ofqual

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

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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