Certificate in Business and Administrative Management

SFJ Awards Level 4

Qualification Handbook

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Contents

Document Control

Revisions and Amendment Register

Date of Issue	Page No	Revision	Version
01/06/2024		Initial handbook	1

1. Introduction

1.1. About SFJ Awards

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

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

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

1.2. Customer Service Statement

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

1.3. Centre Support

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

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

Tel: 0114 284 1970

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

2. The Qualification

2.1. Qualification Objective

This handbook relates to the following qualification:

SFJ Awards Level 4 Certificate in Business and Administrative Management

The objective of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to be able to move into a more senior role within business and administrative management.

2.2. Pre-entry Requirements

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

2.3. Qualification Structure

To be awarded this qualification the learner must achieve **3** optional units as shown in the table below.

Optional Units					
Unit Number	Odyssey Reference	Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit Value
1	6514	Leadership and Management Skills	4	12	4
2	6515	Commercial and Business Awareness	4	12	4
3	6516	The Role of the Executive Assistant	4	14	4
4	6517	Effective Administrative Management	4	12	4

2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Values for Total Qualification Time[1], including Guided Learning, are calculated by considering the different activities that Learners would typically complete to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes of a qualification. They do not include activities which are required by a Learner's Teacher based on the requirements of an individual Learner and/or cohort. Individual Learners' requirements and individual teaching styles mean there will be variation in the actual time taken to complete a qualification. Values for Total 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

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

- 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 4 Certificate in Business and Administrative Management	133-134	36-38

2.5. Grading

This qualification is graded pass / fail.

2.6. Age Range and Geographical Coverage

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

2.7. Opportunities for Progression

This qualification creates a number of opportunities for progression, for example:

- Administrative Manager
- Office Manager
- Business Development Manager
- Operations Manager
- Team Leader / Supervisor
- Executive Assistant

This list is not exhaustive as roles may vary depending on the specific industry the learner wishes to progress within.

2.8. Use of Languages

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

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

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

3. Qualification Units

3.1. Optional Units

Title	Leadership and Management Skills
Level	4
Unit Number	1
TQT	44
GLH	12

Learning Outcomes *The learner will:*	Assessment Criteria *The learner can:*		Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand an organisation's structure, leadership, and management	1.1	Outline the characteristics of different types of organisational structure	Types of organisational structure: E.g., line, staff/functional, committee, divisional, project, matrix, hybrid etc.
	1.2	Outline the advantages and disadvantages of different types of organisational structure	Advantages: E.g., simplifying lines of authority, ease of decision-making, delegating, efficient interaction, defining/aligning specific goals/targets, co-ordination, responsiveness, flexibility etc. Disadvantages: E.g., disagreements between departments, administrative

				burdens, slow responsiveness, lack of control, discouraging innovative thinking etc.
	1.3	Explain the factors that influence the choice of structure for an organisation		External factors: Economic, social, political, nature of competition etc. Internal factors: Purpose of the organisation (e.g., profit motive, social aims), size, industry sector, business strategy, resources available to organisation, interests of stakeholders etc.
2. Understand the principles of leadership and management	2.1	Evaluate the leadership and management processes that enable an organisation to achieve its goals		Leadership and management processes for achieving organisational goals: Covering operational and administrative processes, e.g., devolving decision-making, organising staff training/appraisals (linking performance directly to achievement of goals), clarifying and aligning individual/team objectives with organisational goals, integration, encouraging communication between staff and managers, setting SMART (specific, measurable,

				attainable, relevant, time-bound) objectives etc.
	2.2	Analyse the principles, characteristics, and application of goal setting theory		Goal setting theory: E.g., according to Locke and Latham's theory; specific/challenging goals lead to higher performance than general/easier goals; the five principles: clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity; examples include asking an employee to achieve more than last time rather than to do their best etc.
	2.3	Explain the knowledge, skills, personal attributes, and behaviour needed for a management role		Needs for management: Commitment, leadership, transparency, consistency, treating all staff equally, being a role model, encouraging developmental feedback and innovation, recognising success, developing trust between individuals, empowering staff, seeking feedback from customers, adopting a positive approach to/instigating change, technical/bespoke skills, strategic awareness etc.

	2.4	Explain how the roles and responsibilities of a leader differ from those of a manager	Leader: Setting direction, developing long-term vision, and aligning people to it, facilitating decisions, creating changes etc.; being charismatic, motivational, inspirational, transformational, people focused and comfortable with risk. Manager: Maintaining stability, achieving short-term goals, making decisions, planning, and budgeting, staffing, clarifying jobs, measuring performance, problem-solving etc.; being authoritative, work focused and avoiding risks.
	2.5	Outline the characteristics and application of the principal theories of leadership and management	Theories of leadership and management: E.g., Classical Management Theory, Human Relations Theory, Neo-Human Relations Theory, Systems Theory, Chaos Theory, trait theories, behavioural theories, contingency theories and power and influence theories etc.
3. Understand the impact of communication and	3.1	Define the characteristics of effective working relationships	Effective working relationships: Diversity, trust, interrelatedness, respect, varied interaction,

interpersonal relationships on performance in the workplace			effective communication, inclusivity etc.
	3.2	Identify the nature of barriers to communication and interpersonal relationships across an organisation	Barriers to communication/relationships: Covering: the use of jargon, personal problems/emotions, distractions, slang, cultural differences, sensory impairment, physical barriers to the use of body language (remote working), accents, mixed/contradictory messages, disinterest/lack of motivation, assumptions/prejudices, distorted focus, lack of time etc.
	3.3	Analyse strategies for overcoming barriers to communication and interpersonal relationships	Overcoming barriers: Attention-Interest-Desire-Action; sharing information, being polite, showing appreciation/praising achievements, following through on agreed actions, avoiding agreements/promises which cannot be kept, showing empathy, using appropriate media/technology, appropriate complexity of language, body language which correlates with verbal communication, clarity,

				politeness, answering/asking questions directly, volunteering information, negotiating, removing differences in perception etc.
	3.4	Explain the importance of giving structured feedback		Importance of structured feedback: Providing motivation, identifying SMART objectives rather than general feedback, developing performance, ensuring feedback includes praise and developmental feedback, feedback as a learning tool, ensuring the recipient can internalise and act upon feedback rather than just understand it etc.
	3.5	Analyse the characteristics and use of delegation to enhance performance		Purpose of delegation: More effective time management for managers, providing learning/development opportunities for supervisors, ensuring targets are achieved, mapping skill sets to tasks etc. Characteristics of delegation: Arranging regular appraisal/catch-up meetings, monitoring progress, setting clear lines of

			authority/communication, delineating responsibilities to avoid confusion/duplication, identifying and resolving conflicts etc.
4. Understand the relationship between motivation and personal performance in the workplace	4.1	Outline the characteristics and application of the principal theories of motivation	Theories of motivation: E.g., Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, McClellan's Acquired Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Equity Theory, Reinforcement Theory etc.; covering: prioritisation of goals/activities, esteem, intrinsic motivation (e.g., sense of achievement/responsibility), extrinsic motivation (e.g. bonuses, promotions) etc.
	4.2	Analyse the relationship between motivation and individual performance	Relationship between motivation and individual performance: Ensuring motivations across individuals/teams aspire to aligned objectives, increasing attendance/retention, persistence, productivity, innovative thinking, stronger relationships with

				clients/customers, push – pull factors in motivation performance etc.
	4.3	Analyse the impact of motivation on team dynamics		Impact of motivation on team dynamics: Dependent upon how far motivations of individuals align with one another, considering individual/team strengths/weaknesses and goals etc.
	4.4	Identify the characteristics of effective teams		Characteristics: Trusting one another, regular communication, common purpose, utilising the unique skills/perspectives of each member, clarity of perspectives, friendly and focused working environment etc.
5. Be able to solve problems and manage conflicts in the workplace	5.1	Evaluate different problem-solving processes, tools, and techniques		Problem solving processes, tools, and techniques: Covering: identifying the nature/cause of the problem, analysing the problem, developing potential solutions/alternatives, selecting an appropriate solution, implementation, and evaluation,

			e.g. SWOT analysis, PEST analysis etc.
	5.2	Identify the source and nature of conflicts within an organisation	Source/nature of conflicts within an organisation: Interpersonal (e.g., values, interests, personality), communication barriers, organisational (e.g., hierarchical, interdepartmental), change-related (e.g., new technology/methods), stress, lack of resources/resource competition, external factors (e.g., recession, political pressure) etc.
	5.3	Analyse the characteristics of the principal theories of conflict management	Characteristics of theories of conflict management: E.g., Khun and Poole's model, DeChurch and Marks's meta-taxonomy, etc. covering: resolution, organisational learning, negative aspects of conflict, positive aspects of conflict (e.g., the potential to improve group outcomes) etc.
	5.4	Explain the use of conflict resolution, prevention, processes, and techniques	Use of conflict resolution/prevention: E.g., ACAS, brainstorm resolutions, use mediator, examine

			alternatives, manage stress situation, competing, compromising, collaborating, avoiding, and accommodating (as stated by Thomas and Kilmann) etc.

Additional information about the unit			
Delivery guidance	This unit will suit experienced business and administrative support staff who work closely with their organisation's senior management and leadership teams, and who either already have management responsibility for junior staff or plan to take on this level of responsibility in the future. It covers fundamental people management skills and the contextual positioning of managers within an organisation. Learners will also learn how to motivate staff and communicate with people at all levels, including techniques to delegate tasks and manage difficult responses. It will give learners the skills to solve problems, deal with interpersonal conflict, and influence a range of organisational stakeholders towards their point of view. It also helps them to identify key areas for personal development to improve their managerial effectiveness.		
Links	*Health and Safety Executive – www.hse.gov.uk* *Skills CfA (Council for Administration) – www.skillscfa.org/standards-qualifications.html* *e-Skills UK (Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology) – www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/* *Equalities and Human Rights Commissions – www.equalityhumanrights.com* *The National Archives (For all UK legislation) – www.legislation.gov.uk* *The Institute of Customer Service – www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/*		

Title	Commercial and Business Awareness
Level	4
Unit Number	2
TQT	44
GLH	12

Learning Outcomes *The learner will:*	Assessment Criteria *The learner can:*		Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand how an organisation develops its role and purpose at a strategic level	1.1	Define an organisation's role, purpose, and culture	Role/purpose: Profitability, cash flow customer satisfaction, stakeholder value, public service, employee growth, research, and development etc. Culture: Definition of organisational culture, types of organisational culture e.g., Handy's power, role, task and person or other suitable simple model of culture.
	1.2	Describe the tools used by an organisation to communicate its role, purpose, and culture	Tools: E.g., organisation's mission statement, press releases, newsletters, articles, social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.), forums, exhibitions, open days etc.

		1.3	Analyse the purpose of different stakeholders to organisations	Purpose of stakeholders: Including: investors, employees, business partners, board of directors, creditors, suppliers, unions, the wider community etc.; covering: providing finance, decision-making, management, operations, paying for products/services, acting as 'watchdog' etc.
2.	Understand how an organisation uses strategy to drive performance	2.1	Define the role of strategy in organisational performance	Role of strategy in organisational performance: Focusing upon important/urgent issues as priority, setting SMART objectives, promoting adaptive thinking, aligning departments/teams, defining, and setting underlying processes, allocating resources effectively etc.; how ineffective strategies can damage organisational performance.
		2.2	Analyse the role of strategic analysis in the commercial environment	Role of strategic analysis in the commercial environment: To formulate strategy/strategic recommendations, plan to deal with change, identify most efficient/least resistant

			approaches, self-evaluation, understanding competitors, seize business opportunities etc.
	2.3	Explain the application of strategic analytical models to an organisation	Application of strategic analytical models: E.g., SWOT analysis, PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental) analysis, Porter's Five Forces, Critical Success Factor Analysis etc.
	2.4	Evaluate the use of strategic planning tools to develop organisational strategy	Use of strategic planning tools to develop organisational strategy: PESTLE, scenario planning, Porter's Five Force analysis, SWOT analysis, growth-share mix, The Nine Steps to Success
	2.5	Explain the purpose of benchmarking	Purpose of benchmarking: Comparing business processes/performance metrics to competitors/industry practices, focusing on best practices, partnering to share information, allowing the organisation to evaluate practices, identifying

			shortcomings, targeting future performance, adjusting goals etc.
	2.6	Identify the contribution of business and administrative support staff to organisational strategy	Contribution of business and administrative support staff to organisational strategy: Performing a tactical role in support of overall strategy, use of soft skills, execution/implementation (rather than choosing/planning) of organisational strategy at the team level, acting as both leaders and followers, improving effectiveness at the operational level etc.
	2.7	Analyse how the external environment affects organisational strategy	How external environment affects organisational strategy: PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal) factors and how they affect strategy
3. Understand the impact of change on individuals and organisations	3.1	Evaluate the features of theories of organisational change	Theories of organisational change: E.g., Lewin's Model of Change (unfreeze, transition, freeze); Kotter's Eight Step

			Change Model (creating urgency, forming a coalition, creating a vision, communicating the vision, removing obstacles, seeking immediate successes for motivation, building on change, making the change core to the organisation); Schein's Cognitive Redefinition (motivation, change, making it permanent); Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory; Prochaska and DiClemente's Change Theory etc.
	3.2	Explain the importance of reviewing and adapting organisational strategy	Reviewing/adapting organisational strategy: Measuring progress towards strategic aims/objectives, ensuring activities are within parameters of the aims/objectives, minimising disruption caused by changes in the internal/external environment, allowing flexibility and input from employees, implementing alternative processes etc.

	3.3	Analyse the factors that drive organisational change	Factors driving organisational change: E.g., competition, technology, management, organisational culture, regulations, growth/decline, new processes, employee morale, customer/client demands, stakeholders etc.
	3.4	Describe the challenges to be overcome in response to change	Challenges in response to change: E.g., lack of skills/expertise in-house, resource limitations, habits/employee resistance to change, fear of the unknown, inadequate communication regarding the nature of changes, unforeseen costs of changes etc.
	3.5	Analyse the features and benefits of coaching techniques used to support change and periods of transition	Features - informative sharing knowledge & information with the coachee and affirmative feedback or recognition of opinion, model-based, time-based, one-to-one, on-going Benefits - clear goals, improves job satisfaction in line with strategic goals, builds

				confidence and staff engagement
		3.6	Evaluate the role of business and administrative support staff in supporting the management of change	Role of business and administrative support staff in supporting change: Financial planning, restructuring teams, recordkeeping, seeking employee feedback/input, monitoring performance, maintaining an overview of changing business trends, communicating changes set by leadership and management teams, problem-solving etc.
4.	Understand the importance of brand to an organisation	4.1	Evaluate the range, definition, and power of brands	Range, definition, and power of brands: E.g., initialism, alliteration, use of puns, names of founders/geographical locations, logos, graphics, taglines, catchphrases, brand performance (functionality of product/service), brand identity (emotive/symbolic) etc.; covering: brand trust, parity, social media branding, crowd sourcing, multi-brands, derived brands, commercial/cultural impact etc.

	4.2	Explain how organisations develop a vision and brand	Developing vision/brand: With reference to target market, mission statement, organisational strategy, benefits/features of product/service, existing consumer perceptions of organisation etc.
	4.3	Analyse the communication of an organisation's vision and brand	Communication of organisation's vision/brand: Brand integration, logos, promotional materials, packaging, social media/online presence, advertising, articles, reviews, exhibitions, forums etc.

Additional information about the unit	
Delivery guidance	This unit is ideal for experienced business and administrative support staff seeking to develop their commercial awareness and strategic thinking to improve personal confidence and engagement with senior leadership and management. It provides learners with an understanding of the critical issues affecting their organisation and how being commercially aware can increase overall business performance and their career prospects. Learners will cover how to analyse the commercial environment in which they work and draw conclusions about how this affects change and the identity of an organisation.
Links	• *Health and Safety Executive – www.hse.gov.uk* • *Skills CfA (Council for Administration) – www.skillscfa.org/standards-qualifications.html* • *e-Skills UK (Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology) – www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/* • *Equalities and Human Rights Commissions – www.equalityhumanrights.com*

	• *The National Archives (For all UK legislation) – www.legislation.gov.uk* • *The Institute of Customer Service – www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/*

Title	The Role of the Executive Assistant
Level	4
Unit Number	3
Total Hours	45
GLH	14

Learning Outcomes *The learner will:*	Assessment Criteria *The learner can:*		Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand the Executive Assistant's (EA) role	1.1	Explain the role, purpose, and responsibilities of an executive assistant	Role, purpose, and responsibilities: Managing projects, understanding, and working towards organisational strategies, introducing/streamlining processes, liaising with clients/stakeholders, managing budgets, writing executive summaries, organising travel and communication, maintaining websites, conducting research, attending meetings on behalf of managers etc.
	1.2	Identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of an executive assistant	Skills, knowledge, and behaviours: Self-motivation, communication, organisation, interpersonal skills, IT systems

			literacy, assertiveness, expertise on departments, organisation, and wider sector, understanding and appreciation of personalities or managers/clients, patience, empathy, innovative approach, fast-thinking, attentive to detail etc.
	1.3	Identify how an executive assistant works in partnership with a senior manager	Partnership with senior managers: Deputising, delegating workloads, making decision/representing if absent, providing advice based upon practical expertise, making joint decisions, managing personal diaries etc.
	1.4	Explain different senior leadership and management work styles	Work styles: E.g., autocratic, consultative, persuasive, democratic/participative, chaotic, laissez-faire, paternalistic, directive, coaching etc.
	1.5	Identify strategies for working with different senior leadership and management work styles	Ways to work with any management style: Being proactive with communication, accepting developmental feedback, setting boundaries/explaining if certain tasks are unrealistic, adapting for different management styles e.g.,

				for an autocratic style, trying to understand their main objective and strive towards it etc.
2.	Understand the principles of communication skills for executive assistants	2.1	Analyse the impact of barriers to communication	Impact of barriers to communication: Misleading/confusing expectations, misunderstanding of organisational objectives, reduced employee morale, conflict between employees, breakdown of processes, inefficient delivery of products and services, lack of public/client understanding of organisational mission/vision, emotional intelligence etc.
		2.2	Describe the characteristics of listening and questioning	Characteristics of listening/questioning: Active listening, summarising, paraphrasing, probing, focusing attention, displaying empathetic body language while listening etc.
		2.3	Evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, and application of different methods of communication	Communication methods including: Spoken and body language in person: Covering: tone, volume, nodding, smiling, active listening; including: shop floors, visits, and product fairs.

			In writing: Email, memos, formal letters dealing with customer's problems and information leaflets. Phone calls: Staff on standby/making follow up calls; extension numbers, accessing computerised information during calls etc. Covering: Audience (age, numbers, linguistic barriers), location (virtual space/long distance, meeting rooms, offices) timescales (level of urgency, conflicting priorities, response time) etc.
	2.4	Evaluate the effects of aggressive, passive, and assertive communication	Effects of communication: Covering: misinterpreting/mistaking one form of communication for another, reconciliation/increased conflict, gradually releasing/building up frustration, gaining/losing the respect of colleagues, increasing/reducing cooperation, workforce morale, bullying, self-esteem etc.
	2.5	Develop approaches to counter aggressive and passive behaviour	Approaches to counter aggressive/passive behaviour: Encouraging inclusion and an

				open working environment, monitoring the performance of individuals, promoting accountability, ensuring employees know the consequences of behaviours, recognising the potential/early warning signs for conflict and removing it, following the policies and procedures of the organisation, mediating, seeking professional advice/support to manage disagreements, applying disciplinary actions etc.
3.	Understand the executive assistant's role in project management	3.1	Identify the characteristics of a project	Characteristics of a project: These will be specific to the project; temporary (with a start date and agreed/projected end date), deliver something unique (unlike a process/task), structured, purposeful etc.
		3.2	Explain the reasons for project failure	Reason for failure: Communication barriers, ill-defined objectives at the outset, unclear lines of authority, lack of resources, unforeseen challenges, overspending, conflicting/changing priorities, lack of/failure to meet

			interim deadlines, knock-on effect of failure in one area upon the rest of the project, duplication, lack of motivation etc.
	3.3	Identify the characteristics of a successful project	Characteristics of a successful project: Strong lines of communication/authority, clarity of purpose and defined SMART objectives at the outset, GANTT charts, working within resource limitations, contingency planning, risk control, adaptability, delegation, controls etc.
	3.4	Explain the importance of effective project management	Importance of effective project management: Identifying the constraints between different tasks/order they must be undertaken to ensure project success e.g., creating a project network diagram; covering: technical, management, inter-project, and scheduling constraints according to Wysocki; mandatory, discretionary and external dependencies etc.
	3.5	Explain the importance of evaluation criteria to a project	Importance of evaluation criteria: To measure success of a project

				against specific benchmarks, ensuring all stakeholders agree to the criteria, feeding back to stakeholders with reference to criteria etc.; covering: return on investment, profitability, social objectives/values, strategic relevance, durability etc.
4.	Understand the principles of working practice for executive assistants	4.1	Explain the principles and benefits of time management	Principles: Distinguishing between urgent and important, avoiding over-commitment, setting SMART objectives, delegating, preparing for unexpected obstacles, completing tasks before moving to another, developing processes, and ensuring they are followed, minimising distractions Benefits: Meeting multiple demands from management/clients, accomplishing more with less effort, ability to make better decisions, focusing upon important/urgent tasks, reducing stress for self/others, producing higher quality work, increasing confidence and professional reputation of self/organisation etc.

		4.2	Identify ways that executive assistants can improve working practices in the workplace	Improving working practices in the workplace: Software for establishing and monitoring defined sequences of tasks, collaborative/automated processes etc.; covering: removing redundant tasks, identifying problems, ensuring staff can access remotely (e.g., Cloud), setting up email notifications, RAG indicators, availability of templates to save time on recurring tasks, reassigning people and tasks, use of graphics/visual progress reports etc.
5.	Understand the executive assistant's role in supporting business meetings and events	5.1	Describe the characteristics and requirements of different types of meeting	Types of meetings: Annual General Meeting (AGM), Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), committee, project, steering group, board, departmental, briefings etc. Characteristics/requirements: Internal/external, formal/informal, ensuring all stakeholders are represented, agreeing agendas etc.

		5.2	Explain an executive assistant's contribution to meetings and events	Contribution to meetings/events: Ensuring they will bring the maximum value for the CEO/management, representing the CEO/management, scheduling, and planning meetings, developing/circulating agendas beforehand, identifying any queries which can be resolved prior to the meeting, chairing/steering etc.
		5.3	Identify the responsibilities of an executive assistant in planning and supporting meeting and events	Responsibilities in planning and supporting meetings/events: With reference to assessment criteria 5.2; e.g., ensuring those involved know what is expected of them, timing, preparing materials, contingencies, agreeing objectives beforehand, identifying success criteria, costs, sales, leads etc.
6.	Understand personal development for executive assistants	6.1	Explain the purpose and requirements of an appraisal process	Purpose/requirements of appraisal process: Identifying skill/knowledge gaps, ensuring objectives are met, being consistent toward staff, providing opportunities for staff comments/feedback on own performance, continuous

			professional development, reviewing past performance, predicting/determining future performance, offering advice, praise or developmental feedback to staff, deciding upon promotions, setting new objectives, mutually agreeing training methods to benefit staff and the organisation etc.
	6.2	Explain the importance of preparing for a performance review	Preparing for a performance review: Ensuring achievement is recognised; ensuring the review will bring the maximum benefit/be an effective use of time by: analysing shortcomings beforehand to improve performance going forward, identifying gaps in own knowledge to use opportunity to ask questions of appraiser, predicting/ensuring up to date knowledge relevant to likely topics etc.
	6.3	Analyse the purpose and process of objective setting	Objective setting: Ensuring goals align with those of the manager/organisation, dividing goals into smaller objectives which

			are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound), anticipating problems and solving them etc.
	6.4	Analyse the importance of identifying learning and development opportunities that are consistent with identified development objectives	Identifying learning/development opportunities consistent with development objectives: Using learning needs analysis (LNA), to maintain motivation/engagement, currency of technical expertise, ensuring gaps in future skills/capability requirements are minimised, ensuring learning and development will benefit both individuals and the wider organisation, avoiding learning/development which is counter to the values of the organisation etc.
	6.5	Identify and evaluate opportunities for learning and development	Identifying/evaluating opportunities for learning and development: With reference to assessment criteria 6.4.
	6.6	Explain the importance of networking to business efficiency and career progression	Importance of networking: Business efficiency: Building business partnerships, developing sales leads/referrals, raising the positive profile of the organisation,

			influencing the decisions of other organisations favourably, collaborating with those who face similar obstacles (e.g., regulatory, logistical), learning from the mistakes of others, establishing best practices, improving knowledge of sector/competitors etc. Career progression: Seeking opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD), identifying/utilising networks to become more of asset to organisation, improve job security and opportunities for promotion, accessing the 'hidden' job market etc.
	6.7	Explain the importance of periodic reviews of progress against agreed development objectives for professional development purposes	Importance of periodic reviews of progress: To determine whether the objectives are still valid and relevant, identify issues at their early stage/potential issues and address them, be able to update the CEO etc.; covering: benchmarking, obtaining qualitative/quantitative information, feedback from colleagues, managers and clients, appraisals,

		comments boxes, self-reflection etc.

Additional information about the unit	
Delivery guidance	This unit will develop the learners' knowledge and understanding of the role of the executive assistant. It covers the role of an executive assistant within senior leadership and management teams, the principles of communication, project management, working practice and supporting business meetings and events.
Links	• *Health and Safety Executive – www.hse.gov.uk* • *Skills CfA (Council for Administration) – www.skillscfa.org/standards-qualifications.html* • *e-Skills UK (Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology) – www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/* • *Equalities and Human Rights Commissions – www.equalityhumanrights.com* • *The National Archives (For all UK legislation) – www.legislation.gov.uk* • *The Institute of Customer Service – www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/*

Title	Effective Administrative Management
Level	4
Unit Number	4
Total Hours	45
GLH	12

Learning Outcomes *The learner will:*	Assessment Criteria *The learner can:*		Guidance and/or Indicative Content
1. Understand the role of an administrative manager	1.1	Define the role of an administrative manager	Role of an administrative manager: Understanding and working towards organisational strategies, introducing/streamlining administrative processes, liaising with clients/stakeholders, managing budgets, writing executive summaries, organising travel and communication, maintaining websites, conducting research, attending/chairing meetings etc.
	1.2	Evaluate the contribution of administrative managers to the efficiency and overall success of an organisation	Contribution of administrative managers: Specific to organisation; typically involving: daily running of the office, establishing/prioritising objectives,

				supervising and motivating staff, setting budgets, communicating and monitoring goals, implementing and reviewing office policies and procedures, producing reports for board members etc.
2.	Understand techniques for planning and prioritising work and projects under the control of the administrative manager	2.1	Explain the importance of distinguishing between urgent and important work	Important: Those activities which are of high value to self/organisation. They might not have a particular timescale attached to them and could be ongoing. Urgent: Tasks which require completion in accordance with an imminent deadline. They might not be of high value to self/organisation. The definitions are distinct but not mutually exclusive; some work can be both important and urgent while some work falls into neither category.
		2.2	Evaluate the use of tools and techniques to prioritise work in the short, medium, and long term	Tools/techniques to prioritise work: Maintaining a log, multitasking effectively, structuring workload to consider interruptions/changing priorities, using schedules, regularly

			reviewing workload, taking into account own/others current workloads, using the organisational strategy, mission and vision as a benchmark for prioritising activities etc.
	2.3	Evaluate the characteristics of planning	Planning: Covering: goals/scope, SMART objectives, deliverables, schedules, dependencies between tasks, supporting plans (e.g., human resources, communications, risk management), delegating etc.; purpose/benefits of planning: e.g. those involved know what is expected of them, timing, what materials to prepare, contingencies, lines of communication and objectives established and shared, ensuring efficiency etc.
	2.4	Analyse the link between goals and objectives and work efficiency	Goals: Outcome statements relating to the aspirations/future of the organisation; align with mission/vision; specific as opposed to emotive; provide a reference point for managers. Objectives: Steps which work towards the achievement of goals;

				they should be SMART as opposed to emotive. Efficiency: Dependent upon objectives being clearly defined to all individuals involved, prioritising them, mapping activities to them and gauging performance.
3.	Understand techniques for managing work and projects under the control of an administrative manager	3.1	Evaluate the benefits and limitations of systems to manage work and projects	Evaluating systems to manage work/projects: E.g., 'bring-forward' systems, in-trays, pending trays, rotas etc.; the benefits and limitations of each.
		3.2	Evaluate the effectiveness of administrative processes and techniques	Covering: KPI's, service level agreements, mystery shopping, productivity, quality, quantity, deadlines, core competencies of employees, subjective criteria (e.g., the importance of building client relationships over the long term), the limitations of input-output measurements in the knowledge sector, considering how objectives are met and not just whether they are met etc.
		3.3	Assess the effectiveness of techniques and processes for planning and organising projects	Techniques/processes for planning and organising projects: E.g., Gantt Charts, Network

			diagrams, Critical Path Analysis diagrams, Fishbone diagrams, collaborative planning (within department, interdepartmental, external to organisation), working 'backwards' when planning each stage, referring to the business case to determine the rationale of the plan etc.; covering: timescales, risk management, resource requirements, budgets, communication channels, delegation, monitoring systems, designing subsidiary activities etc.
	3.4	Explain the importance of effective delegation	Delegation as a work management tool: Using the support of someone experienced in a task will save time, division of labour reduces time spent switching between tasks, ensuring colleagues feel value, using different levels of empowerment, strengthening relationships, using the ABCD structure of delegation etc.; limitations/disadvantages depend upon the situation: adding a burden to employees, increasing/spreading risk, some tasks cannot be delegated (e.g., a

				statutory activity assigned to a role) etc.
	3.5	Evaluate decision making tools, processes and techniques and their applications		Evaluating decision making tools, processes and techniques: E.g. DECIDE model (define the problem, establish the criteria, consider the alternatives, identify the best alternative, develop and implement a plan of action, evaluate and monitor the solution), Decision Trees, Pareto Analysis, Decision Matrix, Multivoting, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Conjoint Analysis etc.; shortcomings e.g. relying upon/overlooking the opinions of others, reaching conclusions to quickly, procrastination, misidentifying the problem to be solved etc.
4. Understand the role of administrative management in the context of people management	4.1	Analyse the characteristics, advantages, disadvantages and application of leadership and management styles		Management/leadership styles: E.g., autocratic, consultative, persuasive, empathetic, self-aware, democratic/participative, chaotic, laissez-faire, paternalistic, directive, coaching etc. Characteristics, advantages, disadvantages, and application: Varies widely between styles e.g.,

			the authoritative style is effective with tight deadlines or fast decision-making but could stifle the innovation of subordinates, the laissez-faire style encourages innovation but could delay decision-making processes etc.
	4.2	Explain the causes and effects of stress in the workplace	E.g., poor motivation, emotional unpredictability, ill-health, tiredness, confusion, lateness, absenteeism, poor appearance etc. leading to reduced productivity, strained relationships, stress spreading to colleagues, communication difficulties/delays, damage to reputation, loss of business etc.
	4.3	Evaluate ways of preventing and controlling stress in the workplace	Techniques to prevent/control: Encouraging open discussion, recognising warning signs, taking own care/encouraging others to take care of themselves, prioritising/organising as a team, deferring to others if problems need assistance/are insurmountable, sharing leisure time/cultivating a social climate,

			appreciating the concerns of others, praising good work etc.
	4.4	Evaluate the characteristics and effects of passive, aggressive, and assertive behaviour	Characteristics and effects of behaviours: Misinterpreting/mistaking one form for another; covering: reconciliation/increased conflict, gradually releasing/building up frustration, gaining/losing the respect of colleagues, increasing/reducing cooperation, workforce morale, bullying, self-esteem etc.
	4.5	Explain the features and advantages of assertiveness techniques	Assertiveness techniques: E.g., being able to say 'no', use of 'I' statements to show confidence/responsibility, accepting reasonable levels of risk, appropriate volume, asking questions to ensure understanding, staying on topic, avoiding repetition, setting listeners at ease, keeping emails concise, using fonts/formatting to emphasise actions/dates etc. Advantages: Dependent upon the nature of the work scenario and technique used e.g. avoiding failure of task

			completion/misleading others as to what is achievable, focusing upon the valuable/urgent tasks as priority, ensuring a high quality of work rather than multiple incomplete/poor quality outcomes, reducing stress, creating a working environment of mutual respect etc.
Additional information about the unit			
Delivery guidance	This unit will develop the learners' knowledge and understanding of effective administrative management. It covers the role of the administrative manager in managing work and techniques for planning, prioritising, and managing work and projects. The learners will also develop their understanding of the role of the administrative manager when managing people.		
Links	• *Health and Safety Executive – www.hse.gov.uk* • *Skills CfA (Council for Administration) – www.skillscfa.org/standards-qualifications.html* • *e-Skills UK (Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology) – www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/* • *Equalities and Human Rights Commissions – www.equalityhumanrights.com* • *The National Archives (For all UK legislation) – www.legislation.gov.uk* • *The Institute of Customer Service – www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/*		

4. Centre Requirements

4.1. Centre Responsibilities

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Assessment Guidance
- Centre Handbook
- Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policies

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Sanctions Policy
- Examinations and Invigilation Policy
- Risk and Centre Monitoring Policy
- Fair Access and Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy
- Standardisation Policy
- Direct Claims Policy
- Centre Approval Process

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

4.2. Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy

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

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

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

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

4.3. Facilities

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

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

policy, standards, and regulations specified by SFJ Awards to gain approval for knowledge-based assessment.

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

4.4. Trainers

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

5. Assessment

5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods

Assessment methods[3] that can be used for the SFJ Awards Level 4 Certificate in Business and Administrative Management are as follows:

- Aural Examination
- E-assessment
- 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

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[3] Selected from assessment methods listed on Ofqual's regulatory system (Portal)

5.2.   Assessing Competence

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

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

Evidence must be:

- Valid
- Authentic
- Sufficient
- Current
- Reliable

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

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.

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

5.3.1. 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 either in a non-operational environment which is not the learner's workplace, for example a training centre. The qualification handbook will specify whether simulations are allowed for the qualification and/or units within it. Proposed simulations must be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose as part of the IQA's pre-delivery activity.

Simulations can be used when:

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

Simulations must follow the principles below:

1. The nature of the contingency and the physical environment for the simulation must be realistic
2. Learners should be given no indication as to exactly what contingencies they may come across in the simulation
3. The demands on the learner during the simulation should be no more or less than they would be in a real work situation
4. Simulations must be planned, developed and documented by the centre in a way that ensures the simulation correctly reflects what the specific qualification unit seeks to assess and all simulations should follow these documented plans
5. There should be a range of simulations to cover the same aspect of a unit and they should be rotated regularly.

5.4. Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

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

Assessments must be:

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.5. Methods for Assessing Knowledge and Understanding

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

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

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

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

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

5.6. Assessment Planning

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

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

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

6. Assessor Requirements

6.1. Occupational Knowledge and Competence

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

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

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

6.2. Qualification Knowledge

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

6.3. Assessor Competence

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

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

However, there may be circumstances when assessors have the equivalent competence through training to appropriate national standards, and SFJ Awards will agree this on a case-by-case basis.

Assessors' experience, knowledge and understanding could be verified by a combination of:

- curriculum vitae and employer endorsement or references
- possession of a relevant NVQ/SVQ, or vocationally related qualification

- corporate membership of a relevant professional institution
- interview (the verification process must be recorded and available for audit).

Recognised assessor qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- RQF/QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
- RQF/QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- RQF/QCF Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- An appropriate Assessor qualification in the SCQF as identified by SQA Accreditation
- A1 Assess candidates using a range of methods
- D32/33 Assess candidate performance, using differing sources of evidence.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.4. Continuing Professional Development

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

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

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

7. Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

7.1. Occupational Knowledge

Internal quality assurers (IQAs) must be occupationally knowledgeable across the range of units for which they are responsible prior to commencing the role. Due to the risk-critical nature of the work, particularly in the justice, community safety and security sectors, and the legal implications of the assessment process, they must understand the nature and context of the assessors' work and that of their learners. This means that they must have worked closely with staff who carry out the functions covered by the qualifications, possibly by training or supervising them, and have sufficient knowledge of these functions to be able to offer credible advice on the interpretation of the units.

7.2. Qualification Knowledge

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

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

7.3. Internal Quality Assurer Competence

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

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

To demonstrate their competence, IQAs must be:

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.4. Continuing Professional Development

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

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

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

8. Expert Witnesses

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

8.1. Occupational Competence

Expert witnesses must, according to current sector practice, be competent in the functions covered by the unit(s) for which they are providing evidence.
They must be able to demonstrate consistent application of the skills and the current supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly

related to the qualification unit that they are witnessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager.

8.2. Qualification Knowledge

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

9. External Quality Assurers

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

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

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

9.1. External Quality Assurer Competence

To demonstrate their competence, EQAs must be:

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

Relevant qualifications include:

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

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

9.2. Continuing Professional Development

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

10. Standardisation

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

10.1. Internal Standardisation

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

10.2. External Standardisation

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

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

11. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

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

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

12. Equality and Diversity

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

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- 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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The Workforce Development Trust

Skills for Health

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