



Competent Person in the Workplace (CPIW)

SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security and Preparedness

Qualification Specification

Ofqual Qualification Number: 610/7028/2

Qualifications Wales Number: C00/5349/6

Operational Start Date: 1 March 2026



NATIONAL
COUNTER TERRORISM
SECURITY OFFICE



COUNTER
TERRORISM
POLICING

ACT

ACTION
COUNTERS
TERRORISM

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Document Control

Revisions and Amendment Register

Date of Issue	Page No	Revision	Version
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1. Introduction

1.1. About SFJ Awards

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

SFJ Awards is an independent Awarding Organisation, regulated by the UK qualifications regulators, including Ofqual, CCEA, Qualifications Wales, and Qualifications Scotland Accreditation to assess, quality assure and certificate learners and employees, helping training providers and employers to continue developing a highly skilled workforce for the future. We are passionate about developing the workforce and improving lives across the protective services. We work in partnership with our sectors, innovate to deliver meaningful impact, treat people with respect, and act with integrity - holding ourselves accountable and doing the right thing. .

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. 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 specification¹ relates to the following qualification:

SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security and Preparedness

This qualification has been developed in collaboration with the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO). It has been designed with alignment to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025².

The objective of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding of the attack methods used by terrorists, how to assess the likelihood of such threats, and what mitigation strategies are available. They will also learn how to apply these strategies effectively. Additionally, they will recognise the limits of their own expertise and understand when and how to seek advice or support from specialist professionals.

2.2. Achieving compliance with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

This is the **only** qualification that has been developed with and endorsed by the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO). The qualification is supported by comprehensive materials that enable learners to understand terrorism threats and how they can reduce their likelihood and impact to their venue, site or organisation.

This qualification does **not** ensure compliance with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (also known as Martyn's Law). Compliance with the Act involves a range of factors and these cannot simply be achieved through completion of a qualification.

What the qualification **does** ensure is that the learner will develop a better understanding of Counter-Terrorism in preparation for implementation of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. It is applicable to staff from venues, sites and organisations that fall into both the standard and enhanced tiers under the Act.

2.3. 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.

¹ A more detailed qualification handbook is provided to approved centres in Odyssey.

² Achievement of this qualification does not mean that a venue, site or organisation is compliant with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

2.4. Qualification Structure

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

Qualification Title	TQT	GLH
SFJ Awards Level 3 Award in Counter-Terrorism Protective Security and Preparedness	90	41

To be awarded this qualification the learner must achieve **all 6** mandatory units as shown in the table(s) below.

Mandatory Units				
Unit Number	Odyssey Reference	Unit Title	Level	GLH
1	6833	Introduction to Counter-Terrorism	3	5
2	6834	Positive Organisational Security Culture	3	5
3	6835	Counter-Terrorism Protective Security	3	5
4	6836	Counter-Terrorism Preparedness	3	8
5	6837	Completing a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment and Preparedness Plan	3	12
6	6838	Completing a Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation	3	6

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

Successful completion of this qualification equips learners with the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress into, or within, roles that support the protection of people and places. Typical next steps include operational positions such as security officer/leader, venue or facilities supervisor, event safety steward/supervisor, and protective security adviser.

Learners may also progress to further study and professional development, for example Level 4–5 qualifications in protective security, risk management, security management, business continuity and emergency planning, or leadership and management.

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](#) or on request from SFJ Awards.

2.9. Supporting resources

Centres approved to deliver this qualification will have access to resources that provide everything needed to support delivery to learners. These resources have been developed in collaboration with NaCTSO. Resources include:

Resource	Designed for:	
	Tutor	Learner
e-Learning		X
Course Overview	X	
Lesson Plans	X	
Slides	X	X
Exemplar Materials	X	X
Assessment guidance	X	
Live Assessments	X	X

Any resources provided to you by SFJ Awards must not be copied, shared, reproduced, adapted, or distributed in any form. Any unauthorised use, copying, or distribution constitutes a breach of contract and an infringement of our intellectual property rights. In gaining approval for this qualification, you are confirming that your centre is fully complying with these obligations. Please note that we reserve all rights in respect of our materials and will take appropriate action where breaches are identified.

3. Qualification Units

Title	Introduction to Counter-Terrorism	
Level	3	
Unit Number	1	
GLH	5	
Unit Purpose	This unit introduces learners to the concept of terrorism, UK threat levels, and common attack types. It also outlines key counter-terrorism legislation and the importance of protecting public spaces, providing a foundation for understanding responsibilities in preventing and responding to terrorist threats.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know what terrorism is	1.1	Explain what terrorism is
	1.2	Explain what a threat level is
	1.3	Identify different UK threat levels
	1.4	Identify different terrorism attack types
2. Understand legislation relating to Counter-Terrorism	2.1	List key legislation that relates to Counter-Terrorism
	2.2	Identify different types of Venues, Sites and Organisations (VSOs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the scope of Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 • Out of the scope of Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

	2.3	Explain motivations to protect Venues, Sites and Organisations (VSOs) against acts of terrorism
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Title	Positive Organisational Security Culture	
Level	3	
Unit Number	2	
GLH	5	
Unit Purpose	This unit introduces the principles of a positive organisational security culture, including its key components, benefits, and barriers. Learners will explore how leadership, staff involvement, and structured management processes contribute to building and sustaining a strong security culture.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know the benefits of and barriers to a positive security culture	1.1	Identify the key components of an effective security culture
	1.2	List the benefits of a positive security culture
	1.3	Identify barriers to creating a positive security culture
2. Understand the key features and management processes that support a positive security culture	2.1	Outline key features of a positive security culture
	2.2	Explain the management process within a positive security culture

Title	Counter-Terrorism Protective Security	
Level	3	
Unit Number	3	
GLH	5	
Unit Purpose	This unit introduces learners to crime prevention and protective security principles, including identifying threats such as hostile reconnaissance and insider risks. Learners will explore layered protective measures and the JASPAR principles to help reduce vulnerabilities and enhance organisational resilience.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand Crime Prevention measures	1.1	Identify the principles of Crime Prevention
	1.2	Define Hostile Reconnaissance and associated behaviours
	1.3	Define Insider Threats
	1.4	Define Social Media Auditors
2. Understand the principles and categories of Protective Security measures	2.1	Describe the principles of Protective Security
	2.2	Identify the categories of Protective Security measures and associated thematics
	2.3	Identify the JASPAR principles

Title	Counter-Terrorism Preparedness	
Level	3	
Unit Number	4	
GLH	8	
Unit Purpose	This unit equips learners with the knowledge and skills to develop, implement, and maintain effective Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plans. It covers key preparedness stages, emergency procedures, communication strategies, staff training, and post-incident planning to enhance organisational resilience against terrorist threats.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know what a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan is	1.1	Explain the concept of Counter-Terrorism Preparedness
	1.2	Identify the phases of a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan
	1.3	Outline considerations for a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan
	1.4	Define the terms in relation to a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train • Exercise • Validate
2. Understand the different components of a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan	2.1	Summarise the difference between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation • Invacuation

		Lockdown
	2.2	<p>Explain appropriate ways of communicating to different groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Contractors • Stakeholders (neighbours) • Visitors • Emergency Services
	2.3	Describe how to respond to suspicious items or behaviour
	2.4	Explain what must be included in a Counter-Terrorism First Aid Plan
	2.5	Describe how organisations should ensure all employees are appropriately trained and aware of policies and procedures
	2.6	Explain the impact of a change in Threat Level on a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan
	2.7	Outline Counter-Terrorism Post Incident planning
	2.8	Outline the importance of Counter-Terrorism documentation
	2.9	Explain the process when completing Counter-Terrorism documentation

Title	Completing a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment and Preparedness Plan	
Level	3	
Unit Number	5	
GLH	12	
Unit Purpose	This unit enables learners to develop a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment and Preparedness Plan. It covers key terms, Risk Assessment steps, treatment options, and control measures, enabling learners to identify, evaluate, and mitigate terrorism-related risks within an organisational context.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know the key elements of the Counter-Terrorism Risk Management Process	1.1	Define the following terms in relation to a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat • Vulnerability • Impact • Risk
	1.2	Describe the five steps of carrying out a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment
	1.3	Identify the key risk impacts to an organisation
	1.4	Identify the different levels of success likelihood in relation to terrorism
	1.5	Explain what a risk treatment is and any control options
	1.6	Summarise control options in relation to a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active
2. Be able to complete a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment	2.1	Identify Existing Controls
	2.2	Complete an Impact Scoring Card
	2.3	Produce a Risk Treatment Plan
	2.4	Complete a Counter-Terrorism Risk Assessment
3. Be able to complete a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan	3.1	Produce a Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Plan

Title	Completing a Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation	
Level	3	
Unit Number	6	
GLH	6	
Unit Purpose	This unit guides learners in producing a structured, evidence-based Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation. It includes identifying risks, proposing solutions, justifying actions using moral, legal, and financial arguments, and outlining implementation strategies with leadership support.	
Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know how to complete a Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation	1.1	Explain the importance of having Leadership Support
	1.2	Identify arguments that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral • Legal • Financial
2. Be able to complete a Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation	2.1	Produce a Counter-Terrorism Written Recommendation

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.

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
- details of delivery plans

4.2. Developing Assessments

Centres are **not** permitted to develop assessments for this qualification.

5. Assessment

5.1. Qualification Assessment Methods

The assessment methods for this qualification are set by SFJ Awards, these consist of:

- Multiple Choice Examination
- Written Assignment
- Professional Discussion

SFJ Awards sets the assessment for each of the assessment methods above and these are delivered by approved centres and must be delivered in the order listed.

Centres must carry out assessment and quality assurance activity for their learners. SFJ Awards will Externally Quality Assure centre delivery.

6. Trainer / Assessor Requirements

6.1. Occupational Knowledge and Competence

Trainers / 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 about current working practices and technologies within the area of work.

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

6.3. Trainer / Assessor Competence

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

- be qualified with a recognised trainer and assessor qualification, or working towards a recognised qualification³ or relevant experience
- have appropriate Counter-Terrorism (CT) experience in relation to CT Protective Security, CT Preparedness and CT Risk Assessing⁴

However, there may be circumstances when trainers or 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).

³ Trainee assessors working towards a qualification must be registered for the qualification with a regulated AO and achieve it within **12 months**. Assessor competence will be checked through annual External Quality Assurance checks.

⁴ Should further subject matter expertise be required there may be an opportunity to join a subject specific training course delivered by NaCTSO within a limited time period.

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.

7.2. Qualification Knowledge

IQAs must understand the content, structure and assessment requirements for the qualification(s) they are internally 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 qualification⁵
- have appropriate Counter-Terrorism (CT) experience in relation to CT Protective Security, CT Preparedness and CT Risk Assessing⁶

⁵ 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.

⁶ Should further subject matter expertise be required there may be an opportunity to join a subject specific training course delivered by NaCTSO within a limited time period.

8. Standardisation

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

8.1. 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.

8.2. 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 Centre guidance for Internal Assessment and Quality Assurance and the SFJ Awards [Standardisation Policy](#).

9. 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](#).

10. 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 [Fair Access and 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.

11. 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.

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**The
Workforce
Development
Trust**

