



# **Semta**

## **Business - Improvement Techniques (B-IT)**

### **NVQ Level 2, 3 and 4**

## **QCF Unit Assessment Strategy**

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## QCF UNIT ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

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## QCF UNIT ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

### Introduction

[Semta], the Sector Skills Council for the Science Engineering Manufacturing Technologies Sector, has produced this QCF Unit Assessment Strategy to:

- assist those undertaking assessment, internal and external quality assurance of occupational competence
- encourage and promote consistent assessment of B-IT NVQ units
- promote cost effective assessment plans

This document also provides definitions for:

- the scope of activities and the characteristics of typical learners undertaking B-IT NVQ units at level 2, 3 and 4
- the qualifications and experience required for Assessors and Verifiers
- the assessment environment and notes on simulation/replication
- access to units

and requirements relating to:

- carrying out assessments
- performance evidence
- assessing knowledge and understanding

The importance and value in which employers and learners place on undertaking B-IT NVQ units will provide a key measure of [Semta's] success with this unit assessment strategy. Another key success factor will be [Semta's] partnership with the relevant Awarding Bodies/Organisations

## **QCF UNIT ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

### **Learners Undertaking Level 2, 3 and 4 QCF NVQ Units**

The Business-Improvement Techniques NVQ units at Level 2 have been designed for those learners who are making a contribution to the identification and implementation of business improvements such as:

- employees involved in business improvement within a team who wish to have their business improvement competencies assessed for certification purposes
- new employees who have undertaken business improvement training and are now acquiring experience within a team and wish to demonstrate their competencies for assessment purposes

The Business-Improvement Techniques NVQ units at Level 3 have been designed for those learners who will be applying business improvement activities where they are:

- employed as supervisors, team leaders or facilitators and are responsible for carrying out business improvement activities
- people who through Continuous Professional Development are being prepared to take on staff responsibilities in a Business Improvement environment

The Business-Improvement Techniques NVQ units at Level 4 have been designed for those learners who will be leading/managing business improvement projects and where applicable carrying out business improvement activities where they are:

- employed as managers, supervisors, team leaders or facilitators that have overall responsibility for leading/managing business improvement projects
- people who through Continuous Professional Development are being prepared to take on staff and project management responsibilities in a Business Improvement environment

## **QCF UNIT ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

### **Assessor Requirements to Demonstrate Effective Assessment Practice**

Assessment must be carried out by competent Assessors that as a minimum must hold the QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment. Current and operational Assessors that hold units D32 and/or D33 or A1 and/or A2 as appropriate to the assessment being carried out, will not be required to achieve the QCF Level 3 Award as they are still appropriate for the assessment requirements set out in this Unit Assessment Strategy. However, they will be expected to regularly review their skills, knowledge and understanding and where applicable undertake continuing professional development to ensure that they are carrying out workplace assessment to the most up to date National Occupational Standards (NOS).

### **Assessor Technical Requirements**

Assessors must be able to demonstrate that they have verifiable, relevant and sufficient technical competence to evaluate and judge performance and knowledge evidence requirements as set out in the B-IT QCF unit learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria. This will be demonstrated either by holding a relevant technical qualification or by proven industrial experience of the technical areas to be assessed. The assessor's competence must, at the very least, be at the same level as that required of the learner(s) in the units being assessed.

Assessors must also be:

Fully conversant with the Awarding Body/Organisation assessment recording documentation used for the B-IT NVQ units against which the assessments and verification are to be carried out and other relevant Awarding Body's/Organisation's documentation and system and procedures to support the Quality Assurance process.

### **Internal and External Quality Assurance Roles (formally Internal and External Verification)**

Internal quality assurance (Internal Verification) must be carried out by competent persons that as a minimum must hold the QCF Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practices. Current and operational Internal Verifiers that hold internal verification units V1 or D34 will not be required to achieve the QCF Level 4 Award as they are still appropriate for the verification requirements set out in this Unit Assessment Strategy. Verifiers must be familiar with, and preferably hold, either the nationally recognised Assessor units D32 and/or D33 or A1 and/or A2 or the QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment.

External quality assurance (External Verification) must be carried out by competent persons that as a minimum must hold the QCF Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practices. Current and operational External Verifiers that hold external verification units V2 or D35 will not be required to achieve the QCF Level 4 Award as they are still appropriate for the verification requirements set out in this Unit Assessment Strategy. Verifiers must be familiar with, and preferably hold, either the nationally recognised Assessor units D32 and/or D33 or A1 and/or A2 or the QCF Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment.

Persons carrying out the role of Internal or External Quality Assurance will be expected to regularly review their skills, knowledge and understanding and where applicable undertake continuing professional development to ensure that they are carrying out workplace Quality Assurance (verification) of Assessment Processes and Practices to the most up to date National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Persons carrying out the role of Internal or External Quality Assurance, will also be expected to be fully conversant with the terminology used in the QCF NVQ units against which the assessments and verification are to be carried out, the appropriate Regulatory Body's systems and procedures and the relevant Awarding Organisation's documentation, systems and procedures within which the assessment and verification is taking place.

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### Specific technical requirements for persons undertaking the role of Internal or External Quality Assurance

Persons undertaking the role of Internal or External Quality Assurance of the B-IT NVQ qualification or individual units must be able to demonstrate that they have verifiable, sufficient and relevant business experience in the occupational area, and must have a working knowledge of the processes, techniques and procedures that are being used where the business improvement has been implemented.

The tables below shows the recommended levels of technical competence for Assessors and those undertaking Internal and External Quality Assurance;

#### Technical Requirements for Assessors and Verifiers

Role	Prime activity requirements	Support activity requirements	Technical requirements (see notes)
Assessment	Assessment of Occupational Competence	Quality Assurance Systems	Technical <i>competence</i> in the areas covered by the QCF units being assessed
Internal Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance	Assessment Knowledge	Technical <i>understanding</i> of the areas covered by the qualifications
External Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance	Assessment Understanding	Technical <i>awareness</i> of the areas covered by the qualifications

#### Notes

1. Technical *competence* is defined here as a combination of practical skills, knowledge, and the ability to apply both of these, in familiar and new situations, within a real working environment
2. Technical *understanding* is defined here as having a good understanding of the technical activities being assessed, together with knowledge of relevant Health & Safety implications and requirements of the assessments
3. Technical *awareness* is defined here as a general overview of the subject area, sufficient to ensure that assessment and portfolio evidence are reliable, and that relevant Health and Safety requirements have been complied with
4. The competence required by persons undertaking assessment, internal and external quality assurance, in the occupational area being assessed, is likely to exist at three levels as indicated by the shaded zones in the following table;

Technical Competence Job Role:	An ability to <i>discuss</i> the general principles of the competences being assessed	An ability to <i>describe</i> the practical aspects of the competence being assessed	An ability to <i>demonstrate</i> the practical competences being assessed
Assessment			
Internal Quality Assurance			
External Quality Assurance			

## QCF UNIT ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

### Assessment Environment

The evidence put forward by the learner B-IT NVQ units can only be regarded valid, reliable, sufficient and authentic if demonstrated in a real working environment, where work activities or work outcomes assessed are the learners own work/contribution and provides evidence of improvements to the business e.g. Quality, Cost and Delivery, etc. As with all aspects of assessment, assessors must obtain agreement with internal and/or external verifiers before assessing any learners and determine what constitutes acceptable performance evidence.

Assessment using **Simulation or replication** of the working environment is **only** acceptable in the following unit;

Unit: 1: Complying with Statutory Regulations and Organisational Safety Requirements  
Assessment Criteria 1.5 in relation to;

- Following organisational procedures in the event of fire and the evacuation of premises

Assessment Criteria 1.8 in relation to;

- Use correct manual lifting and carrying techniques

Performance Evidence must be the main form of evidence gathered to prove learner competence and **MUST** come from the working environment.

Simulation of any form will **ONLY** be regarded as a means for providing Underpinning Knowledge for B-IT qualifications apart for the area identified in Unit 1.

### Access to Assessment

There are no entry qualifications or age limits required by learners to undertake the B-IT NVQ units unless this is a legal requirement of the process or the environment. Assessment is open to any learner who has the potential to achieve the assessment criteria set out in the units.

Aids or appliances, which are designed to alleviate disability, may be used during assessment, providing they do not compromise the standard required.

### Carrying Out Assessment

The B-IT NVQ units were specifically developed to cover a wide range of activities. The evidence produced for the units will, therefore, depend on the learners choice of "bulleted items" listed in the unit assessment criteria.

Where the assessment criteria gives a choice of bulleted items (for example 'any three from five'), assessors should note that learners do not need to provide evidence of the other items to complete the unit (in this example, two) items, particularly where these additional items may relate to other activities or methods that are not part of the learners normal workplace activity or area of expertise.

### Assessment of Individual NVQ Units

It should be noted that whilst unit certification is acceptable, it is unlikely that the achievement of individual units will lead to the implementation of sustainable business improvements in quality, cost and delivery targets.

Due to the nature of the B-IT units and their direct relationship to overall business performance, Semta recommends that: the achievement of groups of units such as the qualification and pathway mandatory units set out in the relevant QCF NVQ Level 2, 3 and 4 Rules of Combination, would as a minimum provide evidence to support sustainable improvement activities within organisations.

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### **Minimum Performance Evidence Requirements**

Performance evidence must be the main form of evidence gathered. In order to demonstrate consistent competent performance for a unit, a minimum of three different examples of performance of the unit activity will be required. Items of performance evidence often contain features that apply to more than one unit, and can be used as evidence in any unit where they are suitable.

#### **Performance evidence must be:**

- products of the learners' work, such as items that have been produced or worked on, plans, charts, reports, standard operating procedures, documents produced as part of a work activity, records or photographs of the completed activity

together with:

- evidence of the way the learners carried out the activities, such as witness testimonies, assessor observations or authenticated learner reports of the activity undertaken

Competent performance is more than just carrying out a series of individual set tasks. Many of the units contain statements that require the learner to provide evidence that proves they are capable of combining various features and techniques. Where this is the case, separate fragments of evidence would not provide this combination of various features and techniques and, therefore, will not be acceptable as demonstrating competent performance.

If there is any doubt as to what constitutes suitable evidence the person responsible for internal and/or external quality assurance should be consulted.

### **Assessing knowledge and understanding**

Knowledge and understanding are key components of competent performance, but it is unlikely that performance evidence alone will provide enough evidence in this area. Where the learner's knowledge and understanding (and the handling of contingency situations) is not apparent from performance evidence, it must be assessed by other means and be supported by suitable evidence.

Knowledge and understanding can be demonstrated in a number of different ways. Semta expects oral questioning and practical demonstrations to be used, as these are considered the most appropriate for this qualification. Assessors should ask enough questions to make sure that the learner has an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding, as required by the unit. Awarding Bodies/Organisations may choose other methods, which must be supported by a suitable rationale.

### **Witness testimony**

Where observation is used to obtain performance evidence, this must be carried out against the unit assessment criteria. Best practice would require that such observation is carried out by a qualified Assessor. If this is not practicable, then alternative sources of evidence may be used.

For example, the observation may be carried out against the assessment criteria by someone else that is in close contact with the learner. This could be a team leader, supervisor, mentor or line manager who may be regarded as a suitable witness to the learner's competency. However, the witness must be technically competent in the process or skills that they are providing testimony for, to at least the same level of expertise as that required of the learner. It will be the responsibility of the assessor to make sure that any witness testimonies accepted as evidence of the learner's competency are reliable, auditable and technically valid.

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**Note:**

a) It is recognised that some Awarding Organisations/Bodies provide supplementary guidance and documentation to centre's to support the quality of assessment and verification practice of N/SVQs.

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