

NVQ Consultancy Services



Developing people is our business

Guidance and Advice for the Assessment of Fire Service NVQs

A resource to provide help and advice for
those who are responsible for assessing:
**Operations in the Community
NVQ Level 3**



NVQ Consultancy Services working with the Fire Service

NVQ Consultancy Services Ltd has extensive knowledge and experience of working with public sector organisations. We have been supporting development initiatives with the local Fire Services since 1998.

Our directors and associates draw on a depth of expertise and professional knowledge to advise on the broad range of training, development and accreditation possibilities that exist for Fire Service Personnel currently. Our extensive experience in this area makes us uniquely placed to be able to support senior officers make informed decisions on strategic direction for learning and development. We are fully aware of the need for such decisions to meet local context requirements as well as the needs of IPDS and other national initiatives.

Currently one of our consultants is working with Wiltshire Fire Brigade, supporting the staff to set up an NVQ centre and deliver the Fire service NVQs. We have undertaken a programme of development and accreditation for staff to become A1 assessor qualified, and support the team of verifiers to ensure the quality of the NVQ programmes.

We have worked with senior managers in Dorset Fire and Rescue Services, on various projects, including the development of a unique leadership and command module. We have been successful in delivering senior management level NVQs, in training and accrediting assessors to A1 standard, and in the development of staff to undertake the increasingly important role of training within the service.

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Members of Wiltshire Fire Brigade and Dorset Fire & Rescue Service have been patient and generous in taking time to explain their understanding of IPDS with us.

It was while we were working with the Wiltshire Fire Brigade assessment team that the idea of developing the guidance notes first came about. Wiltshire has been involved in piloting the guidance notes and their positive response encouraged us to develop the full package.

We must also acknowledge the wealth of information available in the national occupational standards (NOS) and the Evidence Profiles produced by EdExcel.

Lynn Willmott
Jane James

Directors, NVQ Consultancy Services Ltd

Further publications

This book of '*Assessment Guidance Notes*', is the first in a series aimed at supporting assessors who have a responsibility for assessing the performance of their teams.

NVQ Consultancy Services aims to produce further publications to support:

- Control Operations Level 3
- Watch Management level 3



This guide to the assessment of the national occupational standards (NOS) has been designed to enable you to undertake the role of the assessor with confidence.

It will help you plan for assessments more effectively and provide some practical advice on the most suitable and effective methods of assessment.

I trust that this publication will support you as an assessor, and improve the quality of assessment practice. This will be of benefit to all involved in the assessment of performance in your Service.

Most importantly, this guide will enable you to ensure that individual development needs are being identified, and the information used to determine future development activities.

I strongly recommend that you now read the introduction to the book. It will help you understand how to use this resource to best effect.

Lynn Willmott

Lynn Willmott,
Director
NVQ Consultancy Services

Who is this guide for?

These guidance notes have been aimed at people involved in the assessment of performance against the national occupational standards (NOS).

National initiatives such as the introduction of Integrated Personal Development Systems (IPDS) and National Vocational qualifications (NVQs) have seen team leaders and managers improving their assessment practice and performance management skills.

This book has been produced to provide a common understanding of the requirements of the standards and support a consistency of approach to assessments.

The publication can be used for the assessment of NVQ 3 Operations in the Community or for IPDS purposes.

We have tried to bring together all the information available from the standards, the Common Evidence Profiles and the experience of people who have been working with the standards for some time.

We have talked to external verifiers and ensured that the guidance supports 'best practice methodology' by using a variety of sources of evidence that will occur naturally in the workplace, including the use of direct observation.

Read this before you start

As the name of this book suggests, the suggestions for assessment of each unit are for **guidance only**. **They are not prescriptive**. The candidate may suggest other types of evidence that could provide proof of his/her competence.

Identify evidence of prior achievement first.

Assessors should in the first instance always look for any evidence that already exists of the candidate's competence.

Involve the candidate in his/her own development.

The candidate needs to be involved at all times in his/her development and that includes planning the assessment. The guidance notes are to help you and the candidate in the planning process.

Judging the outcomes of the assessment.

To ensure sufficiency of evidence, we have mapped the evidence suggested to the standards, context and knowledge requirement of each unit. This has been based on the performance evidence meeting these standards. *Your candidates may or may not reach the same standard.*

Judge for yourself.

Always base your decision on the evidence the candidate **actually does or can produce**, then judge the evidence against the standards yourself to ensure you are making valid, and reliable judgments of the candidates competence. Just because he/she carries out the task, does not mean he/she is doing it 'to standard'.

Be able to justify your decision.

Be aware that during the internal and external verification process you may have to justify your decision.

We hope that by using the guidance, you and your candidates can quickly identify suitable evidence, and plan effectively for the assessment of the units. In doing so, a higher degree of consistency in assessment can take place throughout the Service.

Notes:

SAMPLE

FF 1 Inform and educate your community to improve awareness of safety matters

About this unit

This unit is mostly about the community fire safety work carried out on station and out in the community.

It has 2 elements

FF1.1 - which mainly covers promoting fire safety through events

FF1.2 - which covers giving instruction and advice to people on fire safety matters

Candidate - to demonstrate your competence, you must ensure that:

Unit FF1 - Element 1 Promote safety matters to inform your community

- a. you confirm any need for any information and the response that you will make with relevant people;
- b. your actions when responding to the identified needs support organisational objectives;
- c. your contact with people is positive, supportive, constructive and timely;
- d. you provide information which is relevant, accurate, within your own limits of authority;
- e. you provide information in a format which meets the needs of your community;
- f. you confirm with relevant people a common understanding for each communication;
- g. when information required is not within your remit you direct enquirer to the relevant person;
- h. your actions to support community safety avoid harm to yourself, others and the environment;
- i. your records are in the agreed format, accurate, complete, legible and accessible to all authorised people;
- j. you report on the suitability, success and possible improvements to promotional activities on completion.

Unit FF1 - Element 2 Promote safety matters to inform your community

- a. you apply control measures, based on risk assessment, prior to commencement and during the event;
- b. you resolve any difficulties and risks occurring during the event with the relevant degree of urgency;
- c. your contact with people promotes understanding, goodwill, co-operation and enhances the image of yourself and your organisation;
- d. your aims and objectives for activities meet identified needs and support the goals and objectives of your organisation;
- e. you communicate at a pace, level, manner and with terminology which is suitable for your audience;
- f. you welcome and acknowledge questions and provide appropriate responses;
- g. you report on the suitability, success and possible improvements on completion;
- h. you return and secure resources to their correct location and report defects and deficiencies;
- i. your records are in the agreed format, accurate, complete, legible and accessible to authorised users.

The scope of this unit covers working in the following circumstances:

- a. responding to direct requests for safety information;
- b. leaflet drops;
- c. station based events - open days, scout /guide visits etc;
- d. events in the community - school visits, WI talks, fetes, shows etc;
- e. working unsupervised;
- f. working as a member of a team;
- g. learning events covering fire safety, first-aid, firefighting, calling the fire service, fire survival and escape, role of the fire service.

Understanding of roles and responsibilities:

The candidate must show that he/she knows and understands:

Health and Safety

- U17 Hazards and risks of the workplace affecting people and the environment
- U10 How to make and apply decisions based on the assessment of risk
- U3 How to apply practices that maximise the health, safety and welfare of yourself and others in the workplace

Organisational

- Q25 National and organizational objectives for Community Safety
- Q23 Sources and availability of information
- Q22 Record systems and their use

Personal and Interpersonal

- R5 How to communicate clearly and effectively with the range of people involved
- R35 How to treat colleagues and members of the public with respect and consideration, taking account of and accepting diversity
- R51 Roles, responsibilities and limits of authority of yourself, others and other agencies

Technical

- T97 How to identify and provide appropriate safety advice
- T98 Your community and its needs

Training and Development

- S13 How to facilitate learning
- S3 How to evaluate learning events

Remember

Simulation is not acceptable for this unit; evidence must be the result of tasks carried out as part of the candidate's day-to-day activities.

Unit FF1 - Assessment Guidance Note

The following ideas for assessment are in line with the evidence profiles produced by Edexcel. The assessor should take into consideration any APL the candidate may wish to produce, the candidates circumstances and preferred method of assessment. At all times the planning of the evidence should be a two-way process between the candidate and the assessor.

It is recommended that the following pieces of evidence will need to be produced and assessed in order for competence in this unit to be demonstrated.

Evidence	The evidence MAY cover the following performance criteria	The evidence MAY cover the following knowledge	The evidence MAY cover the following Scope or Context
<p>1. Observation reports by the assessor of the candidate's involvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One on-station event, working as part of a team to promote community safety (i.e. open days, scout or guide visits etc). One on station event, working individually to deliver community safety instruction (i.e. instructing a group in fire safety, first-aid fire fighting, calling the fire service, fire survival and escape, the role of the fire service. These can be the same event providing promoting community safety and giving instruction are both covered. 	<p>FF1.1 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h</p> <p>FF1.2 a, b, c, d, e, f, h</p>	<p>U17, 3, 10 Q25, 23 R5, 35, 33, 31 T97, 98</p> <p>U17, 3, 10 Q25, 23 R5, 35, 33, 31 T97, 98 S3, 13</p>	<p>c, f</p> <p>g, e</p>
<p>2. One witness testimony from the candidate's supervisor, or experienced colleague, observing the candidate's involvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One off station event promoting community safety (i.e. leaflet drop, school visit, WI talks, fetes, shows) One off station community safety learning event (i.e. training a group in fire safety, first-aid fire fighting, calling the fire service, fire survival and escape, the role of the fire service). These can be the same event providing promoting community safety and giving instruction are both covered. 	<p>FF1.1 a, b, c, d, e, f, h</p> <p>FF1.2 a, b, c, d, e, f, h</p>	<p>U17, 3, 10 Q25, 23 R5, 35, 33, 31 T97, 98</p> <p>U17, 3, 10 Q25, 23 R5, 35, 33, 31 T97, 98 S3,13</p>	<p>b, d</p> <p>g</p>
<p>3. A testimony from the candidate's supervisor of the candidate's competence when responding to direct requests for safety information (must be different events from the above).</p>	<p>FF1 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h</p>	<p>R5, 35, 33, 31</p>	<p>a</p>
<p>4. A document produced by the candidate to show that he/she has properly recorded the community safety events.</p>	<p>FF1 - i FF1.2 - i</p>	<p>Q22</p>	<p>all</p>
<p>5. A candidate's own written account that covers what he/she would do if they identify an opportunity to improve the way safety promotional or learning events that he/she has been involved in can be delivered.</p>	<p>FF1.1 - j FF1.2 - g</p>	<p>R5, 33, 31</p>	<p>all</p>
<p>6. An attendance record, supported by a supervisor's testimony confirming consistent performance over a three month period.</p>	<p>all</p>	<p>all</p>	<p>all</p>

NVQ Consultancy Services

NVQ Consultancy Services is an experienced company providing focused and effective development opportunities for individual learning and achievement, and organisational transformation.

Consultancy

NVQ Consultancy Services can provide advice and support for a variety of HR development initiatives:

- Management and leadership development
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- Facilitation
- Developing in-house assessment and accreditation centres.

Professional vocational qualifications

NVQ Consultancy Services is an approved NVQ Centre offering learning and development opportunities leading to nationally recognised qualifications:

- Management NVQ Level 3-5
- Certificate in Management Studies
- Learning and Development NVQ level 3-5
- Teaching Assistants NVQ Levels 2 -3
- Sport and Recreation level 2-3
- Exercise and Fitness Level 2 including Pilates Module
- Assessor and Verifier Awards.

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NVQ Level 3 Fire Service Operations in the Community

