

National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support

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PC 63	Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates
PC 64	Support the control of project scope changes

Unit: PC 52 – Follow quality assurance procedures in carrying out project control activities

Unit Commentary

This Unit is concerned with the competence required to apply quality assurance procedures to your project control support activities. It requires the responsibilities of individual practitioners to be defined and the support, auditing and reporting systems to be in place.

A practitioner would be able to support colleagues in implementing a culture of quality in executing the project control function, using the established QA system and procedures.

You must be able to:

- a) Gather, process and record information and data in accordance with the quality assurance procedures specified for the execution of your role.
- b) Assess your own activity outcomes and performance against the requirements of the project procedures.
- c) Identify non-conformances of which you become aware and advise those in a position of authority to organise corrective action.
- d) Produce and maintain records of your own activities that meet the requirements of the quality system.

Scope:

1. Quality assurance procedures

- Company
- Project specific

2. Non – conformances in

- Activity outcomes
- Information and data
- Process operations

3. Quality audits (2 out of 3)

- During project implementation
- Carried out by internal specialists
- Carried out by external bodies

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Quality assurance procedures applicable to your role, to the project and to the organisation as a whole.
2. An appreciation of the quality assurance accreditations held by your own organisation and their purpose.
3. Sources of information on quality assurance including the codes, standards and techniques used by your own organisation.
4. How to modify an existing procedure.

Unit: PC 53 – Obtain and organise information for project control

Unit Commentary

The effective and efficient obtaining and organising of information is key to the successful control of projects and to improving project control operations.. This unit defines the competence required for obtaining and organising project control information.

You must be able to:

- a) Identify the information needed to carry out your day to day project control functions.
- b) Identify the information needed to make specified improvements in project control operations.
- c) Establish that the sources of information are sufficiently reliable to meet current and likely future requirements.
- d) Obtain, record and classify information making effective use of available resources.
- e) Confirm the accuracy, relevance and sufficiency of the information obtained for project purposes.
- f) Take action to deal with situations where the information is not suitable for the purposes for which it is required by referring the matter to those with the authority to initiate corrective actions.

Scope:

1. Sources of information (at least 3 of the following)

- Colleagues within your own organisation
- People in client or other external organisations
- Performance monitoring data
- Resource acquisition and usage data
- Planned and actual progress data

2. Types of information

- Qualitative
- Quantitative
- Contained in text
- Numerical or descriptive data
- Graphical data

3. Methods of obtaining information

- Interrogation of people
- Interrogation of systems holding data
- Review of numerical or descriptive texts

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. An appreciation of how to assess the accuracy, relevance and sufficiency of the information required for project control purposes and who to consult.
2. An appreciation of the importance of effective project control information management and information currency.
3. The sources of project control information available and how its validity and integrity can be confirmed.

4. Uses of day-to-day project control information and data.
5. Uses of feed back data gathered for the purposes of making project control operational improvements.

Unit: PC 54 – Process project control data using information technology (IT)

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence required to process project control data using an specified range of IT systems.

The processing of data includes:-

- the collection and processing of commercial and technical data
- reporting project status

Using IT as a tool has become an essential feature of project control activities. Practitioners need to have the necessary IT skills to play their part in supporting the project control function.

You must be able to:

- a) Enter, process and extract information and data using the IT systems established for the execution of the project.
- b) Handle, edit and format information and data provided from a range of sources.
- c) Produce outputs and information in the formats required by the project.
- d) Develop your own skills so that you are able to apply the range of IT systems determined by the needs of the project.
- e) Implement the specified security measures to protect the confidentiality and integrity of project control data held in the IT systems with which you are working.

Scope:

1. Software and IT systems

- Spreadsheets
- Databases
- Word processing
- Presentation
- Proprietary
- Bespoke

2. Range of sources

- Other IT systems
- Manually created
- From within your own organisation
- From other organisations

3. Security measures

- Access rights to input
- Access rights to outputs
- Passwords
- Back-up of information and data
- Recovery plans

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Procedures and work instructions that must be followed in using the IT systems.
2. An appreciation of the attributes of the specified IT systems.
3. Sources and flow paths for the project control information and data.
4. Uses to which the results of the use of IT are put.
5. Security systems and data protection measures in use.
6. Methods of entering and processing information and data.
7. Methods of extracting and formatting information and data.

Unit: PC55 – Prepare documents for the execution of project control activities

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence required to produce a range of project control documents such as memoranda, emails and reports. The competencies include the preparation of documents that are factually accurate and in which the spelling, grammar and punctuation are correct and in which the layout of text, tables and graphics effectively conveys the information to be communicated.

You must be able to:

- a) Prepare documents in accordance with the required layout, content, project conventions and organisation 'house style'.
- b) Prepare and issue documents within agreed project deadlines.
- c) Prepare correspondence and text in which the content and language effectively conveys the meaning and information intended.
- d) Adhere to the project and organisation's procedures and practices for security, confidentiality and distribution of documents.
- e) Check documents for accuracy and completeness and make corrections when necessary.

Scope:

1. Documents

- Reports
- Memoranda, letters and emails
- Lists, tables and schedules
- Project records

2. Content

- Text
- Tables
- Graphics
- Diagrams
- Numerical data

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Effective use of language, graphics, diagrams and numerical data.
2. Security, confidentiality and distribution of documents.
3. Project document conventions and 'house style'.
4. Collation, reproduction and version control of documents.

Unit: PC 56 – Plan and organise your assigned project control tasks

Unit Commentary

This unit defines the planning and organisational competence required to be able to plan and organise a set of assigned project control tasks in order to provide effective support to the project control function.

You must be able to:

- a) Identify and prioritise routine project control tasks to meet the needs of the project.
- b) Select and apply the appropriate planning and scheduling aids to help you manage the routine tasks.
- c) Adapt your plans and schedules when priorities change and, where necessary, seek authority for changing agreed work sequences and delivery dates.
- d) Anticipate problems in meeting deadlines.
- e) Identify and use sources of help and support when needed to meet specific demands and deadlines.
- f) Ensure that all your project control tasks are finalised with data, results and records archived and stored in accordance with project and the organisation's procedures and practices.

Scope:

1. Planning and scheduling aids (in computerised or manual form) (3 out of 4)

- Diaries and organisers
- Plans and schedules
- Action plans
- Punch lists

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. The work scope and responsibilities in support of the project control activities.
2. Attributes of the various techniques that can be used to plan and organise a personal work schedule.
3. An appreciation of the importance of time management.

Unit: PC 57 – Implement a personal project control competence development plan

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence required to implement a personal plan to enhance project control skills, knowledge and competence. The process is a continuous one and involves:-

- Self assessment and assessment by others of current competencies.
- Understanding the skills and knowledge needed to perform effectively in the project control support role.
- Carrying out the necessary project control skills and knowledge enhancement to meet the needs of the organisation.

You must be able to:

- a) Use opportunities from within the working environment that provide bases for planned project control skills and knowledge enhancement.
- b) Respond to functional and human resources management requirements to carry out appropriate off and on-site taught project control knowledge acquisition necessary to meet the needs of the organisation.
- c) Keep your own personal records of your competence, knowledge and skills enhancement to support reviews of your progress and achievement.

Scope:

1. Opportunities may include (3 out of 6)

- Self study of relevant material
- Training on and off site
- Guidance from colleagues
- Assessed vocational programmes leading to formal qualifications
- Taught courses
- Professional bodies

2. Skills and knowledge enhancement (3 out of 5)

- Project control technical skills
- Inter-personal skills
- Project control knowledge, including information sources
- Formal academic and vocational programmes
- Understanding of the organisation's processes for delivering projects

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Opportunities within the organisation for competence development.
2. Sources of advice and information relevant to meeting learning needs.
3. Training policies used by the organisation.

Unit: PC 58 – Work to the organisation’s procedures and practices relating to ethical and behavioural issues

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence to work within a framework of laid down rules, guidelines and procedures defining the way in which the organisation deals with ethical, behavioural, confidentiality and personnel issues. The objectives of actions are to contribute to the maintenance of the integrity and standing of the organisation with its employees, business associates and customers.

You must be able to:

- a) Understand and follow the laid down rules, guidelines and procedures.
- b) Identify situations likely to give rise to breaches of the laid down rules, guidelines and procedures and refer them to those with the authority for dealing with the issues.

Scope:

1. Rules, guidelines and procedures for (5 out of 8)

- Commercial confidentiality
- Matters relating to company security
- Grievance and discipline matters
- Handling of personal information
- Data protection
- Equal opportunities
- Freedom from discrimination
- Health, safety and environmental protection

2. Those with authority include (2 out of 3)

- Line and function management
- Project management
- Human resources management

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. The organisation’s rules, procedures and guidelines for the matters listed in Scope item 1.
2. An appreciation of what constitutes a duty of care.
3. Where you can get guidance and advice from within your organisation in the event of uncertainty on questions of ethics and values.
4. Health and safety regulations codes and practices applicable to your organisation and its business operations.

Unit: PC 59 – Support the preparation of project resource estimates and plans

Unit Commentary

This unit is about the competence to support and assist with the key project control functions of estimating resources and developing the plans for the acquisition and use of those resources.

You must be able to:

- a) Work with the methods specified for estimating resources and preparing plans.
- b) Obtain clarification from the appropriate people when methods and instructions are incomplete or unclear.
- c) Prepare estimates and plans with the required level of accuracy and content.
- d) Identify and record the assumptions made in developing the estimates and plans.
- e) Record any necessary allowances made for uncertainties.
- f) Report and present the results of your activities in estimate and plan preparation to the appropriate people.

Scope:

1. Resources (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

2. Appropriate people (2 out of 3)

- Colleagues
- Senior project control staff
- Functional and project managers

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. An appreciation of the types of estimates used in the organisation.
2. An understanding of the most significant areas of estimates – impacts on costs and schedules.
3. Sources of data from within and without the organisation.
4. Types of plans used in the organisation.
5. An appreciation of the types of contingencies used in the organisation.
6. An appreciation of the relationships between effort input to scope definition and the levels of accuracy that can be expected of estimates and plans.

Unit: PC 60 – Support the preparation of budgets for the control of the project

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence required to support and assist with the preparation of the budgets for resources required to meet the defined project objectives.

You must be able to:

- a) Check that the estimated resources are able to meet the needs of specified aspects of the project.
- b) Advise those with the authority to initiate corrective actions where inadequacies in the estimated resources become apparent
- c) Use resource estimates, project programmes and work breakdown structures to support the development of budgets.
- d) Provide budget information for project cash flow development.

Scope:

1. Resources (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. An appreciation of time/cost/quality relationships and their influence on the accuracy of project budgets.
2. An appreciation of the meaning of the terms direct costs, indirect costs, contingencies and allowances as applied in the organisation.
3. An appreciation of the relationships between scope definition, achieved through project progress, and the accuracy of the budgets.
4. What budgets need to contain for them to be used effectively for project control and reporting.
5. The importance of budget version control and means of achieving it.

Unit: PC 61 – Support the preparation of the programmes and schedules for the control of projects

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence to support and assist with the preparation of the programmes and schedules for controlling the timing and sequencing of resources and project outcomes.

A programme defines the scope of a number of major areas of activity that are to be resourced and undertaken. A schedule defines the scope of the work to be carried out within major areas of activity. It includes all the activities that are to be resourced and undertaken over a defined period of time to achieve the required project outcomes.

You must be able to:

- a) Check that work activity sequences and resources available have been identified in sufficient detail for the programmes and schedules to be produced.
- b) Advise those with the authority to initiate corrective actions where the information on activity sequences and resources is not adequate for preparing the programmes and schedules,
- c) Develop specified elements of the programmes and schedules to meet the project requirements.

Scope:

1. Resources (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

2 Elements of programmes and schedules (4 out of 9)

- Develop
- Design
- Purchase
- Install
- Test
- Operations and maintenance
- Rectify
- Close-out and handover
- Decommissioning and disposal

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Methods of preparing, structuring and presenting programmes and schedules.
2. An appreciation of the process of logic network development.
3. An appreciation of the process of resource smoothing and the effects on programmes and schedules.
4. An understanding of the terms events, activities, dummy activities, work break down structure, critical path and float.
5. Planning and scheduling IT systems used within the organisation.
6. Programme and schedule version control and means of achieving it.

Unit: PC 62 – Monitor and report on progress and the use of resources

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence to monitor and report on the key project control parameters of progress and resource usage. The activities utilise the developed and approved budgets, programmes and schedules as the sources against which progress and usage are monitored and reported.

You must be able to:

- a) Check that the systems for collecting resource usage and progress data are in operation
- b) Advise those with the authority to initiate corrective actions where the systems for collecting resource usage and progress data are not working effectively.
- c) Use the project systems set up to process and analyse progress, resource usage and commitment data.
- d) Review and report on resource usage, commitment and progress data.
- e) Identify and report on variances between planned and actual achievements.

Scope:

1. Progress of

- Work achievements
- Physical actions
- Mental actions

2. Variances include (3 out of 6)

- Misallocation
- Timing not to schedule
- Under or over expenditure
- Under or over commitment
- Forecast cost variances
- Scope changes

3. Resource usage of and commitments for (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Systems and methods available for the collection and collation of resource usage and progress data.
2. Means of assessing resource usage, commitment and progress data against budgets and plans.
3. Use of the work breakdown structure as a basis for monitoring resource usage and progress.
4. An appreciation of key performance indicators and their use within projects.

5. Means of reporting and presenting resource usage, commitment and progress data and information.

Unit: PC 63 – Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence to support and assist with the forecasting and reporting of project final resource usage and programme completions. Forecasting final conditions utilises data collected for the regular monitoring of progress and resource usage and applies forecasting methods to that data.

You must be able to:

- a) Check that the project systems and methods, specified to be used by you to support the prediction of final resource usage and programme completions, are available to you.
- b) Advise those with the authority to initiate corrective actions where the systems and methods for predicting out-turn conditions are not available.
- c) Use the specified project systems for the prediction of final resource usage and programme completion.
- d) Support the review and analysis of predicted final conditions.

Scope:

1. Resource usage of (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

2. Programme completion of (1 out of 2)

- Specified project stages
- Complete project

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. An appreciation of resource usage and progress forecasting methods use in the organisation.
2. Sources of specialist advice to assist in producing reliable and accurate forecasts.

Unit: PC 64 – Support the control of project scope changes

Unit Commentary

This unit is concerned with the competence to support and assist with the control of changes to the project scope. Changes may be the result of intention, difficulty or opportunity but, whatever the origin, project control needs to be used to monitor and adjust activities, resources and plans in a controlled fashion to ensure that project integrity is maintained.

You must be able to:

- a) Check that the project systems and methods for the quantification of the effects of project scope changes are in operation.
- b) Advise those with the authority to initiate corrective action where the systems and methods for the quantification of the effects of project scope changes are not working effectively.
- c) Use the established systems and methods to quantify the impact of changes on resource requirements and programmes and schedules.
- d) Review, analyse and report to the appropriate people on the impact of scope changes on project resources programmes and schedules.

Scope:

1. Changes in scope may include those which impact on (5 out of 9)

- Developments
- Design
- Purchasing
- Installation
- Testing
- Operations and maintenance
- Rectification
- Close-out and handover
- Decommissioning and disposal

2. Appropriate people (2 out of 3)

- Colleagues
- Senior project control staff
- Functional and project managers

3. Resource requirements (3 out of 6)

- People
- Materials and equipment
- Facilities
- Finance and cash
- Data and data handling systems
- Services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation

Specific knowledge required for this Unit:

1. Systems and methods for quantifying project scope changes.
2. An appreciation of the methods that can be used for maintaining project control including registering changes, quantifying changes and gaining approval for changes in scope.

Qualification Structure – Project Control Support Level 2

Mandatory Units (All 8 units must be completed)

PC52	Follow quality assurance procedures in carrying out project control activities
PC53	Obtain and organise information for project control
PC54	Process project control data using information technology (IT)
PC55	Prepare documents for the execution of project control activities
PC17	Contribute to effective project working relationships
PC56	Plan and organise your assigned project control tasks
PC57	Implement a personal project control competence development plan
PC58	Work to the organisation's procedures and practices relating to ethical and behavioural issues

Optional Units (3 out of 6 units must be completed)

PC59	Support the preparation of project resource estimates and plans
PC60	Support the preparation of budgets for control of the project
PC61	Support the preparation of the programmes and schedules for the control of projects
PC62	Monitor and report on progress and the use of resources
PC63	Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates
PC64	Support the control of project scope changes

NB: PC 17 is a mandatory unit in both this and in the Project Control Level 3 Qualification Structure. The Assessment Strategy applicable to the unit in either case is that relating to all units within the Project Control Level 3 Qualification Structure.

Signposting of Key and Core Skills

Unit Number	Key Skills Signposting	Application of Number	Communication	Technology Information	Improve own learning	Problem solving	Working with others
	Unit Title						
PC52	Follow quality assurance procedures in carrying out project control activities		L2			L2	
PC53	Obtain and organise information for project control		L3	L3		L2	L2
PC54	Process project control data using information technology		L2	L3	L2	L2	L2
PC55	Prepare documents for the execution of project control activities	L2	L3	L3			L3
PC56	Plan and organise your assigned project control tasks		L3	L3		L2	L2
PC57	Implement a personal project control competence development plan		L2		L3		L2
PC58	Work to the organisation's procedures and practices relating to ethical and behavioural issues		L2				L2
PC59	Support the preparation of project resource estimates and plans	L3	L2	L3		L2	L2
PC60	Support the preparation of budgets for control of the project	L3	L2	L3			L2
PC61	Support the preparation of the programmes and schedules for the control of projects	L3	L2	L3		L3	L2
PC62	Monitor and report on progress and the use of resources	L3	L2	L3		L3	L2
PC63	Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates	L3	L2	L3			L2
PC64	Support the control of project scope changes	L2	L2			L2	L2

Unit Number

Core Skills Signposting

	Unit Title	Numeracy	Communication	Technology Information	Problem solving	Working with others
PC52	Follow quality assurance procedures in carrying out project control activities		Inter 1		Inter 1	
PC53	Obtain and organise information for project control		Inter 2	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 1
PC54	Process project control data using information technology		Inter 1	Inter 2		Inter 1
PC55	Prepare documents for the execution of project control activities	Inter 1	Inter 2	Inter 2		Inter 2
PC56	Plan and organise your assigned project control tasks		Inter 2	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 1
PC57	Implement a personal project control competence development plan		Inter 1			Inter 1
PC58	Work to the organisation's procedures and practices relating to ethical and behavioural issues		Inter 1			Inter 1
PC59	Support the preparation of project resource estimates and plans	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 1
PC60	Support the preparation of budgets for control of the project	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 2		Inter 1
PC61	Support the preparation of the programmes and schedules for the control of projects	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 2		Inter 1
PC62	Monitor and report on progress and the use of resources	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 2	Inter 2	Inter 1
PC63	Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates	Inter 2	Inter 1	Inter 2		Inter 1
PC64	Support the control of project scope changes	Inter 1	Inter 1		Inter 1	Inter 1

Assessment Strategy

for N/SVQs derived from the National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support

Introduction

The Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB) Standards Setting Body was the project manager for the preparation of the Project Control Support National Occupational Standards. Higher level project control standards have given rise to Level 3 and Level 4 National Vocational Qualifications. The National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support have been prepared as an extension to the set, and increase the total number of units from 51 to 64.

ECITB led a Working Group of stakeholders interested in the project control occupational standards and N/SVQs that prepared the **Project Control Support** standards and this Assessment Strategy. The strategy is to be applied to vocational qualifications that are created from the additional standards. The stakeholders forming the Working Group were:-

- The ECITB Standards Setting Body.
- Association of Cost Engineers (ACostE) – the professional body for project control practitioners.
- British Chemical Engineering Contractors Association (BCECA) – the trade association to which 20 of the UK's major employers of Project Control practitioners belong. BCECA represents the principal companies in the UK that provide engineering, procurement, construction and project management services to the process industries.
- Occupational Standards Council for Engineering (OSCEng) – a voluntary, employer led association of parties sharing the commitment to the development of a coherent framework of occupational standards across the full range of engineering occupations.
- ProVoc – The 'user group' for the existing Project Control vocational qualifications. It draws its membership from project control practitioners, assessors and verifiers, the standard setting and awarding bodies, candidates and employers. It is a sub-committee of ACostE and invites QCA representatives to its meetings.
- SEMTA – the SSC for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies covering some 100,000 companies.
- COGENT – the SSC for the chemical, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymer industries.
- Construction Skills – the SSC for the construction industry.
- Representatives from interested companies.

The strategy outlines the requirements for the assessment of competence. This includes assessment for the purposes of nationally accredited vocational qualifications (N/SVQs) and units.

A candidate's competence should be assessed against the requirements of the standards through consideration of the candidate's ability to support and assist a competent and experienced practitioner in relevant aspects of that role. Assessment should be undertaken in the context of projects of sufficient complexity and breadth of scope to warrant this level of expertise. As such, it is unlikely that simulation, other than in the workplace, will be able to provide acceptable demonstrations of practitioner competence.

Project Control has relevance across many sectors of business and industry with projects varying considerably in duration, size and cost. Candidates can therefore be operating domestically, nationally or internationally, and it is essential that the assessment process is relevant to the business and the sector in which they are operating.

The stakeholder group has established the requirements for:

- i) enhanced external quality control
- ii) standards that must be assessed against workplace evidence and performance
- iii) the areas, use and terms for simulation
- iv) the competence requirements of Assessors and Verifiers
- v) guidance on specific assessment issues resulting from the content and application of the standards that is contained in **Appendix B**

1 Enhanced Quality Control and Assessment

After consultation, it was concluded that it would be neither cost-effective nor beneficial to adopt the approaches outlined in **Appendix A** as a mandatory part of the strategy for enhancing quality control.

Awarding Bodies through the quality control mechanisms, specified within the NVQ Code of Practice and the SQA Criteria document (Implementing SVQs – A Guide to Awarding Bodies), must ensure rigorous and effective control of centres and the assessment processes so that judgement of what is valid, authentic, current, reliable and sufficient evidence is maintained across all assessment contexts. To ensure consistency and integrity of assessment it is required that the Awarding Bodies participate in meetings of Approved Centre assessors, internal verifiers and vocational qualification administrative staff which shall be the focus for ensuring that assessment of competence is conducted in a fair and consistent manner.

The Awarding Bodies will be expected to support a common understanding of the standards and promote the best assessment practice by the Approved Centres to:

- i) establish and maintain a common guide to appropriate types and amounts of performance evidence for the units.
- ii) draft and maintain a specification of basic knowledge issues to be addressed for the units.
- iii) agree Awarding Body sampling plans covering all units in the awards.
- iv) contribute to cross Awarding Body standardisation activities.
- v) ensure effective systems are in place and managed to confirm occupational competence of Assessors and Verifiers.
- vi) collate and report on take up, successes and areas of difficulty.

The Awarding Bodies are required to define and maintain comprehensive guidance for the external verification of assessment procedures, processes and outcomes. Specific elements to be included are:

The Awarding Body verification systems must ensure that the External Verifier sample of the evidence represents a sufficiently accurate picture of assessment in the centre to be confident that those decisions not sampled would also meet the National Standards.

External Verifiers should support centres in developing Internal Verification practices in line with good practice outlined in the Joint Awarding Bodies Guidance on Internal Verification.

External Verifiers must require centres to submit details of assessment planning arrangements and assessment recording forms and systems. Submitted information must include information on the planned use and design of simulations and the External Verifier must be satisfied that these accord with the recommendations on the acceptability and use of simulation given later in this strategy.

2 Assessment of Performance in the Workplace

Other than as indicated in the section on simulation below, all evidence of competence must reflect activity undertaken by the candidate in the workplace executing his/her assigned project control work role.

Candidates should be encouraged to make effective use of all available opportunities for evidence collection in line with the following principles:

- i) evidence must be valid, in that it meets the requirements of the standard and is capable of being authenticated as the candidate's own work, or work for which the candidate has responsibility.
- ii) where the scale, diversity, complexity and duration of projects from which candidates can derive evidence is limited, evidence from a single project, using a combination of

significant components within it, may be sufficient. However, evidence from a range of projects is preferable.

- ii) assessors should pay due regard to the cost–effectiveness of using varied sources of evidence when planning assessments with candidates.

As a guide a 'project', in the context of this qualification or units within it, is likely to have most if not all of the following attributes:

- (a) *it will have individual, original and unique features that are novel to its management and is unlikely to be of a repetitive nature*
- (b) *it will involve risk and uncertainty and may be influenced by external events outside the project manager's direct control*
- (c) *it will be approved against commitments to deliver specified, qualified and quantified results within stated quality and technical parameters*
- (d) *authorisation will require results to be delivered within a specified time frame (stated start–end dates), resource and cost constraints*
- (e) *the project will usually involve a team nominated from across a range of disciplines and the project life cycle, which may be subject to change during the project's development/progress. Some organisations may assemble a team specifically for the duration of the project.*

3 Acceptability and Use of Simulation

The use of simulation as a means of assessing competence is only acceptable in relation to those few instances where one or more of the following characteristics apply:

- i) Health and safety could be compromised by seeking workplace evidence
- ii) The behaviour or situation under which assessment occurs happens infrequently in the workplace
- iii) There would be unacceptable commercial or operational risk in securing workplace assessment.
- iv) Facilities need to be placed in an unacceptable operating state to allow for assessment to take place.

The only units for which simulation is permitted are:

- PC 62 – Monitor and report on progress and the use of resources.
- PC 63 – Support the forecasting of final resource usage and programme completion dates.

For the units where simulation is permitted, the simulation must be designed to reflect the activity as it would be carried out in a workplace environment, including:

- (a) The presence, actions and capabilities of other interacting personnel.
- (b) The urgency with which the activity must be carried out and the time needed to complete it
- (c) The number and sequence of actions needed to complete the activity
- (d) The number and complexity of the factors affecting the activity
- (e) The skills and knowledge needed to carry out the activity
- (f) The nature and availability of resources needed to carry out the activity
- (g) Access to references and sources of advice and assistance that could be needed if problems arise
- (h) The type of documentation to be completed
- (i) The standards to which the activity must be carried out, including any practices and procedures which must be followed
- (j) The outcomes which the activity will produce

Assessor proposals for the use of simulation should be approved by the Awarding Body in advance of being used and may be rejected if they fail to comply with the characteristics listed above.

4 Requirements for Assessors and Verifiers

Assessors

Assessors are responsible for assessing candidates' performance against the relevant occupational standards. Therefore, they must have had recent and relevant experience of performing the competences under assessment. They must also have a thorough technical knowledge of what constitutes effective performance and best working practices in the context in which the assessment is to take place. It is unlikely that an individual of less than five years experience of project control in the relevant sector would have sufficient occupational or vocational competence to be an effective assessor.

In addition, Assessors must have achieved the ENTO Unit A1 - Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods, or have a clear action plan for the achievement of that unit, or hold an equivalent qualification. Where an Assessor is still working towards the A1 unit, an Assessor qualified in the unit must support and countersign the final assessment decisions.

Assessors who already hold the D32 Assess Candidate Performance and D33 Assess the Candidate Using Differing Sources of Evidence qualifications will not be required to re-qualify with the A1 unit but will be required to show evidence of their continuing professional development (CPD), eg familiarity with the new standards and keeping up to date with new assessment techniques as guided by the Awarding Bodies.

Assessors must be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of the National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support, as well as the Awarding Body's and Approved Centre's systems and procedures.

There may be a requirement to use more than one Assessor for a candidate to cover the full award. Centre arrangements must ensure the co-ordination and cohesion of the assessment process in those circumstances.

Internal Verifiers

Internal Verifiers must have direct experience or substantial knowledge of the occupational area for which they are responsible for verifying assessment processes, practices and decisions. Internal Verifiers must have achieved ENTO Unit V1 - Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process. Internal Verifiers must also have achieved the ENTO Unit A1 – Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods, or have a clear action plan for the achievement of the unit, or hold equivalent qualifications.

Internal Verifiers must be able to demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of the National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support, the Awarding Body's and Approved Centre's systems and procedures and the ability to work effectively with both assessors and candidates. Where an Internal Verifier has only limited occupational or vocational expertise, mechanisms must be put in place by the Approved Centre for supporting Internal Verifiers with occupational related decisions. It is essential that Internal Verifiers should have no direct involvement in the assessment of candidates for the unit(s) they are verifying.

Where an Internal Verifier is still working towards the ENTO V1 unit, an Internal Verifier qualified in the unit must support and countersign the final judgement.

Internal Verifiers who already hold the D34 - Internally Verify the Assessment process qualification will not be required to re-qualify with the V1 unit but will be required to show evidence of their continuing professional development (CPD), eg familiarity with the new standards and keeping up to date with new assessment techniques as guided by the Awarding Bodies.

External Verifiers

External Verifiers must have achieved, or be working towards gaining, within the required timeframe, the ENTO Unit V2 - Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process or hold an equivalent qualification. It is desirable that they also hold the ENTO Unit V1 – Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process, or hold equivalent qualifications. Where an External Verifier is still working towards the relevant ENTO unit, a Verifier qualified in the relevant unit must support the final judgement. External Verifiers must possess effective communication and interpersonal skills.

External Verifiers who already hold the D35 - Externally Verify the Assessment Process qualification will not be required to re-qualify with the V2 unit but will be required to show evidence of their continuing professional development (CPD), eg familiarity with the new standards and keeping up to date with new assessment techniques as guided by the Awarding Bodies.

External Verifiers should have a thorough working knowledge of the National Occupational Standards for Project Control Support, the Accrediting Bodies' guidance on the implementation of NVQs, the Awarding Body's systems and procedures and quality assurance operating procedures.

Where an External Verifier has only limited vocational expertise, mechanisms must be put in place by the Awarding Body for supporting External Verifiers with occupational related decisions. Such supporting individuals must not have been involved with the assessments concerned.

Confirmation of Competence

Awarding Bodies need to have in place effective systems for confirming the occupational and vocational competence of Assessors and Verifiers. The systems for recruitment and monitoring must be capable of balanced and objective decisions, using evidence from academic and vocational qualifications, balanced against breadth and length of experience from the workplace.

Appendix A

After consultation with the stakeholders it was concluded that it would be neither cost-effective nor beneficial to adopt the following approaches to external quality control as a mandatory part of the strategy. This does not exclude Awarding Bodies using them where they have mechanisms in place and wish to adopt them as a means of enhancing quality.

Use of independent assessors (moving the candidate)

The variation in business sector needs and techniques involved would make the use of test centres impractical, unrealistic and expensive in assessing candidate achievement.

Use of independent assessors (moving the assessor)

The spread of candidates, small numbers per centre and the need for a spread of business sector occupationally competent peripatetic assessors would be very costly. It could create difficulties in finding and allocating assessors with suitable experience who are available to travel to the required locations.

Use of independent assessment methods (open written response assessment)

Given the variation in technologies it would be difficult to generate assessment instruments that could be administered and marked in a cost-effective, reliable and consistent manner.

Use of independent assessment methods (multiple choice tests)

Given the wide variation in business and sector requirements, there would be low confidence in the validity and reliability of multiple choice testing in such assessments.

Appendix B

Guidance on Specific Assessment Issues

Assessment of Subjective Performance Evidence

In some of the units, performance statements (“You must be able to”) will need evidence that is of a subjective nature. The under-noted examples illustrate the point.

Unit	“You must be able to” statement
PC 52	b) Assess your own activity outcomes and performance against the requirements of the project procedures.
PC 17	a) Establish and maintain productive working relationships with colleagues. b) Deal with disagreements in an amicable and constructive way so that good relationships are maintained in the interests of achieving effective project control. c) Keep others informed about work plans or activities which affect them. d) Seek assistance from others in a polite and courteous way without causing undue disruption to normal work activities. e) Respond in a timely and positive way when others ask for help or information.
PC 57	b) Respond to functional and human resources management requirements to carry out appropriate off and on-site taught project control knowledge acquisition necessary to meet the needs of the organisation.

Approved Centres are to respond to the guidance of the Awarding Body in developing reliable methods for assessing the evidence of competence provided by candidates in response to such “You must be able to” statements. Such Awarding Body guidance may include for the use of witness testimony and the interview of witnesses as part of the assessment process.

Assessment of Scope

Most units contain a number of Scope requirements that, themselves, contain a number of subjects. Where it is considered that proof of competence does not require evidence covering all the Scope subjects, the number of subjects to be covered is defined against the Scope requirements. An example is in PC 61 where the Scope requirement for “Resources” requires that evidence be provided by the candidate for 3 out of the 6 subjects of people, materials and equipment, facilities, finance and cash, data and data handling systems and services drawn from within the organisation and from outside the organisation.

If no flexibility (e.g. 3 out of 6) is indicated, then a candidate will be expected to provide evidence matching all the Scope subjects.

Assessment of Knowledge

Unit PC 57 provides for a candidate acquiring knowledge through taught programmes that may take place at a candidate’s place of work or away from the candidate’s place of work.

Where the results of such taught programmes are offered as evidence of a candidate’s underpinning knowledge then it is the responsibility of the Assessor to examine the outputs of the taught programmes, that are offered as evidence, to satisfy him/her self that the outputs meet the requirements of the relevant Unit.

The Assessor is also responsible for questioning (or otherwise testing) the candidate to be satisfied that the underpinning knowledge is current.

The results of Assessor examination of outputs and questioning and testing of candidates is to be fully documented and recorded such the evidence can be substantiated on External Verification by the Awarding Body.