Forestry and Arboriculture

Centre Guidance

Version 1.1

Centre Guidance

Forestry and Arboriculture Qualifications (SCQF)

Contents

1 Introduction

This Centre Guidance provides information on the Qualifications developed by Lantra using the Lantra Awards brand. Lantra is a nationally recognised Awarding Body (AB) with almost 40 years specialising in training and qualifications primarily for the environment and land-based sector. As part of Lantra, an employer-led organisation, we are committed to promoting and ensuring that skills development support businesses and individuals.

We work closely with professionals, businesses and trade associations to develop training and qualification programmes to ensure they have a professional and competent workforce that has the right skills and knowledge to carry out their jobs safety and effectively.

To operate in Scotland, Lantra gains its AB status from Scottish Qualifications Authority Accreditation (SQA Accreditation). We are approved by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), the qualifications regulator in England and Northern Ireland, who also regulate on behalf of the Welsh Government in Wales and Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland.

The Qualifications are based on the Trees and Timber National Occupational Standards (NOS, 2012), which exist to ensure that personnel working within industry meet minimum standards such as those operating chainsaws. The Qualifications will provide the learner (the individual undertaking a qualification; may also be referred to as candidate) with the knowledge, understanding and skills required for undertaking specific tasks within the Trees and Timber industry.

Lantra Awards worked collaboratively with Lantra Sector Skills Council (SSC), other ABs, External Verifiers and stakeholders to produce Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) units that have been used as the basis for the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF) qualifications at levels 4 to 8 in forestry and arboriculture.

The SCQF is a non-regulatory framework and as such organisations can choose to place their qualifications within the framework. There are a few exceptions to this, qualifications that are modern apprenticeships (MAs) in Scotland must be SCQF credit rated. Qualifications are accredited and then placed in the SCQF if they have been credit rated. These Qualifications have been credit rated for the SCQF and are placed at SCQF levels 5 and 7.

The Qualifications have been developed to enable learners operating at SCQF levels 5 to 7 to meet the minimum relevant legal requirements in relation to training and assessment and provide a professional and quality assured approach to the training and assessment.

This Centre Guidance provides information for centre staff involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of the regulated forestry and arboriculture qualifications that have been placed in the SCQF at levels 5 and 7.

The information provided in this document was correct at the time of publication. Lantra may update this information at any time. Please refer to the Lantra Awards website, https://www.lantra.co.uk and/or the online centre profile for the latest downloadable version.

1.1 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

The SCQF promotes lifelong learning in Scotland. Through the Framework you can find out about all mainstream/non-mainstream qualifications in Scotland and plan your future learning. The Framework also provides an extremely important way of recognising different types of learning in a wide range of settings for example, learning in the workplace or in the community). The SCQF supports everyone in Scotland, including learning providers and employers by:

- helping people of all ages and circumstances to get access to appropriate educations and training so they can meet their full potential;
- helping employers, learners and the general public to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications, how qualifications relate to each other and to other forms of learning, and how different types of qualification can contribute to improving the skills of the workforce.

SQA Accreditation is responsible for the accreditation and regulation of this suite of forestry and arboriculture qualifications which have been placed in the SCQF.

The SCQF is a system for recognising skills and qualifications. It does this by awarding credit for qualifications and units (small steps of learning). The SCQF allows achievements to be recognised and recorded through the award of credits and qualifications. It supports the accumulation and transfer of credits and the easy identification of each achievement's level and size.

Every unit and qualification has a level and credit value. The level of a unit/qualification indicates the level of difficulty. One SCQF credit represents an average of ten hours of learning, showing how much time the average learner would take to complete the unit or qualification.

The SCQF helps education providers, learners, employers and the public in general to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications. It shows how the different types of qualifications relate to each other and how they can contribute to improving skills and knowledge.

By using two measures – the level of a qualification and the number of credit points (referred to as credit from here after) awarded for that qualification – the Framework helps you understand and compare qualifications. The level of a qualification increases with the complexity of the content. The number of credit for a qualification is based on the amount of time that an 'average' learner studying at the appropriate level might take to achieve the outcomes of the programme.

SCQF levels

There are 12 SCQF Levels which provide an indication of the complexity of qualifications and learning programmes. SCQF Level 1 is the least demanding and SCQF Level 12 is the most demanding. The different levels indicate the level of difficulty of a particular unit/qualification and increases in levels relate to factors such as:

- the complexity and depth of knowledge and understanding
- links to associated academic, vocational or professional practice
- the degree of integration, independence and creativity required
- the range and sophistication of application/practice
- the role(s) taken in relation to other learners/workers in carrying out tasks.

SCQF level descriptors

The level descriptors outline the general outcomes of learning at SCQF levels under five broad headings:

- knowledge and understanding (mainly subject based)
- practice (applied knowledge and understanding)
- generic cognitive skills (e.g. evaluation, critical analysis)
- communication, numeracy and IT skills
- autonomy, accountability and working with others.

The descriptors allow broad comparisons to be made between the outcomes of any learning and allow learners, employers and the public in general to understand the range of skills and learning that should be achieved at each level. SCQF levels are increasingly used in job advertisements to help employers articulate the skills they require for a particular role and to help potential employees to highlight their skills thus ensuring the right person gets the right job. They are also used by education providers as the basis for credit rating learning provision. More information on this can be found in the Education Providers and Advisers section.

Credit

Credit is used to quantify learning outcomes and give them a value or currency. It is a way of showing how much time it takes, on average, to complete a unit/qualification or learning programme. Along with the level descriptors, credit allows learners, learning providers and employers to compare different qualifications at the same or even different levels.

Credit quantifies the outcomes of learning that are subject to valid, reliable methods of assessment. The number of credit is worked out on the basis of the amount of time that an 'average' learner at a specified level might expect to take to achieve the outcomes. In common with other credit systems, the SCQF works on the basis that one credit represents the amount of learning achieved

through a notional 10 hours of learning time which includes everything a learner has to do to achieve the outcomes in a qualification including the assessment procedures. No credit is added or taken away if more or less time is taken to achieve the outcomes.

1.2 Who are these Qualifications designed for?

These Qualifications are intended to offer learners involved in a variety of forestry and arboriculture roles the opportunity to achieve recognised qualifications that reflect the national occupational standards for the type(s) of role(s) they perform. These Qualifications will be suitable for those entering work, those who have established themselves in a role and those working at assistant/supervisory/management levels, they are therefore appropriate to support on going professional development.

These Qualifications are designed to encourage learners to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills to support their role(s) and develop their careers in varied forestry and arboriculture situations under minimal guidance or direction. These Qualifications will enhance the ability of personnel to work safely, effectively and efficiently in the workplace, reducing unnecessary risks to themselves and others.

This suite of forestry and arboriculture Qualifications are suitable for learners from 16+ wishing to develop knowledge, understanding and skills of forestry and arboriculture practices. They are ideally suited to professional users/operators working in the forestry and arboriculture sector(s) and for learners requiring proof of competence within their field of expertise across a range of progression routes.

Due to the nature of the Qualifications a minimum level of fitness may be required for specific operations. Please consult with your External Verifier/Lantra if you have any concerns regarding a learner's fitness.

The units used for these Qualifications relate to the Trees and Timber NOS (2012).

Learners will only achieve licence to practice status for these Qualifications if they successfully meet all of the unit assessment criteria.

1.3 Target audience

The suite of forestry and arboriculture Qualifications are suitable for learners from 16+ who wish to develop knowledge, understanding and skills and require proof of competence within their field of expertise across a range of learning routes/options.

Learners may be using their skills across a range of trees and timber operations. The Qualifications aim to ensure all learners can be confident the minimum standards of good working practices are observed/followed at all times.

These Qualifications have been devised with the key aim for learners to successfully evidence their competence in forestry and arboriculture operations.

The units/Qualifications available can be used to create individual learning programmes tailored to the learner's needs whilst enabling those learners to achieve or work towards achieving national competence qualifications and improve their opportunities.

Several of the units are identified as being relevant towards a number of work-based qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks, approved and supported by Lantra SSC. Learners undertaking these units may have the credit gained counted towards the achievement of work-based qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks approved by the sector.

1.4 Qualification aims

Learners undertaking these Qualifications will be able to prove their competence in forestry and/or arboriculture operations and; evidence their ability to meet licence to practice and/or other relevant legal requirements made by the relevant sector, professional or industry.
Learners who achieve the Qualifications will have the opportunity to obtain competency card(s) for employment within the key professional sector(s), thus enabling further employment opportunities for which competency is a significant requirement.

Learners undertaking these Qualifications will develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of a range of issues within the forestry and arboriculture sectors. The Qualifications will enable learners to test their own interests and develop a range of knowledge and skills. Learners may then choose to specialise in a particular area of interest by undertaking further training and development or use the units/Qualifications as a route to demonstrate on going development.

These Qualifications aim to:

- Assess the learner's knowledge and understanding across a range of forestry and arboriculture functions and activities
- Assess the learner's ability to work effectively in a forestry and arboriculture environment, both independently and as part of a team
- Assess the learner's ability to review and develop their own practices and carry out a range of practical forestry and arboriculture tasks, to the required industry standard
- Improve awareness of relevant health and safety legislation and how individuals can contribute to the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) agenda.

Following regulatory requirements these Qualifications are identified and approved with the following purposes and will:

- Confirm occupational competence and/or licence to practice
- Confirm the ability to meet licence to practice or other relevant legal requirements made by the relevant sector, professional or industry.

2 Qualification structure and units

2.1 Qualification profile

Titles/Qualification numbers	- Lantra Awards Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting SCQF Level 5 - Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees up to 380mm SCQF Level 5 - Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees over 380mm SCQF Level 5 - Lantra Awards Severing Uprooted or Windblown Trees Using a Chainsaw SCQF Level 7 See section 2.2			
Level	These Qualifications have been accepted on to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications (SCQF) as regulated qualifications at Levels 4 to 8.			
Credits	See section 2.2.			
Age group approved	**Pre -16**	**16-18**	**18+**	**19+**
		X		X
These Qualifications are suitable for	These Qualifications are suitable for those wishing to develop knowledge, understanding and skills of a range of issues within the forestry and arboriculture sectors.			
Entry requirements	Yes – a number of the Qualifications require pre-requisite achievement(s). See Annexe A.			
Pre-requisite(s)	See Annexe A.			
Qualification structure	To achieve any of these Qualifications, learners must attain the minimum required credits from the mandatory/optional unit(s). These Qualifications are one unit qualifications, except for the Lantra Awards Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting SCQF Level 5 which consists of 2 mandatory units. See section 2.2. Learners will need to complete and achieve the mandatory/optional units/qualifications and any additional pre-requisite qualifications that are specific to their work.			
Assessment	Units in these Qualifications are assessed by approved Lantra Awards Assessors and externally verified by Lantra. Each unit has an associated assessment type (independent/integrated training and assessment) attached. The units are not graded.			
Funding	These Qualifications may eligible for public funding. For information on qualifications approved for funding please see contact: Skills Development Scotland (SDS); Scottish Funding Council; Colleges; Employers			
Performance figures	These Qualifications do not contribute to the performance measures.			

Apprenticeship frameworks	A number of the units associated with these Qualifications sit within the Trees and Timber and Power Industry/Distribution apprenticeship frameworks.
Start date of qualifications	01 August 2013
Review date of qualifications	31 January 2017

2.2 Qualification structure

To achieve any of the Qualifications at SCQF levels 5 to 7, learners must attain the minimum required credits from the mandatory/optional unit(s).

Learners will need to complete the mandatory/optional unit(s) and any additional pre-requisite qualifications that are specific to their work.

M=Mandatory unit O=Optional unit

2.2.1 Lantra Awards SCQF Level 5 Qualifications

- Lantra Awards Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting SCQF Level 5
- Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees up to 380mm SCQF Level 5
- Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees over 380mm SCQF Level 5.

Lantra Awards Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting SCQF Level 5 (R333 04)				
M/O	Unit reference number	Unit title	SCQF unit level	SCQF credit
M	UC08 04	Carry out maintenance of chainsaw and cutting system	5	1
M	UC09 04	Cross-cut timber using a chainsaw	4	1
		Qualification total		2

Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees up to 380mm SCQF Level 5 (R334 04)				
M/O	Unit reference number	Unit title	SCQF unit level	SCQF credit
M	UC10 04	Fell and process trees up to 380mm	5	5
		Qualification total		5

Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees over 380mm SCQF Level 5 (R339 04)				
M/O	**Unit reference number**	**Unit title**	**SCQF unit level**	**SCQF credit**
M	UC15 04	Fell and process trees over 380mm	5	3
		Qualification total		**3**

M	UC14 04	Access a tree using a rope and harness	6	3
		Qualification total		**3**

2.2.2 Lantra Awards SCQF Level 7 Qualifications

- Lantra Awards Severing Uprooted or Windblown Trees Using a Chainsaw SCQF Level 7

Lantra Awards Severing Uprooted or Windblown Trees Using a Chainsaw SCQF Level 7 (R342 04)				
M/O	**Unit reference number**	**Unit title**	**SCQF unit level**	**SCQF credit**
M	UC18 04	Sever uprooted or windblown trees using a chainsaw	7	5
		Qualification total		**5**

2.3 Unit format

Each unit contains:

Unit title	Gives a summary of the content of the unit.
Level	This advises the SCQF/QCF level on which the unit is accredited.
Credit value	This advises how many SCQF/QCF credits the learner will attain for successful achievement of the unit.
Unit reference number	This is the unit code given on approval/accreditation from the regulators SQA Accreditation/Ofqual.
Learning outcomes	Sets out what the learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do as a result of the learning process.
Assessment criteria	Details the requirement that the learner will be assessed against in order to evidence the learning outcomes.
Unit purpose and aims	This section provides the overall purpose and aim of the unit.
Unit review date	The review date will reflect the date of the unit review.
Unit withdrawal date	The withdrawal date will reflect the date the unit is to be withdrawn.
Details of the relationship between the unit and relevant national occupational standards (NOS) or other professional standards or curricula (if appropriate)	This section will show the NOS reference number(s) to the suite of standards the qualification relates to.
Assessment requirements or guidance specified by a sector or regulatory body (if appropriate)	This specifies the assessment criteria for the unit.
Support for the unit from a SSC or other appropriate body (if required)	This show the Sector Skills Council (SSC)/industry that have approved the unit.
Location of the unit within the sector subject area (SSA)	This section show the subject classification area (SSA) that the unit sits within.
Name of the organisation submitting the unit	This will show the name of the Awarding Body that has submitted the unit on the regulatory system.
Availability for use	This defines whether the unit is shared or restricted use.
Unit available from	This specifies the live operation date of the unit.
Unit guided learning hours	Scotland – GLH is not applicable. England, Northern Ireland, and Wales - This defines the minimum guided learning hours (GLH). GLH represents only those hours in which a tutor, trainer or facilitator is present and contributing to the learning process.

2.4 Statement of level

These Qualifications assess knowledge, understanding and skills at levels 5 to 7 of the SCQF.

These Qualifications relate to the NOS for trees and timber developed by Lantra SSC.

2.5 Learning time

The time it will take a learner to complete these Qualifications will depend on a number of things for instance, mode of study and level of knowledge or experience.

The notional learning time for the achievement of a single credit is 10 hours.

Section 2.2 clarifies the total SCQF qualification credit a learner must achieve to be awarded with each Qualification.

Learners may take slightly less or slightly more time to achieve the number of credits required; the size of the Qualification is based upon notional learning time and represents an average rather than a defined number of learning hours. It is important that centres approved to deliver the Qualification give the appropriate time and support to enable learners to achieve. Learners may claim certification for any credit/units they achieve irrespective of whether they have completed the full Qualification.

3 General information

3.1 Administration arrangements

The Lantra Awards Forestry and Arboriculture Qualifications are part of a suite of qualifications that sit within the trees and timber footprint, available at levels 5 and 7 of the SCQF.

The Awarding Body for these Qualifications is Lantra and the regulatory body is SQA Accreditation who has given SCQF approval.

3.1.1 Administration process for registration and certification

- Notification of Assessment completed and submitted to Lantra at least 5 working days before assessment takes place
- Site Specific Risk Assessment (SSRA) received from Lantra
- Complete SSRA, Learner Registration and Assessment Results and Assessment Form(s) (AF(s))
- Learner to be issued with tear off copy of completed Assessment Results form
- SSRA, Learner Registration and Assessment Results returned to Lantra
- Data quality controlled and assured by Lantra
- Certificates issued by Lantra.

The Learner Registration and Assessment Results form is a mechanism for regulated qualification centres to register learners and claim learner certification.

3.2 Entry requirements and restrictions

Due to the nature of the Qualifications a minimum level of fitness may be required for specific operations. Please consult with your External Verifier/Lantra if you have any concerns regarding a learner's fitness.

There are no barriers that restrict access or progression thereby promoting equal opportunity.

These Qualifications are not appropriate for those learners under the age of 16.

All centres involved in the assessment or delivery of these Qualifications must understand the requirements of the Qualification(s) and match them to the needs and capabilities of individual learners.

A number of the Qualifications require pre-requisite achievement(s). See Annexe A for the Qualification progression routes.

3.3 Recognition of prior learning

Within the SCQF and is acceptable practice, where appropriate, with Accredited qualifications, recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process for recognising learning that has its source in experience and/or previous formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. This includes knowledge and skills gained within school, college and university and outside formal learning situations such as through life and work experiences.

Lantra recognises RPL as a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

It is important that centres make it clear to learners that the RPL process is associated with how the learner has acquired the knowledge, understanding or skills; it does not mean the learner is exempt from the assessment.

The currency of knowledge and ability is often important when recognising skills and competences. Where assessment is devolved staff must ensure the relevance and currency of RPL before Lantra quality assures and certificates.

Lantra Awards offers occasional user training courses within forestry and arboriculture. Following achievement of an occasional user training course a learner may require evidence of achievement of a regulated qualification. A regulated qualification, in this context, may be required by the learner to work on a professional forestry/arboricultural site. Achievement of a regulated qualification implies the learner holds 'licence to practice' status.

It is recommended centres refer to Lantra's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. Additional information relating to RPL may also be found at on the SCQF website www.scqf.org.uk.

3.4 Scottish Candidate Number (SCN)

An SCN is a unique serial number given to each learner when they first enter the Scottish education system or register for a qualification that is regulated by SQA Accreditation. The SCN is used by the SQA computer system to record a learner's achievements.

It is advised that the SCN should be entered on the Learner Registration form and Assessment Results form for all learners intending to claim a certificate for these qualifications. Although inclusion is advised, if the SCN is not available it does not prohibit the submission of documentation as it is not a regulatory requirement.

For information on how to obtain SCNs, please refer to the SQA's: How do I get my Scottish Candidate Number? - SQA

3.5 Progression opportunities

The units/Qualifications will enable those who are successful to continue and complete further training and/or assessment within the forestry and arboriculture sector including full-time competency based qualifications and further specialised qualifications at the same or higher level.

Learners may choose to progress on to forestry and/or arboriculture Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), an apprenticeship framework and/or Higher National Certificates/Diplomas (HNC/Ds).

Certification is required for all professional forestry and arboriculture operations and is supported by industry good practice guidance, 'training and certification'. The Qualifications may also enable progression in the workplace.

3.6 Delivery in the UK

The specifications for these Qualifications are approved for delivery in the United Kingdom. SQA Accreditation regulates these SCQF Qualifications in Scotland. Ofqual regulates RQF qualifications in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Although these Qualifications are not regulated in England, Northern Ireland and Wales they are available to anyone who wishes to use them.

Lantra makes no distinction between centres and learners in Scotland and those elsewhere.

3.6.1 About SQA Accreditation

SQA Accreditation quality assures qualifications offered in Scotland by approving ABs and accrediting their qualifications. SQA Accreditation does this by checking ABs and their qualifications against published regulatory principles and accreditation criteria.

SQA Accreditation's work is divided in to two main areas: Accreditation and Regulation. Both sections work with organisations seeking approval as ABs. Thereafter, their main duties are distinct.

The Accreditation section has responsibility for:

- the accreditation of qualifications
- SCQF credit rating
- supporting and advising Sector Skills Councils and Sector Bodies (SSC/Bs) in the development of Sector Qualifications Strategies and their associated action plans
- supporting and advising SSC/Bs in the development of qualification structures, Assessment Strategies and Core Skills Signposting.

The Regulation section is responsible for:

- auditing ABs and monitoring centres to ensure compliance with SQA Accreditation criteria, including the review of self-assessment reports
- investigating compliance and complaints
- maintaining ABs' quality enhancement profiles
- supporting ABs in the development of strategies, policies system and procedures to ensure compliance with accreditation criteria.

If you would like further information about SQA Accreditation, please visit www.sqa.org.uk.

3.7 Environmental issues, health and safety considerations

Relevant environmental issues, health and safety considerations and their application should be considered as part of the taught delivery for all units within these Qualifications.

3.8 Mode of delivery

Delivery is through Lantra Awards centres that are approved to deliver these Qualifications. These Qualifications will be based in a variety of situations which will include classroom, workshop and any appropriate environment for the use of equipment. Each unit/qualification will carry its own assessment requirements and/or guidance which will be fit for purpose and will enable the learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the unit of assessment to be clearly demonstrated and measured. Depending upon the assessment criteria for each unit, methods of assessment will include oral questioning for underpinning knowledge testing and observed practical demonstration.

The Benchmark Assessments (BAs) and Assessment Forms (AFs) are an assessment resource for regulated qualification centres delivering this suite of Qualifications and for assessors assessing learners. Assessors only have access to the AFs and BAs that they are approved for by Lantra. The BAs and AFs are the learner assessment and must not be given to the learner ahead of and/or during the assessment taking place. Any regulated qualification centre and/or assessor found to be giving BAs and/or AFs to learners may be subject to sanctions.

3.8.1 Benchmark Assessment

The assessment for these Qualifications is set by Lantra using the Benchmark Assessment (BA). A BA is provided for each of the units that form part of this suite of Qualifications. The BA is an assessment resource for regulated qualification centres delivering the Qualifications and for assessors assessing learners. Only assessors approved to deliver specific Qualifications should have access to the BA. The BA is the learner assessment and must not be given to the learner ahead of and/or during the assessment taking place. Any regulated qualification centre and/or assessor

found to be giving BAs to learners may be subject to sanctions. BAs are available within the forestry and arboriculture section of My Profile online.

3.8.2 Assessment Form

An Assessment Form (AF) is provided for each of the units that form part of this suite of Qualifications. An AF is available to support the tracking of learner achievement against the unit(s) of the qualification(s). An AF must be used and completed in full for each assessment that is undertaken. Evidence must be provided by the learner and recorded by the assessor for each assessment criteria (AC) and associated guidance of the assessment. The BA must be used as the minimum resource to support the assessor during an assessment. Only assessors approved to deliver specific Qualifications should have access to the AF. The AF is the learner assessment and must not be given to the learner ahead of and/or during the assessment taking place. Any regulated qualification centre and/or assessor found to be giving AFs to learners may be subject to sanctions. AFs are available within the forestry and arboriculture section of My Profile online. All learner AFs must be retained by the regulated qualification centre until instructed to release this following verification.

3.8.2.1 Completing an Assessment Form

The assessor must complete the AF with the support of the BA. The BA is the minimum resource to support the assessor during an assessment. One AF must be completed per learner.

Column heading	Information and guidance
Assessment criteria (AC) and guidance – The learner must	The AC is in bold type. The assessment guidance is in normal type.
AC Met (✓/×)	The assessor must mark off each of the minimum required assessment guidance associated with the given AC. The assessor must indicate with a ✓ for met or, × for not met.
Assessment method/Additional evidence/Result (✓/×)	Assessment method – the assessor must use the BA to indicate the associated code(s) for the type(s) of evidence provided. Additional evidence – it is the responsibility of the assessor to decide if any other suitable evidence that adequately meets the assessment criteria is acceptable to a particular situation in addition to the guidance provided on the BA. The assessor should provide additional evidence to the relevant centre as appropriate (i.e. use/and results of an agreed/approved theory test to assess knowledge).

	Result – overall result for the associated AC. Assessor's should ✓ if all of AC has been met or, × if not all AC has been met.

It is also the responsibility of the assessor to ensure the following sections are completed:

- Assessor feedback to learner
- All AC met
- Date unit achieved
- Learner name
- Learner comment
- Assessor name.

AFs should be returned to the centre. It is the responsibility of the regulated qualification centre to retain assessment paperwork.

3.9 Costs

Qualification fees are based upon a combined full qualification fee or individual unit depending upon the requirements of the learner. For a current list of all centre approval, learner registration charges and quality assurance costs please access the published fees list.

Where required, external verifier (EV) visits and distance monitoring will be charged to the centre at current rates. For a list of current rates please access the published fees list.

A full qualification refers to the minimum number of credits and associated units required to achieve a qualification.

3.10 Certification

3.10.1   Claiming certification

Centres will automatically receive Direct Claim Status (DCS) (authority to claim learner certification prior to an external verification visit) following centre approval. Retention of DCS will be dependent upon the outcome of the centre visit.

Once centres are actively registering and assessing learners a centre visit will be made. The timing of the visit will be when assessments take/have taken place. Centres must liaise with Lantra to ensure the visit takes place at the earliest opportunity. Centres can send a sample of completed Assessment Forms (AFs) to Lantra if you would like assessment decisions to be validated, ahead of a visit.

Centres should be aware that learner certification may be withdrawn if assessment is non-compliant. Lantra will support centres when approval requirements are not met by implementing sanctions; developing action plans; providing recommendations.

The Learner Registration and Assessment Results form should be completed and uploaded/submitted to Lantra Awards for unit/Qualification certification to be issued.

It is recommended copies of learners' work should be retained by the centre until instructed to release this following verification.

3.10.2 Replacement certification

Lantra will issue a replacement certificate if a learner loses the original, provided that the learner can provide proof of identity (for example, birth certificate, wedding certificate, driving licence) and can give details of the centre they were registered with. Lantra will check all claims for replacement certificates against the original certificate claim form. The centre may be contacted for authentication. The certificate will be clearly marked as a replacement. There is a fee for all replacement certificates; contact Lantra for the current fee.

3.11 Funding

These Qualifications may be eligible for funding through relevant Scottish funding sources: Skills Development Scotland (SDS); Scottish Funding Council; colleges; employers.

Funding may be available to organisations which meet the requirements of the relevant agency.

3.12 Complaints

The Lantra Complaints Procedure is published in the Policies Document; available on the Lantra Awards website.

3.13 Appeals

Lantra has an enquiries policy and an appeals procedure that can be used in these circumstances. There are fees for enquiries and appeals, which will be refunded in full if the appeal is upheld or if a learner's results are changed as a result of an enquiry. See the Lantra Policies Document, available on the Lantra Awards website.

3.14 Malpractice

Contact Lantra with as much information as you can provide about the suspected malpractice and the circumstances surrounding the matter. You should also refer to the malpractice procedure in the Lantra Policies Document for information about how Lantra investigates such cases.

3.15 Additional requirements

Lantra Awards publishes its Equality and Diversity Policy in the Policies Document; available on the Lantra Awards website.

Centres are expected to make appropriate arrangements, including reasonable adjustments; these are detailed in the Policy to ensure that learners with additional needs can access assessments wherever possible. The Equality and Diversity Policy covers alternative assessment arrangements which can be made for learners with visual and/or auditory impairment, permanent or temporary physical impairment, specific learning difficulties or dyslexia and learners for whom English is a second language.

3.16 Documentation updates

The information provided in this document was correct at the time of publication. Lantra may update this information at any time. Please refer to the Lantra Awards website, https://www.lantra.co.uk and/or the online centre profile for the latest downloadable version.

4 Centre information

4.1 Centre approval

Your organisation must apply to Lantra Awards to become a regulated qualification centre for this suite of Qualifications.

There are two approval routes depending on your current Lantra Awards status:

Current status	Documents required
New centre or centre approved to deliver other Lantra Awards non regulated provision (such as training courses)	• Part A Application • Part D Application • Centre Agreement
Approved to deliver regulated qualifications	• Part D Application

If you meet the criteria set within the documents required, Lantra will approve your organisation as a 'regulated qualification centre' which means that you can offer these Qualifications.

Regulations require ABs to approve each centre for specific qualifications, regardless of any other activities that organisation may undertake.

Learners cannot be assessed for any part of a Qualification unless Lantra Awards receives notification of assessment from a Lantra Awards regulated qualification centre.

Following centre approval you will be informed in writing of your regulated qualification centre approval; you should access your online centre profile to obtain documentation to support the administration of the Qualification(s).

Lantra only approve centres if they:

- Nominate a member of the team that will be the sole contact with Lantra
- Meet all other centre approval criteria.

Centres are responsible for ensuring learners are fit to participate in all parts of the unit(s)/Qualification(s) they are registered for. Any medical conditions that may affect a learner's ability to participate must be declared.

4.2 Centre ID

When a new centre is approved to offer a qualification, Lantra will allocate a unique centre ID. You must give your centre ID on any correspondence.

4.3 How do centres register learners for the Qualification(s)?

The Notification of Assessment must be completed and submitted to Lantra at least 5 working days before assessment takes place. The Learner Registration and Assessment Results form must be completed and submitted to Lantra following completion of an assessment.

4.3.1 Completing the Learner Registration and Assessment Results form

The Learner Registration and Assessment Results form is a two part form. The top section enables the regulated qualification centre to confirm learner registration and assessment result details. The bottom section (tear off part) enables the assessor to issue the learner with their assessment results in the interim to receiving their certification or being re-assessed.

Role	Responsibility
Learner	Signature
Assessor	Have all assessment criteria been met? Start time End time Signature
Centre	All other sections

4.4 Allocation of Centre External Verifier

When your centre is approved, you will be allocated an EV. Contact details of the EV will be provided and the EV will be informed that your centre has been approved.

An EV may be Lantra staff or an external representative acting on behalf of Lantra.

4.5 Centre External Verifier visits

The exact frequency of monitoring activities will be determined by number and types of products offered and level of activity. The frequency of visits is normally between one a year and one every three years. Lantra will liaise with the centre and the EV to set a date for the visit.

Monitoring will be in the form of either a visit to the centre, a remote monitoring event, which would involve postal sampling and telephone interviews with the assessment team and/or learners where necessary or an unannounced spot visit. See Service Fees list.

Remote monitoring will not be available to a centre until at least one visit has been made and Lantra is satisfied that the centre's systems and processes are rigorous and sufficient to allow remote monitoring.

An EV visit will usually take about six hours at the centre; although this can vary depending on the size of the programme and the number of learners and team members. The location of the visit may vary if assessments are carried out in different locations or if the centre offers a range of qualifications. For more detail on centre visits see EV visits guidance for centres.

Centres will be charged the standard monitoring activity fee for each visit. This is to ensure that the cost of the visit is covered. See Service Fees list. If additional visits are required, for example where there are serious quality issues or concerns an additional visit fee will be charged.

Centres may request an additional visit if they consider that further advice, support or guidance would be beneficial. An additional visit fee will be charged. The request for additional visits must be made via Lantra and not directly with the EV.

The addition of an EV that quality assures the assessment process ensures that assessment via this method is robust and standardised across different assessors.

4.6 Consistency of assessment

The purpose of internal verification is to ensure that quality assurance is monitored within the centre. An essential part of internal quality assurance is to sample the work of the assessor in the programme team to ensure that there is consistency and fairness in the assessment decisions made about individual learners. It is important that where centres use a large number of assessors on a regular basis, such as an established assessment team, all team members are monitored and that effective communication channels are established, especially if any team members are based at a different site.

4.7 Centre queries

This Centre Guidance contains all the information needed to deliver and administer these Qualifications. Queries relating to these Qualifications that are not answered within this document should be referred to Lantra at sales@lantra.co.uk.

5 Assessment

5.1 Assessment

In order to achieve the Qualification(s) learners need to demonstrate that they have met the evidence requirements for the assessment criteria of each of the individual units. BAs and AFs are available online in the centre profile for regulated qualification centre's offering this suite of Qualifications for the units.

All of the assessments for these Qualifications are underpinned by the, 'Rationale for the Assessment of Qualifications and Units in Forestry and Arboriculture' developed by Lantra SSC, specific to qualifications and units in forestry and arboriculture and industry good practice guidance, 'training and certification'. To ensure the accuracy and validity of the assessment process the minimum levels of assessment have been set and detailed by Lantra which is underpinned by the Lantra SSC 'A Rationale for the Assessment of Qualifications and Units in Forestry and Arboriculture' guidance. It would normally be expected that evidence for a given criteria and/or knowledge requirement would consist at least of an assessment carried out on site, where practicable, and recorded questions and answers resulting from that assessment, together with other evidence as required.

Certain elements such as health and safety awareness appear in a number of related qualifications and where learners can demonstrate prior achievement; this may be assessed against the evidence required for the appropriate units. This will apply to all units, or aspects of units. In order to ensure that the evidence used to assess learners against the unit(s) is valid, all centres must demonstrate that the learners have access to the types of resources commonly in use in the industry.

Each unit/qualification has been prescribed a minimum assessment type either, Independent (IA) or Integrated Training and Assessment (ITA). Annexes A – C stipulate the assessment type.

The assessment type for each qualification unit is determined by the level of risk inherent in the activities covered by the individual unit and not on the status of the chainsaw operator. ABs offering chainsaw and aerial treework qualifications have jointly agreed which units are defined as:

- High risk – thereby subject to independent assessment
- Low risk - thereby assessed by integrated training and assessment.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure the unit(s)/qualification(s) assessment meets the requirements of the customer (such as employer, learner) in terms of IA/ITA.

A SSRA must be completed for each assessment.

5.1.1 Assessment strategy

For each qualification the relevant standard setting body (such as an SSC) specifies the assessment requirements (such as an assessment strategy) or guidance specified by a sector or regulatory body which must be implemented by the ABs offering the qualification. Lantra SSC ' A Rationale for the Assessment of Qualifications and Units in Forestry and Arboriculture' must be used as guidance to support these Qualifications.

5.1.2 Independent Assessment

Lantra's IA is underpinned by robust, rigorous quality assurance and meets Ofqual's regulatory requirements.

IA is demonstrated by:

- Assessments are set by Lantra Awards
- Learners are assessed by Lantra Awards approved Assessors
- Learner evidence is standardised and externally, independently verified by Lantra Awards approved External Verifiers (EVs).

IA must be undertaken by a Lantra Awards approved Assessor who does not have a personal interest in the result of the assessment:

- The assessment must take place separately to any training.

In addition, Lantra recognises industry's preference for IA to be conducted independently. It is recommended therefore that the assessor is a different person to the trainer. However, at the discretion of the centre and in line with the guidance provided in Annex C and specific customer requirements, centres may opt for IA to be based solely on the independent quality assurance using external standardisation and verification set by Lantra.

5.1.2.1 Personal interest

Assessors should not assess learners where they have a personal interest in the outcome.

Personal interest can arise where the learner is known to the assessor outside of the educational setting and/or is directly or indirectly related to the assessor.

5.1.2.2 An example of a way for centres to evidence a learner's assessment has taken place separately to the training

- The assessor is different to the instructor
- The assessor is approved by Lantra Awards
- The Lantra Awards approved Assessor must complete the relevant Assessment Form (AF) and relevant section(s) on the Learner Registration and Assessment Results form
- Quality assured training takes place – centres must indicate that quality assured training has been received by the learner
- The Lantra Awards approved Instructor delivering the Lantra Awards training course must verify they have delivered quality assured training to the learner
- The assessment must adhere to the prescribed Lantra Awards AF and Benchmark Assessment (BA).

5.1.3 Integrated Training and Assessment

ITA must be undertaken by a Lantra Awards approved Assessor and may include the following:

- Assessment is on going throughout the period of training with the point of assessment being made clear to the learner
- Assessment may be a separate activity or undertaken during the training.

Lantra's robust and supportive quality assurance underpins all of our ITA qualifications.

ITA is demonstrated by:

- Assessments are set by Lantra Awards
- Learners are assessed by Lantra Awards approved Assessors
- Learner evidence is standardised and externally verified by Lantra Awards approved External Verifiers (EVs).

5.1.4 How do centres provide evidence of learners' achievement of assessment criteria?

An AF and Learner Registration and Assessment Results form must be completed for each unit/Qualification the learner has been assessed against. The AF enables the learner to explicitly provide evidence against each assessment criteria of a unit prior to the assessor verifying the learner's successful completion on the AF and Learner Registration and Assessment Results form. The BA/AF ensures the centre has adequate and sufficient evidence for a learner against each assessment criteria of a unit prior to claiming unit/qualification certification.

5.2 Marking

Each task should be assessed against the assessment criteria of the unit being undertaken and judged to be either achieved or not achieved. Where a series of tasks are set, the learners must demonstrate the achievement of the required standards identified in the assessment criteria in all tasks in order to achieve the unit credit. All of the assessment criteria within a unit must be met before the unit is achieved. The unit is not banded or graded.

Learner evidence should be recorded on the appropriate AF. Lantra Awards has developed appropriate BAs and AFs for all units which are available online in the centre profile.

Centres may be required to provide samples of assessment tasks and activity for regular standardisation events.

6 Quality assurance

Lantra provides robust quality assurance of these Qualifications by ensuring assessment is scrutinised and confirmed through rigorous quality assurance arrangements and standardisation activities.

- Assessments are set by Lantra Awards
- Learners are assessed by Lantra Awards approved Assessors
- Learner evidence is standardised and externally verified by Lantra Awards approved External Verifiers (EVs).

6.1 Definitions of key roles

- **Assessor** - Person who makes the judgement about a learner's competence
- **Internal verifier** - Checks that judgements made by assessors are consistent and checks that quality assurance procedures are followed
- **External verifier** - Independent person appointed by Lantra to assist with monitoring internal quality assurance and to check that assessments are in line with national standards
- **Learner** - Person whose competence is being judged.

Centres, assessors and internal verifiers are all subject to the tariff of sanctions.

6.2 Assessors

6.2.1 Skills and experience

Assessors must be approved by Lantra and have sufficient skills and occupational knowledge to be able to make valid judgements about the competence of learners they assess against a qualification. This may be illustrated by the assessor having achieved the unit/qualification themselves and/or can evidence achievement of current operator competence, having substantial current or recent experience at a fully skilled level in the job function(s) being assessed (including working with current legislation, regulations, procedures and technology), or being in a day-to-day line management, technical or quality assurance role that involves undertaking appraisals and/or assessments of those carrying out work covered by the units they are assessing.

Lantra gives guidance on the specific requirements for assessors for each competency based qualification.

Learners must be assessed by assessors who:

- Are occupationally competent in the areas they are assessing. They should have sufficient and relevant technical competence in the unit, at or above the level of the unit being assessed and as defined by the assessment strategy for that qualification
- Hold or are working towards a suitable Assessor qualification to confirm they understand assessment and how to assess
  - Assessors must successfully complete these units within the time frame(s) stipulated by Lantra.
- Have demonstrable experience of assessing
- Are fully familiar with the unit(s) against which the assessments and verification are to be undertaken
- Hold a current First Aid at Work certificate
- Submit an annual CPD record to Lantra to include a report of an observation of assessment
- Maintain continual professional development (CPD) and attend updates as required.

Individuals that meet current City & Guilds Land Based Services Assessor requirements must provide:

- Current City & Guilds approval certificate(s) per skill area
- Copy of current First Aid at Work certificate
- Evidence of achievement of an award in assessment or completion of these units within time frame(s) stipulated by Lantra.

Lantra holds a register of approved assessors who work directly with any approved centre to assess the suite of forestry and arboriculture qualifications.
Assessors must be familiar with the requirements of the units that are used for assessing learners.

6.2.2 Making assessment decisions

The assessment process for this suite of qualifications revolves around learners collecting sufficient evidence to prove their competence against unit assessment criteria. Assessors must be familiar with the unit(s) and the additional information about the unit(s).

When assessing evidence, the assessor must consider whether the evidence presented by the learner really relates to the requirements of the assessment criteria of the unit. If the evidence is irrelevant it should be discarded or used as evidence towards more appropriate assessment criteria.

Assessors must ensure that the evidence used to assess learners against the unit(s) is current and valid. It may be necessary for the learner to be re-assessed to show that the knowledge and/or skill are still current.
Assessors also need to ensure the assessment decisions are reliable; would they reach the same decisions based on the same evidence for all learners?

Assessors judge the learner to be competent when sufficient evidence has been collected to show that it covers all the requirements of the relevant part of the unit(s).

The assessor must feel confident that the learner has met the criteria required and that they will continue to do so in the future. If the assessor is not convinced, then the learner will need to produce more or alternative evidence.

6.2.3 IA/ITA

For each qualification the relevant standard setting body (such as an SSC) specifies the assessment requirements (such as an assessment strategy that includes independent assessment) or guidance specified by a sector or regulatory body which must be implemented by the ABs offering the qualification.

The detail of the assessment requirements is included in the unit and within the BA/AF.

Assessors must be familiar with the requirements of the assessment and any specified forms for independent assessment.

6.2.4 Assessment methods

It is important to use a variety of assessment methods and types of evidence to obtain a rounded picture of the learner's competence.

Evidence for these units/Qualifications can come from:

- Observations of learners performing a task
- Learner reports of an activity
- Video or audio
- Photographs
- Notes of discussions with assessor(s)
- Formal questioning
- Knowledge tests.

Where these activities still do not cover all the requirements of the units, supplementary evidence can be produced, for example from oral questioning and/or professional discussion. The latter can supplement evidence as it gives the learner the opportunity to explain in more depth what they did and why they did it in the way that they did. It can also help to extend the evidence by asking what the learner would do in a particular set of circumstances.

Oral questioning and/or professional discussion can be used for assessing the knowledge that learners must have in order to be able to carry out activities competently. Evidence of knowledge can be assessed through case studies, pre-set questions or multiple choice tests. Some units require a particular type of assessment and you need to check whether this is the case for the qualification(s) that your centre offers.

6.2.5 When is the evidence sufficient?

The evidence is sufficient when the assessor judges that the requirements of the unit/qualification have been met by the evidence presented.

Centres may wish to set guidelines for the length of time or amount of tuition offered to learners for financial or logistical reasons, and it is helpful to learners to have a target date for completion.

However, there will be some learners who do not collect sufficient evidence of the required quality to achieve. This may be because learners may be aiming for a unit/qualification at too high a level, in which case they will need guidance on to a more appropriate programme.

Centres must provide the opportunity for learners to claim certificates of unit credit so that they can receive a certificate for the credit(s)/unit(s) they have been able to achieve.

Assessors should always consider the centre's equality and diversity policy in relation to the unit(s)/qualification(s) they are assessing and ensure that their own practice complies with it. There may be occasions when a learner has a particular requirement, which means that reasonable adjustments have to be made in order to give them access to assessment opportunities. Centres must apply to Lantra for approval of reasonable adjustments to be made. Please refer to the Lantra equality and diversity policy which includes full details of what arrangements can be made for various types of qualifications.

6.2.6 Feedback to learners

Throughout the process of collecting evidence it is important that learners receive feedback, not only to motivate them, but to help them identify when they have collected sufficient evidence for each unit and where further sources of evidence might be found.

Where feedback is given, assessors should ensure that it is positive and constructive and use the opportunity for future planning.

6.2.7 Records

Assessment records (Site Specific Risk Assessment (SSRA) and the Learner Registration and Assessment Results form) must be sent in with each learner's certification claim. Centres are advised to retain copies of associated assessment documentation to enable monitoring of learners' progress through the unit(s)/ qualification(s), primarily when elements and/or units were achieved and to keep records of feedback given from assessments and action plans negotiated as a result. All assessment records should be retained until at least an EV visit after learners have completed the programme. Centres should adhere to funding arrangements where appropriate. All records must be kept securely so that there is no opportunity for them to be falsified or for fraudulent claims to be made.

There is no prescribed format for these records and centres may well wish to incorporate them into documentation they already maintain within their own organisation. If the centre already works to quality management systems such as the ISO9000 series or is required to maintain records for government funded training schemes, that documentation will almost certainly provide the basis for assessor records.

6.2.8 Summary

Assessors are expected to:

- Be familiar with the requirements of the unit(s) they are assessing, including any associated assessment strategies
- Recognise where opportunities for collecting evidence might arise
- Make judgements about the evidence
- Use a range of appropriate assessment methods
- Review progress and give constructive feedback to learners
- Ensure fair assessment and equal opportunities for all
- Maintain accurate records for each learner
- Endorse all assessments as the authentic work of each learner (countersigned by the learner).

6.3 Internal Verifiers

6.3.1 Skills and experience

Internal Verifiers (IVs) must be registered with Lantra, where a centre uses a large number of assessors or have an established assessment team. For clarification as to whether an IV is appropriate for your centre contact Lantra.

IVs need to have the authority to carry out their role effectively. For example, they will be responsible for recommending improvements or amendments to systems and for identifying training needs for assessors. The support of senior management is essential to the success of the programme and internal quality assurance.

IVs need to be sufficiently knowledgeable about the occupational area and the requirements of the unit(s) so that they can make judgements about the performance of assessors. This may be illustrated by the IV having achieved the unit/qualification themselves and/or having substantial current or recent experience at a fully skilled level in the job function(s) being assessed (including working with current legislation, regulations, procedures and technology), or being in a day-to-day line management, technical or quality assurance role that involves making detailed appraisals and/or assessments of those carrying out work covered by the units they are assessing/verifying.

IVs must:

- Have sufficient and relevant technical/occupational familiarity in the unit(s) being verified
- Be familiar with the standards and assessment criteria in the units to be assessed
- Understand the ABs quality assurance systems and requirements for the qualification(s)
- Maintain CPD and attend updates as required.

IVs will need to receive training for their role. It is desirable the IV holds an appropriate Assessor qualification in order to be familiar with the role of the Assessor. New IVs must be registered with Lantra using the appropriate application.

IVs are responsible for the induction and development of assessors so that they understand how the qualifications work, the contents of the qualification units including the assessment strategies, AB requirements, appropriate methods of assessment, and types of evidence and records which need to be kept.

IVs can act as assessors if they are an approved Lantra Assessor; however, they cannot be the assessor and the IV for the same assessment decisions. If an IV acts as an assessor to make an assessment decision, that assessment decision must then be internally verified by someone else.

6.3.2 Sampling

The IV will check some of the assessments made by assessors to make sure that they agree that the learner is competent (or not) and to make sure that all assessors in the centre would have reached the same decision based on the evidence provided. Where assessment decisions have been sampled, it is recommended that the IV initial the record sheets to show that sampling has taken place. Sampling must include some direct observation of assessments taking place.

For some qualifications, the assessment strategy includes specific requirements for sampling. Where the assessment strategy does not include guidance on sampling, the following general guidance will be helpful.

Sampling will need to be planned to make sure that evidence selected is representative and includes evidence selected from different:

- Units
- Assessment methods
- Type of evidence
- Assessors
- Learners
- Geographical sites / assessment locations
- QCF provision evidence if the centre offers all qualifications.

Whilst it may not be possible to cover all of the above in one sample, over a period of time IVs must ensure that all of the above are sampled. The IV should therefore devise and make available to the EV a strategy to ensure that the above are covered. The strategy should take into account the number of assessors, new assessors and include mechanisms to deal with assessors whose assessment practices are not completely in line with those of other assessors where these are found to exist.

Internal verification is not a process which is left until the learner has completed their unit(s)/qualification(s). IVs should be sampling evidence in progress to ensure that they have identified possible problems early on and that appropriate feedback is given to assessors.
The purpose of the sample is to ensure that learners are being assessed fairly and consistently. The size of the sample selected depends on how confident the IV is about the consistency of assessment practice.

However, as a rough guide, the sample of assessments should be at least 10 per cent or 10, whichever is larger. Lantra suggests the following sampling:

Size of sample	Content of sample
4 per cent or 4	entire assessment
3 per cent or 3	a unit
3 per cent or 3	an assessment criteria

The sample would be larger for a new programme; if assessors are new to the programme or if the IV has already identified potential problems (for example, in interpreting the unit(s)). The EV will want to see records showing how the sample has been selected.

Where assessors have not achieved an Assessor qualification the assessment decisions that they make must be supported by a qualified assessor.

6.3.3 Consistency of assessment

Standardisation meetings should be held for assessors and IVs to compare and standardise their judgements so that everyone involved in the assessment process has a common understanding of the standards required and is assessing to the standards specified for the unit/qualification.

Ideally, all team members should have the opportunity to look at samples of evidence and compare judgements made on them. IVs could also present evidence of differing quality to act as benchmarks for future reference. The meetings provide an opportunity to check on the progress of individual learners, particularly if they are in contact with a number of assessors.

It is important that assessors based at other locations have an opportunity to be included in the meetings, or at least receive a copy of the agenda beforehand so that they can comment and receive a copy of the meeting notes afterwards.

Keeping minutes of the meetings is helpful, not only for disseminating information to members of the programme team, but also to discuss with the EV if necessary. Meetings are important for maintaining the quality and consistency of assessment within individual centres.

6.3.4 Records

Records must include the following as a minimum:

- Learner's name
- Scottish Candidate Number (SCN)
- Date of birth
- Contact address
- Workplace address and contact details
- Copies of Notification of Assessment form(s)
- Copies of learner assessment form(s) (AF)
- Copies of Learner Registration and Assessment Results form(s)
- Assessor(s) name
- IV(s) name
- Date of registration with Lantra
- Learner registration number.

Learner assessment records must include details of who assesses what and when, the assessment decision, feedback, the type of evidence used and the location of supporting evidence.

Lantra recommends the following referencing should be used to indicate the type of evidence provided:

Code	Assessment Method
O	Observation of learner
WP	Work product
WT	Witness testimony
CH	Case history
PS	Personal statement
FQ	Formal questioning
PD	Professional discussion

Assessments must be endorsed by both learner and assessor(s) to state that the evidence is the authentic work of the learner.

Records must be stored securely so that there is no opportunity for records to be falsified (for example, altering assessment decisions) or for fraudulent claims to be made.

Internal verification records must show who internally verified what and when, details of the sample selected and the basis upon which the sample was selected. IVs must keep records of standardisation meetings, meetings with assessors, observation of assessors and feedback given, and records of induction and training of new assessors or IVs and their progress towards assessor and verifier qualifications.

Again, there is no prescribed format for these records and centres may well wish to incorporate them into documentation they already maintain within their own organisation. If the centre already works to quality management systems such as the ISO9000 series or is required to maintain records for government funded training schemes, that documentation will provide the basis for internal verification records. An Assessment Form is an example of a record which could be used by IVs.

Records must be retained by centres for at least three years unless, government funded training schemes stipulate longer, after the learner has completed the programme. Records must be made available to EVs and to the regulatory authorities. If a centre fails to maintain auditable records, and so is unable to substantiate claims for certificates, ABs are required to apply sanctions.

6.3.5 Changes within centres

IVs are responsible for notifying Lantra of any changes within the centres, particularly those which may affect centre approval. Lantra must always be informed of any changes to the assessor or IV team.

6.3.6 External Verifier visits

The EV will notify the centre of what the verification will cover and who should be present. The (lead) IV will be expected to be present during an external verification. The centre is responsible for ensuring action points agreed with the EV during the visit are followed up. Further guidance is given in the next section about the role of EVs.

Lantra welcomes feedback from centres about any aspect of its service and there will be an opportunity to pass comments to Lantra via the EV visit report form.

In addition, Lantra actively seeks comments about any aspect of the standards. Any such comments are collated and passed on to the relevant standards setting body so that when the standards are reviewed, feedback from centres can be incorporated.

6.3.7 Regulatory authorities

From time to time SQA Accreditation may wish to visit centres and will require access to premises, meetings, learner assessment records, internal verification records, documents, data, learners and staff. Centres are required to provide access when requested. Centres may have certificate claims suspended if they do not comply.

6.3.8 Summary

Internal Verifiers are expected to:

- Ensure that the centre's internal quality assurance systems are effective
- Liaise with the EV appointed by Lantra, including being present during centre approval and/or external verification visits
- Ensure action plans agreed during the visit are carried out
- Provide support and advice to assessors, including identifying training, development, updating and disseminating information to team members
- Sample assessment decisions made by assessors, including direct observation, and provide constructive feedback
- Countersign assessment decisions and learner achievement records where appropriate
- Ensure Lantra is informed of any changes within the centre including changes to the IV team
- Monitor equal opportunities practice and achievement

- Ensure that records of learners' progress and achievements are maintained accurately and are available for the EV to see
- Ensure selected sample of assessment is available at the time of the external verification
- Meet with assessors and other IVs (if applicable) to discuss assessment
- Ensure that learners receive appropriate support (induction, planning of learning and assessment, monitoring and review of progress, access to information about progression routes)
- Deal with appeals and refer them onto Lantra if necessary
- Provide feedback to the EV
- Report suspected malpractice and co-operate fully with investigations.

6.4 External verifier

EVs are appointed and allocated to regulated qualification centres by Lantra to ensure that each centre's quality assurance systems are operating to maintain national standards. The EV will ensure that assessment decisions are consistent with the national standards and will sample assessments and learners' evidence in order to make this judgement.

6.4.1 Skills and experience

Lantra ensures that EVs are familiar with and/or experienced in the sector for which they are appointed and have qualifications and experience that are relevant to the qualification(s) offered by the centre.

EVs must:

- Have no vested interest with the assessment centre, in order to maintain objectivity
- Have sufficient and relevant technical/occupational understanding in the unit(s) being verified
- Be familiar with the standards and assessment criteria in the units to be assessed
- Understand the ABs quality assurance systems for the qualification(s)
- Meet the requirements of Lantra Awards EV job specification
- Maintain CPD and attend updates as required.

It is recommended EVs:

- Hold or are working towards a suitable EV qualification to confirm they understand and are able to carry out external verification.

On occasion it may be permissible for EVs to have access to technical/occupational knowledge. This may be appropriate when the EV is not fully familiar with an element of the unit/qualification or with a specific technical activity and, they require additional support. The EV must contact Lantra in this circumstance.

All EVs go through a training process with Lantra, which includes being mentored by an experienced verifier. They may also hold an Assessor and Verifier qualification.

Lantra EVs carry out their duties in accordance with assessment strategies and regulatory requirements.

6.4.2 Arranging external verifier visits

EVs must have access to the centre's systems and processes and copies of learner and assessor/IV records and locations where assessments take place. The IV must make sure that the required evidence is available for the visit and that EVs are informed if they need to travel to other sites. If the centre operates across a number of sites, the EV will require the necessary evidence to be made available at whichever site the EV nominates for the visit to take place.

Requests to see particular assessors may be made before the visit takes place. Using a standard visit planner the EV will inform the centre around 10 days in advance of their visit, which evidence they wish to see and for which learners. They may also request access to evidence for other learners during the course of the visit, without prior notification. EVs may wish to observe assessments taking place and to meet learners. EVs will sample the completed evidence for learners who have claimed certificates. Centres must make sure that these are retained for this purpose until after the EV's visit.

Where a learner selected by the EV for interview is not available at the time of the visit, Lantra will require proof that the learner exists. Where this cannot be substantiated, Lantra will notify the regulatory authorities, suspend the centre from registering learners or claiming certificates and will instigate formal investigation proceedings.

The EV will expect to see the IV, where applicable/appropriate, and some of the assessors, a sample of learner and assessor records and a sample of different assessment methods used within the centre. A room should be available for the EV to look at evidence and to interview learners where applicable.

6.4.3 During the external verifier visit

EVs monitor the information given when centre approval was granted and need to be informed when any of those details change, particularly where there could be a significant effect on the programme. For example, EVs need to be informed of changes in roles and responsibilities within the programme team, and new team members.

EV visits may review learner evidence, the judgements made by assessors and the IV, and the support systems required to deliver the unit(s)/qualification(s). EVs will want to see that learner action plans and targets are monitored and that learners are given access to certificates of unit credit.

6.4.4 Sampling

EVs are required to record the evidence they have sampled using the sampling record sheet that forms part of the EV report form. This record ensures that EVs can build up a record of what they have sampled over the course of several visits to ensure that they are sampling across all the different variables.

EVs will plan their sample to ensure that the evidence selected is representative and, that over a period of time, their sampling includes evidence selected from different:

- Units
- Assessment methods
- Types of evidence
- Assessors and IVs, including those who are inexperienced
- Learners
- Geographical sites
- Learners at different stages of completion.

EVs sample of assessments should be at least 10 per cent or 10, whichever is larger. Lantra suggests the following sampling:

Size of sample	Content of sample
4 per cent or 4	entire assessment
3 per cent or 3	a unit
3 per cent or 3	an assessment criteria

Where there are concerns about the consistency of assessment decisions and practices, a higher level of sampling will be undertaken. If this involves any additional units, an additional visit fee will be charged. EVs will sample assessment and internal verification records.

6.4.5 Sanctions

Lantra will implement sanctions ranging from suspension of DCS to withdrawal of centre approval where centres are found to be not operating these units/qualifications in accordance with the guidance in this document and SQA Accreditation regulatory requirements. If centre approval is withdrawn, the regulatory authorities will be informed. Lantra works to the SQA Accreditation/SCQF documentation in its management of these qualifications. Lantra will support centres when approval requirements are not met by implementing sanctions, developing action plans and/or providing recommendations.

6.4.6 Feedback from external verifier visits

You will receive feedback from the EV on the day of the visit. The feedback may include examples of good practice they have observed. There will likely be some action points which will be discussed and agreed with you during the visit, to help your centre work towards best practice wherever possible. Copies of the report are sent to Lantra so that they can monitor the units/qualifications nationally.

If centres are not able to meet the requirements then the EV will state in writing what improvements are to be made and the date by which they are to be completed. The EV may then return to the centre on an agreed date to confirm that the centre has remedied the non-compliance.

Your centre must ensure that action points are followed up; otherwise centre approval may be suspended or even withdrawn. The EV will make a recommendation to Lantra after every visit about whether centre approval can be continued. If you are not satisfied with the EVs judgement then you can appeal to Lantra according to its published appeals policy.

6.4.7 Number of visits

Centres will receive periodical EV monitoring activities dependent on number of learners, assessments and activity. Centres may request additional visits, for which they will be charged the standard visit fee. Additional visits must be requested through Lantra and not directly to the EV.

Where the EV has identified that a centre is not operating the unit(s)/qualification(s) in accordance with the guidance in this document, they may recommend to Lantra that one or more additional visits will be required. A charge will be made for all additional visits.

Where a centre cancels a pre-arranged EV activity at short notice Lantra will contact the centre for an explanation and a full external verification charge may be incurred. If there is any doubt as to the reason for cancellation, Lantra may suspend DCS or withhold certification until a visit has taken place. Lantra reserves the right to carry out EV visits at short notice or without prior notice to minimise the risk of unsubstantiated claims for certificates being made. The regulatory authorities may also make monitoring visits at short notice or without prior notice.

6.4.8 Summary

External verifiers are expected to:
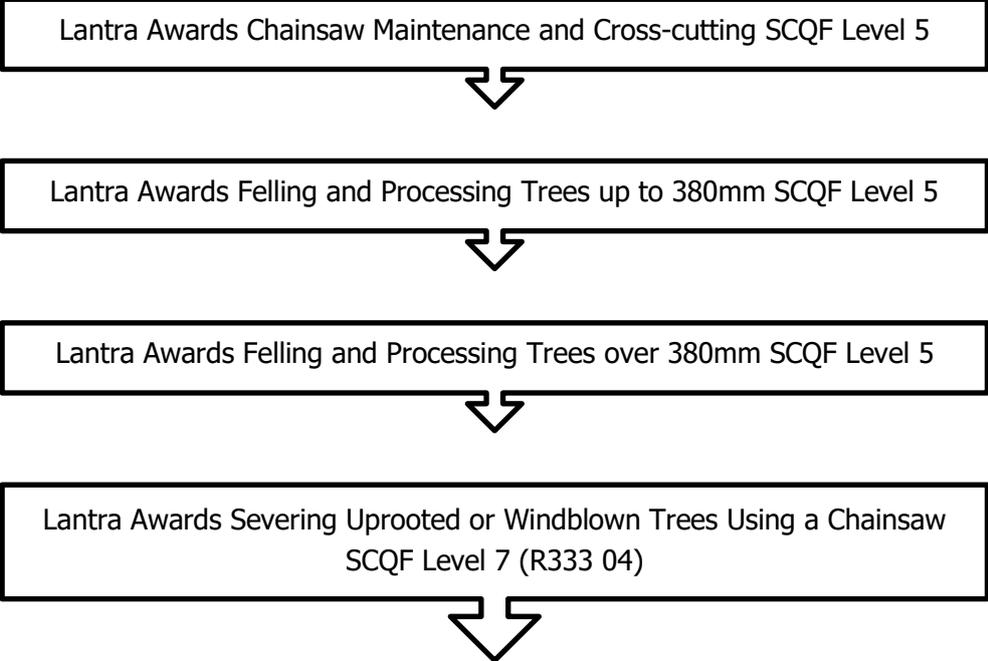
- Monitor the sufficiency of staff and physical resources
- Check that assessment decisions reflect national standards
- Monitor the assessment process and learners' achievement
- Check that appropriate sources of evidence are used
- Ensure that there is access to fair and reliable assessment
- Check that accurate records are being maintained
- Recommend sanctions where appropriate.

6.5 Census Ethnic Group Classifications (2011)

Please use the following code(s) to indicate ethnicity when completing the Learner Registration and Assessment Results form.

England and Wales		Northern Ireland			Scotland	
	White:					**White:**
01	English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	19	White		30	Scottish
02	Irish	20	Chinese		31	British
03	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	21	Irish traveller		32	Irish
04	Any other White background	22	Indian		33	Any other White background
	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	23	Pakistani			**Mixed:**
05	White and Black Caribbean	24	Bangladeshi		34	
06	White and Black African	25	Black Caribbean			**Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British:**
07	White and Asian	26	Black African			
08	Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background	27	Black other		35	Indian
					36	Pakistani
	Asian/Asian British:	28	Mixed ethnic group		37	Bangladeshi
09	Indian	29	Any other ethnic group		38	Chinese
10	Pakistani				39	Any other Asian background
11	Bangladeshi					**Black, Black Scottish or**
12	Chinese					
13	Any other Asian background					**Black British:**
					40	Caribbean
	Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British:				41	African
14	African				42	Any other Black background
15	Caribbean					**Other ethnic background**
16	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background				43	Any other ethnic group
	Other ethnic Group:					
17	Arab					
18	Any other ethnic group					

7 Annex A – Chainsaw qualifications - progression routes

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Lantra Awards Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting SCQF Level 5   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees up to 380mm SCQF Level 5   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Lantra Awards Felling and Processing Trees over 380mm SCQF Level 5   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                 ⇩
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Lantra Awards Severing Uprooted or Windblown Trees Using a Chainsaw   │
│                   SCQF Level 7 (R333 04)                              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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8 Annex C – Assessment of units – guidance

Unit Code	Unit Title	SCQF Credit Value	SSC Unit	Age Restriction	Guidance
UC08 04	Carry out maintenance of chainsaw and cutting system	1	Lantra	Yes	This unit is not appropriate for persons under 16 years of age. It is not manufacturer specific. It represents the outcomes necessary to demonstrate safe working practice and operator competence. Assessment type: Integrated Training and Assessment.
UC09 04	Cross-cut timber using a chainsaw	1	Lantra	Yes	This unit is not appropriate for persons under 16 years of age. It is not manufacturer specific. It represents the outcomes necessary to demonstrate safe working practice and operator competence. Before taking this, learners must successfully achieve pre-requisite unit(s)/qualification(s) or equivalent (QCF/SCQF) provision. Assessment type: Independent. It is recommended the assessor is a different person to the trainer.
UC10 04	Fell and process trees up to 380mm	5	Lantra	Yes	This unit is not appropriate for persons under 16 years of age. It is not manufacturer specific. It represents the outcomes necessary to demonstrate safe working practice and operator competence. Before taking this, learners must successfully achieve pre-requisite unit(s)/qualification(s) or equivalent (QCF/SCQF) provision. Assessment type: Independent. It is recommended the assessor is a different person to the trainer.
UC15 04	Fell and process trees over 380mm	3	Lantra	Yes	This unit is not appropriate for persons under 16 years of age. It is not manufacturer specific. It represents the outcomes necessary to demonstrate safe working practice and operator competence. Before taking this, learners must successfully achieve pre-requisite unit(s)/qualification(s) or equivalent (QCF/SCQF) provision. Assessment type: Integrated Training and Assessment.

| UC18 04 | Sever uprooted or windblown trees using a chainsaw | 5 | Lantra | Yes | This unit is not appropriate for persons under 16 years of age. It is not manufacturer specific. It represents the outcomes necessary to demonstrate safe working practice and operator competence. Before taking this, learners must successfully achieve pre-requisite unit(s)/qualification(s) or equivalent (QCF/SCQF) provision.
Assessment type: Independent. |

Note: All units have a benchmark assessment

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