

Remember, a mapping exercise has already identified which knowledge and understanding requirements are covered by the online learning materials and, in addition to the above SVQs, the e-learning materials can be applied across a large number of vocational qualifications. The online materials cover subject matters including health and safety and security, personal effectiveness, communication skills, dealing with difficult customers – all of which form the content of many mandatory and optional units of vocational qualifications.

Where additional evidence is required the assessor will ask further questions to fill the knowledge and/or performance gap:

- the assessor will discuss the learning need with the learner's supervisor/mentor and arrange for further training or coaching to cover the skills/knowledge gap
- the assessor will ask the learner to research and find answers to missing knowledge and understanding requirements

The benefits of using e-learning materials to support the knowledge and understanding requirements of SVQs will include:

- a consistency of approach to assessment of knowledge and understanding requirements – **evidence is fair**
- relevant support materials for learners which will also meet the needs of SVQs – **evidence is valid**
- learning materials which are current and which relate to skills needed for today's workplace – **evidence is reliable**
- flexibility of access to materials
- courses are worked through at the learners own pace – courses will re-load where they are left off, or they can be re-launched - **evidence is safe**
- currency of evidence for SVQs
- achievement of SVQ will be further enhanced by the completion of the online courses

SVQs provide a means of developing the skills and knowledge of individuals, whilst they are at work, which should produce benefits both the learner and the business. A common barrier to learning and other training activities at work is very often time. Online learning materials offer learners, and their employers, the flexibility of access to learning when it most suits their needs.

### Further information

learndirect scotland e-learning catalogue - <http://vlc.skillnetonline.com/learningbytes>

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

Employment National Training Organisation (ENTO)

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## Using e-Learning Materials to support achievement of Knowledge and Understanding requirements of Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs)

This article, aimed at tutors and assessors in learndirect scotland branded learning centres delivering vocational qualifications (S/NVQs), demonstrates how e-learning materials can support and enhance the learning experience and achievement of vocational qualifications.



SVQs are work based qualifications. They are achieved by learners demonstrating their performance of a chosen work activity against a standard of work which has been set by the National Training Organisation/Sector Skills Council for that industry or occupational area. In addition to demonstrating their performance, learners also have to prove that they understand why they perform a task in a given way and this is measured against the knowledge and understanding requirements for the task.

This article aims to demonstrate how e-learning materials can support and enhance the learning experience, and achievement, of SVQs.

Vocational qualifications have a common structure. They consist of:

- **units**  
Units describe key tasks within a job role  
(Consider making a pot of tea as a key task/unit)
- **elements/outcomes**  
Elements/outcomes define activities within those tasks  
(Boiling the kettle would be an element )
- **performance criteria**  
Performance criteria specify exactly what tasks have to be performed within the element/outcome  
(Filling the kettle, putting on the lid, plugging the kettle into the mains, switching on the kettle – all would be performance criteria)
- **range/scope**  
Range/scope expands the circumstances and/or situation under which the key task has to be performed  
(Electric kettle, boiling a kettle on a gas hob, using a jug kettle, full kettles, half- full kettles – all would be ranges/scope that would apply to the key task)
- **knowledge and understanding requirements**  
By addressing the knowledge and understanding requirements – usually by answering questions - candidates demonstrate they know why a task is performed in a specific way  
(Why must a kettle be filled before use? Where should an electric kettle be positioned? What are the benefits of boiling water to a pot of tea?)

Evidence which will cover performance of a unit activity, e.g., dealing with customers' problems, will probably come from sources such as observation, learners' reports, witness testimonies, and will generally be generated by the learner.

Evidence for knowledge and understanding has traditionally been addressed by assessment of the following sources of evidence

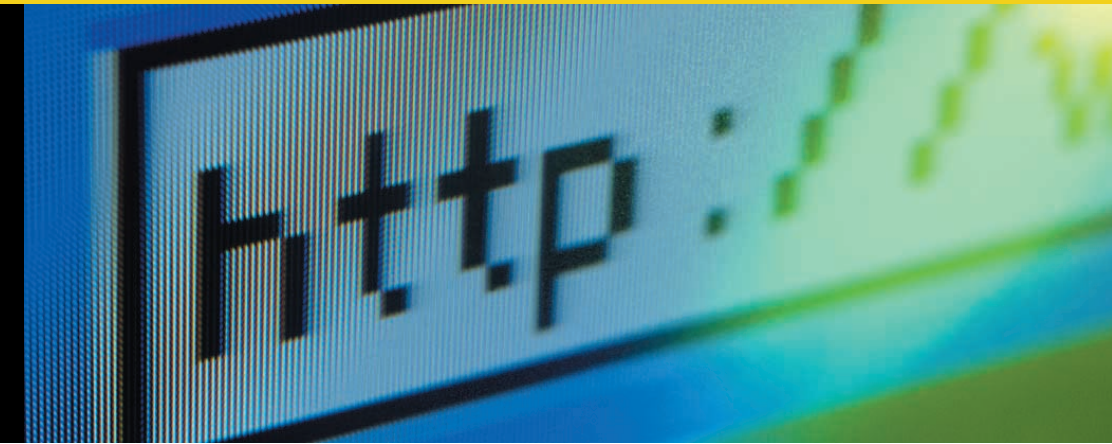
- written report by the learner which covers the knowledge and understanding requirements
- answers to oral, assessor devised or pre-set questions
- observation
- witness testimonies

... e-learning materials can support and enhance the learning experience and achievement of vocational qualifications

## Learners can take control of their learning



On-line learning and the use of e-learning materials offers an option which will add another dimension to the learning experience for the learner



These sources of evidence are considered fair, safe, valid and reliable (requirements for evidence from assessor standard of performance, unit A1) but depend on evidence being collected by the learner and assessed by an assessor. This arrangement for assessment also depends on successful time management of the assessment plan and can be thrown into disarray if either party – learner or assessor – is unable to attend arranged meetings.

### How can online learning materials help learners achieve their SVQ?

Online learning and the use of e-learning materials offers an option which will add another dimension to the learning experience for the learner. The flexibility of access to materials combined with content that relates directly to the knowledge and understanding requirements means that:

- learners will be able to access learning at the time, place, pace and style of learning that most closely meets their needs (learndirect scotland Pledge to Learners, Point 1)
- learners will be provided with learning materials that are relevant to their own personal and work interests and actively involves them in practical examples, exercises and experiences (learndirect scotland Pledge to Learners, Point 3)

Assessment of evidence for SVQs will often identify learning needs. Initial assessment and assessment planning should identify any areas of weakness that exist within a learner's ability to perform to the given standard.

Where this occurs, the assessor will arrange for additional training or learning support to address the skills gap before assessing performance. This will often involve a third party and can take time to organise and plan.

By using e-learning materials, the assessor will be able to direct the learner to the appropriate courseware (e-learning materials). They can then access learning material which will fulfill their learning need(s) at times when it suits them, when it is most convenient for them to learn. This could be during arranged study time at work, during lunch breaks, during free time at home or wherever and whenever learners can connect to the internet. Learners can take control of their learning.

An additional feature of e-learning materials may be online testing at the end of each piece of learning. When learners have successfully completed the course they will be issued with a certificate of achievement and this will satisfy the evidence requirements of knowledge and understanding components for the appropriate SVQ. Only when they have successfully completed and passed the online test will they be issued with a certificate. Appropriately guided, learners will be able to re-sit the online test until they have successfully completed.

Not only will the online learning materials cover the knowledge and understanding requirements for vocational qualification, online learning will improve and develop existing skills of learners.

#### Summary for accessing and using e-learning materials

- learning materials are accessed through Skillnet – learndirect scotland's learning management system
- learners should discuss and agree the appropriate learning course(s) with their assessor
- learners should follow the online instructions for launching their courses – they are easy to access
- learners should work through the materials at their own pace
- learners can dip in and out of courses – the materials will re-load where they left off

The learndirect scotland catalogue of e-learning materials contains courses which have already been mapped to the following SVQs:

#### Administration – levels 2 & 3

Examples of appropriate online learning materials

- Active listening
- Essential phone communication skills
- Handling angry callers
- Making difficult calls
- Taking and leaving phone messages
- Improving working relationships

#### Customer Service levels 2 & 3

Examples of appropriate online learning materials

- Caring for your customers
- Building a customer service team
- Communicating with your customers
- Creating customer loyalty
- Effective communication

#### Management levels 3 & 4

Examples of appropriate online learning materials

- Maintaining a productive workforce
- Succeeding as a new manager
- Assertiveness skills
- Delegation
- Time management
- Managing change

#### Team Leader level 3

Examples of appropriate online learning materials

- Developing your team
- Delegation
- Creating a positive workplace
- Building a customer service team
- Giving praise and feedback to your team
- Team communication

Of course, different levels of knowledge and understanding require to be demonstrated at different SVQ levels, ie, knowledge requirements vary greatly between levels 2, 3, 4 & 5. The learner's assessors will judge whether further evidence is required, but successful completion of an e-learning unit would be considered as evidence towards competence.

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