Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising)

Specification

NVQ/competence-based qualifications

First registration January 2012

Issue 2

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked. For further information, please visit our qualifications website at qualifications.pearson.com. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at qualifications.pearson.com/contactus

About Pearson

Pearson is the world's leading learning company, with 35,000 employees in more than 70 countries working to help people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives through learning. We put the learner at the centre of everything we do, because wherever learning flourishes, so do people. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at qualifications.pearson.com

This specification is Issue 2. Key changes are listed in the summary table on the next page. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on the Pearson website: qualifications.pearson.com

This qualification was previously known as:

Edexcel Level 3 Certificate and Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising) (QCF)

The QN remains the same.

Summary of Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising) specification Issue 2 changes

Summary of changes made between previous issue and this current issue	Page number
All references to QCF have been removed throughout the specification	
Definition of TQT added	1
Definition of sizes of qualifications aligned to TQT	2
TQT value added	6
Guided learning definition updated	13
QCF references removed from unit titles and unit levels in all units	17-83

Earlier issue(s) show(s) previous changes.

If you need further information on these changes or what they mean, contact us via our website at: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html.

Contents

Introducing Pearson Edexcel NVQ qualifications

What are NVQ qualifications?

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work-based qualifications that give learners the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their competence in the area of work or job role to which the qualification relates.

NVQs are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the appropriate sector. NOS define what employees, or potential employees, must be able to do and know, and how well they should undertake work tasks and work roles. At Level 2 and above, these qualifications are recognised as the competence component of Apprenticeship Frameworks. Qualifications at Level 1 can be used in Traineeships, which are stepping-stones to Apprenticeship qualifications. NVQs qualifications can also be delivered as stand-alone for those who wish to take a work-based qualification.

NVQs qualifications are outcomes-based with no fixed learning programme – allowing flexible delivery that meets the individual learner's needs. They are suitable for those in employment or those who are studying at college and have a part-time job or access to a substantial work placement so that they are able to demonstrate the competencies that are required for work.

Most learners will work towards their qualification in the workplace or in settings that replicate the working environment as specified in the assessment requirements/strategy for the sector. Colleges, training centres and/or employers can offer these qualifications provided they have access to appropriate physical and human resources.

Sizes of NVQ/Competence-based qualifications

For all regulated qualifications, Pearson specify a total number of hours that is estimated learners will require to complete and show achievement for the qualification – this is the Total Qualification Time (TQT). The TQT value indicates the size of a qualification. Within the TQT, Pearson identifies the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) that we estimate a centre delivering the qualification might provide. Guided learning means activities, such as lessons, tutorials, online instruction, supervised study and giving feedback on performance, that directly involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising and invigilating learners. Guided learning includes the time required for learners to complete external assessment under examination or supervised conditions. In addition to guided learning, other required learning directed by tutors or assessors will include private study, preparation for assessment and undertaking assessment when not under supervision, such as preparatory reading, revision and independent research. As well as TQT and GLH, qualifications can also have a credit value – equal to one tenth of TQT, rounded to the nearest whole number. TQT and credit values are assigned after consultation with users of the qualifications.

NVQ/Competence-based qualifications are available in the following sizes:

- Award – a qualification with a TQT value of 120 or less (equivalent to a range of 1–12 credits)

- Certificate – a qualification with a TQT value in the range of 121–369 (equivalent to a range of 13–36 credits)

- Diploma – a qualification with a TQT value of 370 or more (equivalent to 37 credits and above).

Qualification titles covered by this specification

This specification gives you the information you need to offer the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising):

Qualification title	Qualification Number (QN)	Accreditation start date
Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising)	600/3985/1	01/01/2012

Qualifications eligible and funded for post-16-year-olds can be found on the funding Hub. The Skills Funding Agency also publishes a funding catalogue that lists the qualifications available for 19+ funding.

You should use the Qualification Number (QN), when you wish to seek public funding for your learners. Each unit within a qualification will also have a unique reference number, which is listed in this specification.

The qualification title and unit reference numbers will appear on the learners' final certification document. Learners need to be made aware of this when they are recruited by the centre and registered with Pearson.

This title replaces the following qualifications from 1 January 2012:

Qualification title	Qualification Number (QN)	Accreditation start date	Accreditation end date
Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising) (QCF)	500/7422/2	01/09/2009	31/12/2011

Key features of the Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising)

This qualification is:

- nationally recognised

- based on the Retail National Occupational Standards (NOS). The NOS, assessment requirements/strategy and qualification structure(s) are owned by Skillsmart Retail.

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising) has been approved as components for the Retail Apprenticeship framework.

What is the purpose of this qualification?

This qualification comprises credit-rated units developed by Skillsmart Retail, the sector skills council for the retail sector. The qualifications will allow learners to apply knowledge, understanding and skills to a national occupational level required by employers, thus proving competency in their job role.

Who are is this qualification for?

This qualification is for all learners aged 16 and above who are capable of reaching the required standards.

Pearson's policy is that the qualifications should:

- be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression

- ensure equality of opportunity for all wishing to access the qualifications.

What are the potential job roles for those working towards this qualification?

- Retail assistant

- Retail buyer

- Retail manager

- Retail merchandiser

What progression opportunities are available to learners who achieve this qualification?

This qualification provides progression to the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Certificate or Diploma in Retail Skills (Sales Professional) and/or the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Certificate or Diploma in Retail Skills (Management).

What is the qualification structure for the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising?

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification is 530.

The Guided Learning Hours for this qualification are 255.

Individual units can be found in the *Units* section. The level and credit value are given on the first page of each unit.

To complete this qualification, candidates must achieve a **minimum of 53 credits**.

A minimum of 42 credits must be achieved at **Level 3**, of which:

- **10 credits** must come from the mandatory unit in **Group A**
- **a minimum of 32 credits** must come from the level 3 units in **Group B**.

A maximum of 11 credits can come from the Level 2 and Level 3 units in **Group C**.

Ten credits must come from **Group A:**

Group A						
Unit number	SSC unit code	Unit title	Unit reference number	Level	Credit	GLH
1	E.08	Work effectively and support others in a retail organisation	H/503/5729	3	10	50

and
- **a minimum of 32 credits** must come from **Group B:**

Group B						
Unit number	SSC unit code	Unit title	Unit reference number	Level	Credit	GLH
2	C.24	Choose merchandise to feature in visual merchandising displays	H/503/5701	3	6	27
3	C.25	Manage the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays	K/503/5702	3	7	31
4	C.26	Evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays	M/503/5703	3	9	46
5	C.27	Manage budgets for visual merchandising projects	T/503/5704	3	10	46
6	C.28	Contribute to	A/503/5705	3	8	36

Group B						
		improving a retail organisation's visual merchandising policy				
7	C.29	Design visual merchandising display layouts	F/503/5706	3	10	46

- **a maximum of 11 credits** can come from **Group C:**

Group C						
Unit number	SSC unit code	Unit title	Unit reference number	Level	Credit	GLH
8	B.37	Manage staff to receive goods in a retail environment	D/503/5681	3	5	24
9	B.38	Organise and monitor the storage of stock in a retail environment	H/503/5682	3	6	27
10	C.18	Follow guidelines for planning and preparing visual merchandising displays	D/503/5695	2	5	22
11	C.19	Dress visual merchandising displays to attract customers	H/503/5696	2	7	35
12	C.20	Order and position signage and graphics for visual merchandising displays	K/503/5697	2	3	15
13	C.21	Dismantle and store props and graphics from visual merchandising displays	M/503/5698	2	3	15
14	C.22	Make props and decorate fixtures and panels for visual merchandising displays	T/503/5699	2	10	45
15	C.23	Assemble visual merchandising displays	D/503/5700	2	4	20
16	E.09	Deputise for the leader of a retail team	Y/503/5730	3	11	55
17	E.10	Contribute to the continuous improvement of retail operations within own area of responsibility	D/503/5731	3	10	47

How are the qualifications graded and assessed?

The overall grade for each qualification is a 'pass'. The learner must achieve all the required units within the specified qualification structure.

To pass a unit the learner must:

* achieve **all** the specified learning outcomes

* satisfy **all** the assessment criteria by providing sufficient and valid evidence for each criterion

* show that the evidence is their own.

The qualifications are designed to be assessed:

* in the workplace or

* in conditions resembling the workplace, as specified in the assessment requirements/strategy for the sector, or

* as part of a training programme.

Assessment requirements/strategy

The assessment requirements/strategy for these qualifications have been included in *Annexe C*. They have been developed by Skillsmart Retail in partnership with employers, training providers, awarding organisations and the regulatory authorities. The assessment strategy includes details on:

* the use and application of simulation

* use of simulation as an assessment method

* definition of a Realistic Working Environment (RWE)

* the role of supervisors and managers in the assessment process

* the role of peripatetic and internal verifiers in the assessment process

* the role of expert witnesses in the assessment process

* occupational competence of expert witnesses

* occupational competence of assessors

* occupational competence of verifiers

* continuing professional development of assessors and verifiers

* risk identification

* risk management.

Evidence of competence may come from:

- **current practice** where evidence is generated from a current job role

- a **programme of development** where evidence comes from assessment opportunities built into a learning/training programme whether at or away from the workplace

- the **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** where a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment criteria within a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess without undertaking a course of learning. They must submit sufficient, reliable and valid evidence for internal and standards verification purposes. RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, several units or a whole qualification

- a **combination** of these.

It is important that the evidence is:

Valid	relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
Authentic	produced by the learner
Current	sufficiently recent to create confidence that the same skill, understanding or knowledge persist at the time of the claim
Reliable	indicates that the learner can consistently perform at this level
Sufficient	fully meets the requirements of the standards.

Types of evidence

To successfully achieve a unit the learner must gather evidence which shows that they have met the required standard in the assessment criteria. Evidence can take a variety of different forms including the examples below. Centres should refer to the assessment strategy for information about which of the following are permissible.

- direct observation of the learner's performance by their assessor (O)

- outcomes from oral or written questioning (Q&A)

- products of the learner's work (P)

- personal statements and/or reflective accounts (RA)

- outcomes from simulation, where permitted by the assessment strategy (S)

- professional discussion (PD)

- assignment, project/case studies (A)

- authentic statements/witness testimony (WT)

- expert witness testimony (EWT)

- evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The abbreviations may be used for cross-referencing purposes.

Learners can use one piece of evidence to prove their knowledge, skills and understanding across different assessment criteria and/or across different units. It is, therefore, not necessary for learners to have each assessment criterion assessed separately. Learners should be encouraged to reference the assessment criteria to which the evidence relates.

Evidence must be made available to the assessor, internal verifier and Pearson standards verifier. A range of recording documents is available on the Pearson website qualifications.pearson.com. Alternatively, centres may develop their own.

Centre recognition and approval

Centre recognition

Centres that have not previously offered Pearson qualifications need to apply for and be granted centre recognition as part of the process for approval to offer individual qualifications. New centres must complete both a centre recognition approval application and a qualification approval application.

Existing centres will be given 'automatic approval' for a new qualification if they are already approved for a qualification that is being replaced by the new qualification and the conditions for automatic approval are met. Centres already holding Pearson approval are able to gain qualification approval for a different level or different sector via Edexcel online.

Approvals agreement

All centres are required to enter into an approvals agreement which is a formal commitment by the head or principal of a centre to meet all the requirements of the specification and any linked codes or regulations. Pearson will act to protect the integrity of the awarding of qualifications, if centres do not comply with the agreement. This could result in the suspension of certification or withdrawal of approval.

Quality assurance

Detailed information on Pearson's quality assurance processes is given in *Annexe A*.

What resources are required?

Each qualification is designed to support learners working in the Retail sector. Physical resources need to support the delivery of the qualifications and the assessment of the learning outcomes and must be of industry standard. Centres must meet any specific resource requirements outlined in *Annexe C: Assessment requirements/strategy*. Staff assessing the learner must meet the requirements within the overarching assessment strategy for the sector.

Unit format

Each unit in this specification contains the following sections.

Unit title:

This is the formal title of the unit that will appear on the learners certificate

Unit reference number:

This code is a unique reference number for the unit.

Level:

All units and qualifications have a level assigned to them. The level assigned is informed by the level descriptors by Ofqual, the qualifications regulator.

Credit value:

All units have a credit value. The minimum credit value is one, and credits can only be awarded in whole numbers. Learners will be awarded credits when they achieve the unit.

Guided learning hours:

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is the number of hours that a centre delivering the qualification needs to provide. Guided learning means activities that directly or immediately involve tutors and assessors in teaching, supervising, and invigilating learners, for example lectures, tutorials, online instruction and supervised study.

Unit summary:

This provides a summary of the purpose of the unit.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements:

The assessment/evidence requirements are determined by the SSC. Learners must provide evidence for each of the requirements stated in this section.

Recording of evidence:

Details how evidence can be recorded.

Learning outcomes:	Assessment criteria:	Evidence type:	Portfolio reference:	Date:

The learner should use this box to indicate where the evidence can be obtained eg portfolio page number.

The learner should give the date when the evidence has been provided.

Learning outcomes state exactly what a learner should know, understand or be able to do as a result of completing a unit.

The assessment criteria of a unit specify the standard a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome, or a set of learning outcomes, has been achieved.

Learners must reference the type of evidence they have and where it is available for quality assurance purposes. The learner can enter the relevant key and a reference. Alternatively, the learner and/or centre can devise their own referencing system.

Units

Unit 1: Work effectively and support others in a retail organisation

Unit reference number:	H/503/5729
Level:	3
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	50

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of a team leader or senior team leader within a retail team, to work effectively and support others to contribute to the success of the wider organisation.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

This unit can be assessed independently of other units. However, it may be possible to generate some of the evidence for this unit holistically when gathering evidence for other units in the same qualification.

AC 4.5: 'Politely' means demonstrating respect and consideration for other people through the use of appropriate body language, verbal language, tone of voice (or the sign language equivalent) and facial expressions.

AC 6.6: 'Constructive' means objective (i.e. not personal), designed to help, and conveyed in a respectful manner.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand how own team contributes to the success of the wider organisation	1.1 Explain own team's purpose, aims and targets in the context of the wider organisation			
	1.2 Explain the roles and responsibilities of colleagues in own team			
	1.3 Explain the importance of good working relations within own team			
2 Understand own role within a team in a retail environment	2.1 Explain own responsibility for contributing to own team's success, including helping colleagues to learn			
	2.2 Explain the importance of being a reliable team member			
	2.3 Explain the factors to take account of when making commitments, including: • existing workload • the degree to which interruptions and changes of plan are within own control			
	2.4 Explain the importance of implementing the organisation's policies and procedures for health and safety, including the importance of setting a good example to colleagues			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3	Understand what motivates self and colleagues in a retail environment	3.1	Explain the factors that can affect own and colleagues' motivation to carry out work in a retail environment, including skills and existing workload			
		3.2	Explain potential circumstances that could affect morale in a retail environment			
4	Be able to support effective working within a retail team	4.1	Allocate work in ways that take account of own and colleagues' preferences, skills and available time			
		4.2	Make and keep commitments to colleagues within: • own team • the wider organisation			
		4.3	Agree alternative actions when it is not possible to keep commitments made to colleagues			
		4.4	Interact with colleagues within own team and wider organisation in ways that attempt to maintain morale			
		4.5	Explain to team members why it is important to treat each other fairly, politely and with respect			
		4.6	Implement own organisation's health and safety procedures while working			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
5	Be able to improve own work performance in own retail team	5.1	Identify knowledge and skills needed to improve own work performance			
		5.2	Reach agreement with own line manager concerning:			
			• learning and development goals			
			• action points and deadlines for own learning and development			
		5.3	Take measures to improve own performance			
		5.4	Review own progress against an agreed learning and development plan, including seeking feedback from those in a position to give it			
6	Be able to help others to learn in a retail environment	6.1	Communicate to colleagues own willingness and availability to provide work-related information and advice			
		6.2	Provide information and advice on request to colleagues where this is within own responsibility			
		6.3	Provide advice and support to colleagues to help them meet the organisation's standards			
		6.4	Communicate procedures to colleagues in a logical sequence to help them meet the organisation's standards			
		6.5	Provide colleagues with opportunities to practise new skills			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	6.6	Provide constructive feedback to colleagues on their progress in developing new skills			
	6.7	Ensure that health, safety and security are not compromised when helping others to learn			
	6.8	Refer colleagues to specialist advice as needed to support their learning			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 2: Choose merchandise to feature in visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number:	H/503/5701
Level:	3
Credit value:	6
Guided learning hours:	27

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are responsible for choosing the merchandise to be featured in visual merchandising displays and negotiating with decision makers regarding those displays.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

AC 2.1: If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the purpose of featuring merchandise in visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain the role of displays featuring merchandise in marketing, promotional and sales campaigns and activities 1.2 Explain the importance of being creative when selecting merchandise for displays			
2 Be able to evaluate merchandise for its display potential	2.1 Evaluate the suitability of different items of merchandise for featuring in a display, with respect to: • the purpose of the display • the potential of the merchandise to attract and interest customers • whether the merchandise to be featured is consistent with the organisation's visual display policy • the availability of the merchandise within the timescale for preparing the display • the cost of obtaining the merchandise in relation to the budget available for the display			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3 Be able to liaise with decision makers concerning the merchandise to be featured in a display	3.1 Explain to decision makers: • the reasons for the choice of merchandise for display • how the merchandise would feature in the display 3.2 Reach an agreement with decision makers concerning the choice of merchandise before work starts on assembling the display 3.3 Reach agreement with decision makers concerning arrangements and timescales for the supply of merchandise			

Learner name: _____ Date: _____

Learner signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____ Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____ Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 3: Manage the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number: K/503/5702

Level: 3

Credit value: 7

Guided learning hours: 31

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are responsible for specifying signage and graphics to be used in visual merchandising displays to achieve the intended effects of a design brief.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

AC 4.1: If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand how signage and graphics are used in visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain how the look of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays can attract customers 1.2 Explain how signage and graphics are used in visual merchandising displays to convey information to customers			
2 Understand the importance of complying with legal requirements relating to the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising	2.1 Explain the importance of complying with legal requirements relating to the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays			
3 Understand the importance of monitoring the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays	3.1 Explain the importance of monitoring the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays to ensure that they are being used as intended			
4 Be able to assess the signage and graphics needed for visual merchandising displays	4.1 Assess the types and quantities of signage and graphics that will best: • suit the purpose of the display • meet legal requirements • comply with the organisation's visual design policy 4.2 Confirm with decision makers that proposals for the use of signage and graphics are acceptable			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
5	Be able to source the signage and graphics needed for visual merchandising displays	5.1	Confirm with suppliers: • the type of signage and graphics needed • quantities • costs • delivery dates • delivery arrangements			
		5.2	Assess whether the signage and graphics received from suppliers meet specified requirements before they are used			
6	Be able to coordinate the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays	6.1	Distribute signage and graphics by the deadlines agreed in the design brief to those who are responsible for putting them on display			
		6.2	Explain to colleagues how they should install signage and graphics to meet the design brief			
		6.3	Check that signage and graphics are installed in line with specifications			
7	Be able to monitor the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays	7.1	Perform checks on visual merchandising displays to ensure that signage and graphics are still being used as intended			
		7.2	Request feedback from colleagues on the use of signage and graphics on display			
		7.3	Take corrective action when signage and graphics are not being used in line with organisational procedures or the design brief			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 4: Evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number:	M/503/5703
Level:	3
Credit value:	9
Guided learning hours:	46

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of displays.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

AC 2.1: If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the types of evidence used to evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays 1.2 Explain when the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays should be evaluated 1.3 Explain which types of information are the most useful for evaluating the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays 1.4 Explain the meaning of 'validity' and 'reliability' in relation to the measurement of customers' responses to visual merchandising displays			
2 Be able to gather information about customers' responses to visual merchandising displays	2.1 Research customers' responses to visual merchandising displays, ensuring that the information gathered is: • valid • reliable • gathered in line with organisation's communications policy • gathered in ways that attempt to maintain the goodwill and cooperation of those providing the information			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3 Be able to analyse information from customers' responses to evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays	3.1 Agree the standards for evaluating the effect of visual merchandising displays with decision makers 3.2 Analyse the evidence of the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays fairly against the agreed standards 3.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays in terms of: • the purpose of the display • customers' responses to the display 3.4 Recommend to decision makers improvements that could be made to the way visual merchandising is carried out in the store, based on the research findings and conclusions			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 5: Manage budgets for visual merchandising projects

Unit reference number:	T/503/5704
Level:	3
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	46

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are responsible for managing the budgets of visual merchandising projects.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learners may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the importance of controlling expenditure on visual merchandising projects	1.1 Explain the importance to the organisation of controlling expenditure on visual merchandising projects			
2 Understand the concept of 'value for money' when managing visual merchandising projects	2.1 Explain what 'value for money' means when managing visual merchandising projects 2.2 Explain why 'value for money' does not just mean paying the lowest prices			
3 Be able to agree costs with decision makers for visual merchandising projects	3.1 Calculate estimates of the costs of proposed visual merchandising projects 3.2 Prepare business cases for visual merchandising project budgets that show how value for money will be achieved 3.3 Present budget proposals to decision makers in ways that attempt to persuade them to adopt the proposals 3.4 Negotiate budgets with decision makers in ways that attempt to keep them committed to the project's aims			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
4 Be able to control costs for visual merchandising projects	4.1	Explain to colleagues the cost limits they must work within on visual merchandising projects			
	4.2	Maintain accurate records of project expenditure in line with organisational procedure			
	4.3	Identify unacceptable discrepancies in project expenditure			
	4.4	Take action to resolve any discrepancies in project expenditure when this falls within own authority			
	4.5	Report unacceptable discrepancies in project costs to the designated person when resolving such discrepancies is not within own authority			
	4.6	Identify areas where value for money could have been improved within budget limits for the project			
5 Be able to keep colleagues informed on expenditure on visual merchandising projects	5.1	Keep colleagues informed on expenditure on visual merchandising projects			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 6: Contribute to improving a retail organisation's visual merchandising policy

Unit reference number: A/503/5705

Level: 3

Credit value: 8

Guided learning hours: 36

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are expected to suggest improvements to an organisation's visual design and to ensure that staff follow the organisation's visual design policy.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

'Visual merchandising/design policy': If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand how visual merchandising and visual design can benefit an organisation	1.1 Explain how having a visual merchandising policy can help the organisation to achieve its aims			
	1.2 Explain how visual design can help to promote and sell goods and services			
	1.3 Explain what customer-focused design is			
	1.4 Explain how customer-focused design can benefit the organisation			
2 Be able to evaluate the organisation's approach to visual design	2.1 Research what internal and external customers want and expect from the visual design of the organisation			
	2.2 Analyse research findings to identify internal and external customers' wishes and expectations concerning visual design in the organisation			
	2.3 Evaluate whether current and recent visual designs used in the organisation meet internal and external customers' wishes and expectations			
3 Be able to recommend new ideas for the organisation's visual design	3.1 Develop ideas for improving the organisation's approach to visual design			
	3.2 Create ideas for improving the visual design of the organisation			
	3.3 Assess whether own design ideas are relevant to the needs of the organisation			
	3.4 Present visual design recommendations to decision makers			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
4 Be able to support staff putting the organisation's visual design policy into practice	4.1 Explain the organisation's visual design policy to staff in a way that attempts to encourage understanding and commitment			
	4.2 Provide opportunities for staff to ask questions			
	4.3 Perform checks to ensure that visual designs used in the organisation are consistent with the organisation's visual design policy			
	4.4 Report to own line manager any problems with implementing the visual design policy that are not within own authority to resolve			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 7: Design visual merchandising display layouts

Unit reference number: F/503/5706

Level: 3

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 46

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of visual merchandising specialists who are responsible for designing display layouts and providing guidance on how to assemble those designs.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the importance of display layout design in visual merchandising	1.1 Explain what layout design is 1.2 Explain the role of layout design in visual merchandising 1.3 Explain the importance of developing creative and practical display layout ideas in visual merchandising			
2 Understand the elements of creative layout design solutions	2.1 Explain how to choose and combine scale, shape, colour, texture and focal points to produce creative layout design solutions 2.2 Explain the role of dimension, shape, colour, texture and location in creative layout design			
3 Understand the importance of display layout designs to those who put layouts together	3.1 Explain why specifications, drawings and supporting information are needed by those who will put layouts together			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
4 Be able to develop creative ideas for display layouts	4.1 Assess which layout best meets the intended purpose of the display			
	4.2 Generate different ideas for the design of the display layout			
	4.3 Evaluate ideas for the design of the display layout, using relevant criteria including: • cost • the time available to prepare the display			
	4.4 Select the display layout idea that is most likely to achieve the required visual effect within time and cost limits			
	4.5 Develop the chosen display layout idea in more detail ensuring that it: • fulfils the precise design requirements • is still achievable within the available time and cost • will fit the available space • can be assembled and used safely			
	4.6 Reach an agreement with decision makers on the final layout			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
5 Be able to produce guidance to enable the assembly of display layouts	5.1 Produce a drawing of the display layout that: • uses visual merchandising drawing and coding conventions to give information • specifies the dimensions and orientation of the layout • specifies the standards of the finished layout 5.2 Estimate the quantities of materials needed for specified display layouts 5.3 Estimate the costs of materials and services needed for specified layouts, doing so: • within the design requirement for the layouts • within cost limits 5.4 Provide detailed information on the layout design to enable the display to be assembled safely			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 8: Manage staff to receive goods in a retail environment

Unit reference number:	D/503/5681
Level:	3
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	24

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of a team leader or senior team member to manage staff to receive goods.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Be able to manage staff to receive and check incoming deliveries of goods in a retail environment	1.1 Select sufficient staff to prepare for, receive and check expected incoming deliveries of goods			
	1.2 Explain to staff, in advance of deliveries of goods arriving: • what needs to be done to prepare the receiving area • what needs to happen when the expected deliveries arrive			
	1.3 Assess whether the area for receiving goods has been adequately prepared to ensure safe and secure unloading of goods			
	1.4 Assess whether there is enough storage space of the right type for the expected goods			
	1.5 Ensure that goods are unloaded safely and securely			
	1.6 Explain why incoming goods should be checked against requirements immediately after unloading			
	1.7 Ensure that incoming goods are checked against requirements immediately after unloading			
	1.8 Ensure that delivery records are completed in line with organisational procedures			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	1.9 Evaluate records of deliveries of goods to determine whether each supplier has met the organisation's service needs			
	1.10 Resolve problems with deliveries of goods in line with organisational procedures			

Learner name: _____ Date: _____

Learner signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____ Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____ Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 9: Organise and monitor the storage of stock in a retail environment

Unit reference number:	H/503/5682
Level:	3
Credit value:	6
Guided learning hours:	27

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of a team leader or senior member of a retail team who is responsible for monitoring the quality of stock and use of storage facilities.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the causes and prevention of stock loss within storage systems	1.1 Explain the causes of stock deterioration, loss and damage 1.2 Explain how to reduce stock loss within storage systems			
2 Understand the legal and organisational requirements for storing stock	2.1 Explain the legal and organisational requirements for storing stock, including health and safety requirements and the removal of out-of-date stock			
3 Be able to organise the use of storage facilities in a retail environment	3.1 Organise storage facilities to take account of: • day-to-day work • safety requirements • the need to keep stock secure • the need to keep stock in a saleable condition 3.2 Train staff to use the storage system: • securely • safely • in line with relevant legal requirements 3.3 Assign staff clear roles and responsibilities for storing and moving stock 3.4 Develop plans to cope with unforeseen storage problems that take account of available resources			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	3.5 Review plans for coping with unforeseen storage problems			
	3.6 Revise plans to cope with unforeseen storage problems, taking account of any relevant factors			
	3.7 Monitor storage operations to ensure that staff are storing and moving stock: • securely • safely • in line with relevant legal requirements			
	3.8 Maintain stock records that are in line with organisational procedures			
4 Be able to monitor the storage and care of stock in a retail environment	4.1 Maintain a routine that meets the organisation's requirements for checking the quality of storage facilities and stock			
	4.2 Perform spot checks of storage facilities and stock			
	4.3 Train staff to: • identify stock that is out of date or at risk of deteriorating • deal with stock that is out of date or at risk of deteriorating in line with legal requirements and organisational procedures			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	4.4	Monitor the storage and movement of stock to make sure that stock is reaching the shop floor as it is needed			
	4.5	Recommend to decision makers ways of running storage and stock movement systems more profitably			

Learner name: _____ Date: _____

Learner signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____ Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____ Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 10: Follow guidelines for planning and preparing visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number:	D/503/5695
Level:	2
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	22

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who are responsible for planning and preparing visual merchandising displays from guidelines provided in design briefs.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the importance of visual merchandising displays and design briefs	1.1 Explain the role of visual merchandising displays in marketing, promotional and sales campaigns and activities			
	1.2 Explain the importance of the design brief in creating visual merchandising displays			
2 Understand the selection of approaches and effects in visual merchandising displays	2.1 Explain why different approaches are needed for displays of different types of merchandise			
	2.2 Explain how light, colour, texture, shape and dimension combine to achieve different effects			
3 Understand the sourcing of merchandise and props to be featured in visual merchandising displays	3.1 Explain how to use a design brief to identify the items needed for a display			
	3.2 Explain how different types of merchandise and props can attract customers' attention			
	3.3 Explain the importance of updating stock records to account for merchandise on display			
4 Be able to plan visual merchandising displays to fulfil a design brief	4.1 Select display locations that enable the design brief to be fulfilled			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	4.2	Create ideas for improving the visual effect of displays, ensuring such ideas: • create the required effect • are within the limits of the design brief • are within the limits of the organisation's visual design policies • are within the limits of own authority			
5 Be able to source merchandise and props to be featured in visual merchandising displays	5.1	Agree alternative selections of merchandise and props with the designated person, when those originally specified are unavailable or unsuitable			
	5.2	Agree arrangements with suppliers for delivery of merchandise and props			
	5.3	Plan enough time for deliveries of merchandise and props to arrive before the display must be installed			
	5.4	Check the progress of deliveries of merchandise and props			
	5.5	Take action to resolve the situation when delays to deliveries of merchandise and props seem likely			
	5.6	Update stock records to account for merchandise on display			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 11: Dress visual merchandising displays to attract customers

Unit reference number:	H/503/5696
Level:	2
Credit value:	7
Guided learning hours:	35

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who dress in-store and window visual merchandising displays, guided by a design brief.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the purpose of visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain the different purposes of visual merchandising displays			
	1.2 Explain how visual merchandising displays can achieve add-on sales			
	1.3 Explain why add-on sales are important to the organisation			
2 Understand how visual merchandising displays achieve their intended purposes	2.1 Explain the importance of visual merchandising displays in retail environment			
	2.2 Explain the importance of being aware of trends relating to visual merchandising			
	2.3 Explain how props, prototypes, dressings and fixtures create visual effects within displays			
	2.4 Explain why different kinds of merchandise need different approaches to display			
3 Be able to dress in-store displays and window displays	3.1 Position merchandise, signage and graphics within displays: • in ways that attract the attention and interest of target customers • to provide the information that customers need • in line with organisational visual merchandising guidelines			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
	3.2 Group merchandise within displays in ways that suit: • the purpose of the display • the style of the display • the intended focal points of the display • the angles from which customers will view the display • the selling features of the merchandise • the visual effect specified by the design brief 3.3 Assess whether the display's lighting meets the design brief in achieving the required visual effects and atmosphere 3.4 Check that the finished display meets organisational requirements for: • health and safety • security • easy access 3.5 Seek permission from the designated person to change displays when this is not within own authority			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 12: Order and position signage and graphics for visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number: K/503/5697

Level: 2

Credit value: 3

Guided learning hours: 15

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who order and position signage and graphics for visual merchandising displays under the supervision of visual merchandising specialists.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

AC 3.1: If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the role of signage and graphics within visual merchandising	1.1 Explain the purpose of signage in visual merchandising 1.2 Explain how signage can contribute to the effectiveness of visual merchandising 1.3 Explain the purpose of graphics in visual merchandising 1.4 Explain how graphics can contribute to the effectiveness of visual merchandising			
2 Be able to source signage and graphics to meet visual merchandising needs	2.1 Describe to suppliers the signage and graphics required by the design brief 2.2 Order signage and graphics: • within the required timescales • within the available budget • from suppliers who have confirmed they can meet the specified requirements 2.3 Monitor the progress of orders for signage and graphics 2.4 Assess signage and graphics when these are delivered, to ensure they meet the agreed requirements			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3 Be able to position signage and graphics to support visual merchandising	3.1 Position signage and graphics in accordance with: • the design brief • any house styles that apply • any branding requirements that apply • organisational policy on signage • legal requirements • the display's intended visual effect and message • organisational safety requirements • the need for signage and graphics to remain securely attached			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 13: Dismantle and store props and graphics from visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number:	M/503/5698
Level:	2
Credit value:	3
Guided learning hours:	15

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who are responsible for dismantling and storing props and graphics from visual merchandising displays under the supervision of visual merchandising specialists.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the importance of storing props and graphics for future use in visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain the importance of labelling props and graphics before leaving them in storage 1.2 Explain why records must be kept of props and graphics in storage 1.3 Explain why props and graphics must be stored securely			
2 Be able to dismantle visual merchandising displays	2.1 Dismantle displays using working practices that: • comply with organisational health and safety requirements • attempt to protect the components of the display from being damaged 2.2 Return merchandise to the designated places in line with organisational procedures 2.3 Dispose of unwanted items from the dismantled display in line with organisational procedures 2.4 Keep records of the movement and disposal of items from dismantled displays in line with organisational procedures 2.5 Clean display sites and components: • in line with organisational procedures • using equipment and materials suited to the task			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3 Be able to store props and graphics from dismantled visual merchandising displays	3.1 Assess the space required for props and graphics that are to be put into storage 3.2 Store props and graphics: • in line with organisational procedures • in secure but accessible places • in ways that do not pose a health and safety risk 3.3 Keep up-to-date storage records in line with organisational procedures 3.4 Report any damaged and/or missing props and graphics in line with organisational procedures			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 14: Make props and decorate fixtures and panels for visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number:	T/503/5699
Level:	2
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	45

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who make props and decorate fixtures and panels for displays under the supervision of visual merchandising specialists.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the purpose of props within visual merchandising displays	1.1 Explain the visual effects that can be achieved with life size and scale models			
	1.2 Explain why it is necessary to decorate panels and fixtures in creative ways			
	1.3 Explain how decorated panels and fixtures contribute to visual effects			
	1.4 Explain why different kinds of merchandise need different approaches to decoration			
2 Be able to specify requirements for visual merchandising props	2.1 Produce specifications for visual merchandising props that: • meet the design brief • are achievable within budget and timescales • specify the type, size and function of the props needed • specify whether props can be obtained ready-made or need to be made to order • include plans for obtaining the props			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3	Be able to make props for use in visual merchandising displays	3.1	Select techniques, materials, tools and equipment that are suited to making the props specified in the design brief			
		3.2	Produce final versions of props, ensuring they: • follow the requirements of the design brief • follow organisational health and safety requirements • are finished within the required timescales			
4	Be able to decorate fixtures and panels for visual merchandising displays	4.1	Select decorative techniques and materials that: • attempt to create the visual effect required by the design brief • are within cost limits			
		4.2	Use tools, equipment and materials for decorative work in line with organisational procedures			
		4.3	Produce finished decorative work that: • is free from faults • has the visual impact required by the design brief • is consistent with the design brief • is completed within required timescales			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 15: Assemble visual merchandising displays

Unit reference number: D/503/5700

Level: 2

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 20

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who assemble displays under the supervision of visual merchandising specialists, based on organisational guidelines provided in the form of plans, elevations and drawings.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

If the assessor is unable to make judgements about the specialist skills and knowledge covered by this unit, expert witness testimony must be sought from a person with suitable current experience, to confirm the learners' competence.

The learner may have undertaken formal visual merchandising training that may contribute to the evidence for this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the purpose of layout design	1.1 Explain what layout design is			
	1.2 Explain the role of layout design in effective visual design practice			
2 Know how to interpret instructions for assembling visual merchandising displays	2.1 Describe the essential features and detailed requirements of display layouts as specified in plans, elevations and drawings			
	2.2 Describe organisational health and safety and security arrangements needed for displays as specified in plans, elevations and drawings			
	2.3 Describe potential problems with assembling displays, where such problems are apparent from plans, elevations and drawings			
3 Be able to assemble visual merchandising displays	3.1 Plan the activities and resources needed to assemble displays as specified in plans, elevations and drawings			
	3.2 Assemble displays in line with: • organisational guidelines provided • agreed deadlines • organisational health and safety requirements			
	3.3 Make adjustments to assembled displays to achieve creative effects within limits of own authority and the guidelines provided			
	3.4 Take actions to resolve problems that arise when assembling displays, within the guidelines provided			

Learner name: _____ Date: _____

Learner signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____ Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____ Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 16:   Deputise for the leader of a retail team

Unit reference number:	Y/503/5730
Level:	3
Credit value:	11
Guided learning hours:	55

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of individuals who deputise for a team leader within a retail environment. The competent individual is expected to be able to manage and motivate peer colleagues to carry out their day-to-day duties.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand the standards of performance required of own retail team when deputising for a team leader	1.1 Explain team leader responsibilities in relation to: • health and safety • equality, diversity and inclusion • security • staffing levels • absence reporting • timekeeping • personal appearance • handling customer complaints 1.2 Explain relevant legislation and regulations relating to the products the team sells 1.3 Explain the importance of setting an example to team members by following organisational procedures and policies at all times			
2 Understand how to gain the cooperation of own retail team when deputising for team leader	2.1 Explain the challenges involved in temporarily managing peer colleagues 2.2 Explain how clear communication helps teams to work effectively 2.3 Explain why it is important for a team leader to be approachable and trustworthy, including the importance of maintaining confidentiality 2.4 Explain the importance of treating all team members fairly			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3	Be able to maintain the standards of performance of own retail team when deputising for a team leader	3.1	Communicate accurate information and instructions to the team			
		3.2	Set an example for own team by following organisational procedures and policies when deputising for a team leader			
		3.3	Perform checks to ensure that team members follow organisational procedures and policies			
4	Be able to manage the morale of own retail team when deputising for a team leader	4.1	Allocate work tasks to team members in ways that attempt to maintain the morale of the team			
		4.2	Use methods to motivate own team that are suited to individual team members' existing levels of motivation and expertise			
		4.3	Praise good performance both to the individuals concerned and to management			
		4.4	Provide support to team members who are having difficulty coping with their work, in ways suited to the individual and the situation			
		4.5	Communicate potentially sensitive information only to those who have a right to receive it			

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
5 Be able to manage own performance when deputising for a team leader	5.1 Manage own time to carry out other work duties when deputising for a team leader 5.2 Follow organisational procedures when problems arise when deputising for a team leader			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature:_____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Unit 17: Contribute to the continuous improvement of retail operations within own area of responsibility

Unit reference number: D/503/5731

Level: 3

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 47

Unit summary

This unit assesses the occupational competence of a first line manager or senior team member in relation to the contribution they make to improving operations within their own area of responsibility. The learner could contribute to improving performance against any operational measure set by the organisation, such as sales targets, service standards or quality standards.

Assessment requirements/evidence requirements

This unit requires workplace assessment of occupational competence.

Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this unit.

It is highly unlikely that the assessor will be able to gather evidence for this unit by observing workplace activity. Evidence can, however, come from professional discussion supported by oral reports of real achievements and testimony from an expert witness.

AC 4.2: If the organisation does not have a written policy, learners need to ask their manager for broad guidelines and follow these where the unit refers to a policy.

Skillsmart Retail's Assessment Principles for Retail Qualifications can be found on their website (www.skillsmartretail.com).

Recording of evidence

The type of evidence, portfolio reference and date should be entered against each assessment criterion in the table. Alternatively, centre documentation could be used to record this information. Evidence such as confidential documents must not be included in a portfolio, but their location must be recorded in assessment documentation. All assessment evidence must be accessible for internal verifiers and Pearson standards verifiers.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
1 Understand how own area of responsibility can contribute to the overall success of the retail organisation	1.1 Explain characteristics of the organisation's brand image, customer base and desired market position			
	1.2 Explain the relationship between the agreed performance measures for own area of responsibility and the organisation's brand image and desired market position			
	1.3 Explain how systems and procedures in own area of responsibility are intended to support the achievement of organisational performance measures			
	1.4 Explain potential causes of failure to achieve organisational performance measures in the type of retail operations carried out in own area of responsibility			
2 Understand how to motivate staff in own area of responsibility to support and contribute to the continuous improvement of retail operations	2.1 Explain why it is important for staff to understand the purpose and intended benefits of improvements to retail operations			
	2.2 Explain how own manner when explaining improvements can affect staff response to these			
	2.3 Explain the importance of encouraging staff to suggest ideas for improvement to retail operations			
	2.4 Explain the importance of ensuring that colleagues receive the credit if their ideas are implemented			
	2.5 Explain the importance of showing enthusiasm and leading by example when putting improvements into practice			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
3	Be able to evaluate achievements of organisational performance measures for retail operations within own area of responsibility	3.1	Evaluate organisational performance within own area of responsibility using information that is: • relevant • reliable • up to date			
4	Be able to develop recommendations for improving the effectiveness of retail operations	4.1	Develop ideas to improve the effectiveness of operations in own area of responsibility			
		4.2	Evaluate which ideas for improvements to the effectiveness of operations in own area of responsibility should be put forward to decision makers, based on the extent to which the ideas are: • consistent with the organisation's brand image • consistent with organisational policy • achievable, given the available resources • beneficial to the organisation and its customers			

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Evidence type	Portfolio reference	Date
5	Be able to recommend ideas for improving the effectiveness of retail operations to decision makers	5.1	Present ideas to decision makers for possible improvements, doing so: • with supporting facts • acknowledging any contributions made by other people			
		5.2	Explain to decision makers the benefits the recommended improvements could bring			
		5.3	Justify to decision makers the resources needed to put improvements into practice			
		5.4	Clarify any aspects of the recommended improvements decision makers wish to discuss further			
6	Be able to contribute to the implementation of planned improvements to retail operations within own area of responsibility	6.1	Explain planned improvements to staff in ways that attempt to: • make clear the benefits of the proposed changes • encourage involvement in implementing proposed changes			
		6.2	Ensure that staff have everything they need to implement proposed changes including additional training			
		6.3	Seek advice and support to resolve any problems with implementing proposed changes that are not within own authority to resolve			
		6.4	Demonstrate to staff own commitment to achieving the benefits of proposed changes through own behaviour			

Learner name: _____   Date: _____

Learner signature: _____   Date: _____

Assessor signature: _____   Date: _____

Internal verifier signature: _____   Date: _____
(*if sampled*)

Further information and useful publications

To get in touch with us visit our 'Contact us' pages:

- Edexcel, BTEC and Pearson Work Based Learning contact details: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html

- books, software and online resources for UK schools and colleges: www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk

Key publications

- *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access and Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, General and Vocational qualifications* (Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ))

- *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units* (Pearson)

- *General and Vocational qualifications, Suspected Malpractice in Examination and Assessments: Policies and Procedures* (JCQ)

- *Equality Policy* (Pearson)

- *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process* (Pearson)

- *UK Information Manual* (Pearson)

- *Pearson Edexcel NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications – Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance* (Pearson)

All of these publications are available on our website: qualifications.pearson.com

Further information and publications on the delivery and quality assurance of NVQ/Competence-based qualifications are available at our website on the Delivering BTEC pages. Our publications catalogue lists all the material available to support our qualifications. To access the catalogue and order publications, please go to the resources page of our website.

How to obtain National Occupational Standards

To obtain the National Occupational Standards go to: www.ukstandards.org.uk.

Professional development and training

Pearson supports UK and international customers with training related to NVQ and BTEC qualifications. This support is available through a choice of training options offered in our published training directory or through customised training at your centre.

The support we offer focuses on a range of issues including:

- planning for the delivery of a new programme

- planning for assessment and grading

- developing effective assignments

- building your team and teamwork skills

- developing student-centred learning and teaching approaches

- building functional skills into your programme

- building effective and efficient quality assurance systems.

The national programme of training we offer can be viewed on our website (qualifications.pearson.com). You can request customised training through the website or by contacting one of our advisers in the Training from the Pearson team via Customer Services to discuss your training needs.

The training we provide:

- is active

- is designed to be supportive and thought provoking

- builds on best practice

- may be suitable for those seeking evidence for their continuing professional development.

Annexe A: Quality assurance

Key principles of quality assurance

- A centre delivering Pearson qualifications must be an Pearson recognised centre and must have approval for qualifications that it is offering.

- The centre agrees, as part of gaining recognition, to abide by specific terms and conditions relating to the effective delivery and quality assurance of assessment. The centre must abide by these conditions throughout the period of delivery.

- Pearson makes available to approved centres a range of materials and opportunities to exemplify the processes required for effective assessment and provide examples of effective standards. Approved centres must use the guidance on assessment to ensure that staff who are delivering Pearson qualifications are applying consistent standards.

- An approved centre must follow agreed protocols for: standardisation of assessors; planning, monitoring and recording of assessment processes; internal verification and recording of internal verification processes and dealing with special circumstances, appeals and malpractice.

Quality assurance processes

The approach to quality assured assessment is made through a partnership between a recognised centre and Pearson. Pearson is committed to ensuring that it follows best practice and employs appropriate technology to support quality assurance processes where practicable. The specific arrangements for working with centres will vary. Pearson seeks to ensure that the quality assurance processes it uses do not inflict undue bureaucratic processes on centres, and works to support them in providing robust quality-assurance processes.

The learning outcomes and assessment criteria in each unit within this specification set out the standard to be achieved by each learner in order to gain each qualification. Pearson operates a quality assurance process, designed to ensure that these standards are maintained by all assessors and verifiers.

For the purposes of quality assurance, all individual qualifications and units are considered as a whole. Centres offering these qualifications must be committed to ensuring the quality of the units and qualifications they offer, through effective standardisation of assessors and internal verification of assessor decisions. Centre quality assurance and assessment processes are monitored by Pearson.

The Pearson quality assurance processes will involve:

- gaining centre recognition and qualification approval if a centre is not currently approved to offer Pearson qualifications

- annual visits to centres by Pearson for quality review and development of overarching processes and quality standards. Quality review and development visits will be conducted by an Pearson quality development reviewer

- annual visits by occupationally competent and qualified Pearson Standards Verifiers for sampling of internal verification and assessor decisions for the occupational sector

- the provision of support, advice and guidance towards the achievement of National Occupational Standards.

Centres are required to declare their commitment to ensuring quality and appropriate opportunities for learners that lead to valid and accurate assessment outcomes. In addition, centres will commit to undertaking defined training and online standardisation activities.

Annexe B: Centre certification and registration

Pearson Standards Verifiers will provide support, advice and guidance to centres to achieve Direct Claims Status (DCS). Pearson will maintain the integrity of Pearson NVQs through ensuring that the awarding of these qualifications is secure. Where there are quality issues identified in the delivery of programmes, Pearson will exercise the right to:

- direct centres to take action
- limit or suspend certification
- suspend registration.

The approach of Pearson in such circumstances is to work with the centre to overcome the problems identified. If additional training is required, Pearson will aim to secure the appropriate expertise to provide this.

What are the access arrangements and special considerations for the qualifications in this specification?

Centres are required to recruit learners to Pearson qualifications with integrity.

Appropriate steps should be taken to assess each applicant's potential and a professional judgement should be made about their ability to successfully complete the programme of study and achieve the qualification. This assessment will need to take account of the support available to the learner within the centre during their programme of study and any specific support that might be necessary to allow the learner to access the assessment for the qualification. Centres should consult Pearson's policy on learners with particular requirements.

Pearson's policy on access arrangements and special considerations for Pearson qualifications aims to enhance access to the qualifications for learners with disabilities and other difficulties (as defined by Equality Act, 2010) without compromising the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding or competence. Please refer to *Access Arrangements and Special Considerations for BTEC and Pearson Edexcel NVQ Qualifications* for further details (qualifications.pearson.com).

The Retail Sector's Assessment Principles for the Qualifications Framework

Final version for use from January 2012

www.skillsmartretail.com

1 Key principles

Assessment methodologies and guidance for qualifications in the retail sector are developed and interpreted in accordance with the following key principles:

Principle 1: **Assessment should contribute to developing a skilled workforce**	Assessment practice in the retail sector should contribute to the development of a skilled workforce. The choice and application of assessment methods must be consistent with this principle.
Principle 2: **Systems for capturing evidence of competence should be integrated**	Skills formation in the retail sector, as delivered through staff induction and ongoing training and development programmes, reflects the unique character and culture of the organisation. To this end, the assessment systems for both competence-based and the knowledge-based qualifications should, where possible, be integrated with organisations' training and HR models for developing and recognising the knowledge and competence of their workforce.
Principle 3: **Assessment methods should be appropriate for the level and nature of the qualification units to be assessed**	Methods of assessing achievement against learning outcomes and assessment criteria must be appropriate for the level being assessed and sector expectations of candidates at that level.
Principle 4: **Evidence of competence should come from workplace activity**	The sector's competence-based qualifications recognise competence in the workplace. Evidence of competence should therefore come from workplace activity and aim to reflect attainment within an organisational context. Observation should be the principle method to assess individuals at Level 2, but other methods such as professional discussion and assignments may be appropriate to assess achievement at Levels 3 and above.

2 Knowledge-based qualifications (Retail Knowledge)

Assessment methodologies for the retail sector's knowledge-based qualifications are developed by the Awarding Organisations that offer them. Assessment methodologies should be consistent with Principles 1, 2 and 3 as set out in section 1 of this document.

3 Applied qualifications

Qualifications have been developed by Awarding Organisations and Skillsmart Retail that use applied learning techniques and are delivered through full and part-time education. Qualifications for the fashion retail sector are included in this category.

Applied qualifications typically combine theory and its practical application. They are based on shared units and are open to be offered by all retail awarding partners. The assessment methodology for these qualifications is developed by Awarding Organisations and the evidence of success gathered must include evidence of the practical application of knowledge and, where required, work placements.

4 Competence-based qualifications (Retail Skills)

4.1 The use and application of simulation

In broad terms, the retail sector holds the view that simulation is a practical and effective tool for establishing skill and understanding, where naturally occurring evidence of competence is unavailable or infrequent. However the sector feels that there is very little that can be assessed by simulation with the exception of:

- some aspects of Health & Safety and Security, and

- some basic functions that do not involve interaction with customers.

Skillsmart Retail requires that Awarding Organisations:

    a   Discourage the inappropriate use of competence-based qualifications by organisations that do not assess candidates in a working environment. Competence-based qualifications are suitable only for learners who are in some form of employment in the sector, or, in a limited set of contexts, are being prepared for work and will be assessed in a realistic working environment (see section 4.1.2 below for definition).

    b   Establish criteria to ensure that simulation is not used as the sole form of evidence for any unit of a competence-based qualification, except where allowed for specific units that meet the criteria set out in Section 4.1.1 of these Assessment Principles. This should be expressed in guidance for qualifications operating in the sector.

c   Provide clear guidance to centres to indicate that evidence towards a competence-based qualification should come from the workplace except where simulation is expressly allowed in the evidence requirements for a particular unit. Workplace evidence may be gathered in the context of full, part-time, casual or voluntary employment. Assessment may be undertaken in a 'work placement' (i.e. fulltime students placed into a working environment for a day per week) although supporting evidence from a supervisor or manager, associated with some form of work activity, must supplement the assessment process.

4.1.1   Use of simulation as an assessment method

Assessment for competence-based units must always be carried out in a retail environment except where a Realistic Working Environment (as defined in 4.1.2) is permitted for simulation. Simulation is allowed only where:

- the assessment criteria require the learner to respond to an emergency;

- a unit covers a limited selection of basic functions which need not involve interacting with customers;

- a unit originates from another SSC or SSB and the originator expressly allows simulation to be used for that unit.

A list of those units for which simulation is allowed is appended to this document.

Evidence generated from simulated activities will not be acceptable for any other unit.

4.1.2   Definition of a Realistic Working Environment (RWE)

Where simulation is used the sector requires that:

a   Simulation must be undertaken in a Realistic Working Environment

b   Awarding Organisations provide guidance for centres that requires that Realistic Working Environments:

"provide an environment that replicates the key characteristics of the workplace in which the skill to be assessed is normally employed".

A Realistic Working Environment (for the purpose of simulated work activities) is regarded as one that replicates a real working environment. For example, a college shop that operates on a commercial basis (i.e. it has a profit and loss account) is acceptable for retail environments but a shop laid out in a classroom environment is not. However, in order to prevent any barriers to achievement, simulated activity may be used for assessment purposes within a real working environment.

4.2 The role and competence of assessors, expert witnesses and verifiers

A wide variety of factors affect the participation of organisations and take-up by individuals of competence-based qualifications. These issues relate to other matters as well as the quality of an assessment process but are central to the way assessment is managed.

To this end, Skillsmart Retail requires that the following conditions be fulfilled.

4.2.1 The role of supervisors and managers in the assessment process

Wherever possible, assessment should be conducted by supervisors and/or managers in a workplace environment. Where the skill or capability of these individuals is inadequate to deliver the requirements of the organisation or the quality infrastructure, services external to the work unit or organisation may be introduced (peripatetic assessors). If the candidate is employed in the retail sector, in no circumstances may a competence-based qualification for the retail sector be delivered without the involvement of the candidate's line manager or the owner/manager to confirm the candidate's competence.

Where in-store line managers carry out the assessment or internal verification roles, retail stores with the agreement of their Awarding Organisation may choose between:

a   achieving the appropriate regulatory authority approved qualifications for assessment and internal verification

   OR

b   demonstrating that training and development activity undertaken by the employer to prepare, validate and review these assessment/verification roles, maps 100% to the National Occupational Standards on which these qualifications are based. The mapping process **must be agreed** by the Awarding Organisation as providing the equivalent level of rigour and robustness as the achievement of the qualification.

The alternative option described in (b) above, which waives the need for the regulatory approved units in the retail sector, must be applied on an 'organisation by organisation' and 'qualification by qualification' basis.

Prospective organisations must be able to confirm that their in-house practices conform to the requirements of the NOS in association with the prospective Awarding Organisation who will be offering the qualification.

4.2.2 The role of peripatetic assessors and internal verifiers in the assessment process

Peripatetic assessors and internal verifiers must hold or be working towards the appropriate regulatory authority approved qualifications for assessment and internal verification.

The services offered by the peripatetic assessor must complement the activity of a line manager or owner/manager and the competence of a candidate employed in the retail sector may not be confirmed without the participation of a line manager or owner/manager in the process. It is also requested that specific reference be made to auditing this provision, within external verification processes.

4.2.3 The role of expert witnesses in the assessment process

There are a number of specialist sub-sectors in retail. Consequently the sector has competence-based units relating to specialisms such as bakery, beauty consultancy and visual merchandising. In many cases assessors will not have the requisite experience of these specialist areas. In these instances the assessor **must use** an expert witness to provide evidence in confirming to the candidate's competence.

An expert witness is an experienced peer of the candidate, or the candidate's line manager. The expert witness is not consulted as a professional assessor, but as someone who is expert in the occupation to be assessed. The assessor will make the final judgement.

A list is appended of those units for which expert witness testimony is required, should the assessor lack the necessary occupational competence.

4.2.4 Occupational competence of expert witnesses

Expert witnesses can be drawn from a wide range of people who can attest to performance in the workplace, including line managers and experienced colleagues from inside the candidate's organisation. Skillsmart Retail requires that expert witnesses have proven practical experience and knowledge relating to the content of the unit being assessed.

It is unlikely that someone could become an expert in their entire job role in less than six to twelve months of being employed in the retail sector. They could, however, very quickly become an expert in the content of a single unit if this was the focus of their job role. The assessor should make a judgement as to the level of expertise held by a potential expert witness and, where necessary, confirm this with a member of the store management team.

4.2.5 Occupational competence of assessors

Assessors in the retail sector should have an in-depth knowledge of, and be competent in performing, the occupational requirements of the generic competence-based units as well as any specialist units for which they do not use expert witness testimony.

This competence will have been acquired either in direct employment in the occupational role to which the unit relates, or in employment as a manager, supervisor or in-house trainer of employees carrying out the role.

It is unlikely that occupational competence will have been achieved in less than twelve months of employment as a retail assistant, or less than six months in a managerial position, but individuals with less experience could be considered as assessors if sufficiently occupationally competent.

4.2.6 Occupational competence of verifiers

Internal Verifiers (or equivalent quality assurance experts) in the retail sector must have a current understanding of the structure, content and occupational requirements of the units that they are internally verifying. This understanding will have been acquired while working directly within the relevant occupational area in either an operational or a support function.

The level of understanding should be sufficient to allow the Internal Verifier to judge whether the assessor has fully assessed learners against all the assessment criteria in the unit.

It is unlikely that a person could have gained this level of understanding in less than six months of being employed in the retail sector, but individuals with less experience could be considered as Internal Verifiers if they have the required level of understanding.

External Verifiers (or equivalent quality assurance experts) in the retail sector must have a current understanding of the occupational requirements of the units they are verifying. This understanding will have been acquired while working within the relevant occupational area in either an operational or a support function.

The External Verifier must understand the requirements of the units sufficiently well to be able to determine whether sufficient evidence of the learner's competence has been collected.

It is unlikely that a person could have gained this level of understanding in less than six months of being employed in the retail sector, but individuals with less experience could be considered as External Verifiers if they have the required level of understanding.

4.2.7 Continuing professional development of assessors and verifiers

All assessors and verifiers, if not currently employed within a retail organisation, will need to prove they have a current working knowledge of the sector they are assessing or verifying. This can be demonstrated by maintaining records of evidence from occupational updating activities such as:

- Internal or external work experience

- Internal or external work shadowing opportunities

- Other relevant CPD activities with the prior approval of the Awarding Organisations

Note: Retailers who have chosen not to use the regulatory authority approved qualifications for assessment and internal verification should be encouraged to offer the qualifications as CPD where the willingness by the employer to support this additional activity becomes known to the Awarding Organisation.

4.3   External quality control of assessment

The application and implementation of external quality control (i.e. independent assessment, external moderation, tests and projects) has been thoroughly researched and employers felt it was neither feasible nor practical. The rationale supported by employers was that a robust quality system is based upon processes associated with risk assessment and management.

The Awarding Organisation's risk rating system must be auditable by the regulatory authority.

4.3.1   Risk identification

In order to achieve the required level of external quality control, the Awarding Organisation must undertake a risk assessment of **each** prospective centre at the point of **application for approval to offer any Skillsmart Retail qualification**. The Awarding Organisation must obtain information on a number of specified 'risk factors' for each prospective centre at the point of approval. Skillsmart Retail would recommend the following, but Awarding Organisations should feel free to recommend alternative risk factors if more appropriate:

- Prospective centres' experience of operating competence-based qualifications;

- The appropriateness of existing systems, or systems developed to meet the requirements of other quality assurance regimes, for the delivery of competence-based qualifications;

- Whether the prospective centre has had a previous application for centre approval refused or their approval status withdrawn;

- The proposed ratio of candidates to assessors and Internal Verifiers, taking account of whether the assessors and Internal Verifiers are full-time or part-time in their roles;

- Whether candidates are going to be in employment (paid or voluntary), on work placements or learning in a Realistic Working Environment (see section 4.1.2 for definition).

The Awarding Organisation must have a **method of rating** the prospective centre against each of the risk factors noted above, including an overall rating that

identifies the level of risk associated with the prospective centre. The rating should then be used by the Awarding Organisation in determining the degree of support during the first year of approval.

4.3.2 Risk management

In order to identify and manage risk during ongoing centre operation, the Awarding Organisation must undertake a **yearly risk assessment of each active centre for the retail sector competence-based qualifications**. The Awarding Organisation must obtain information on a number of specified 'risk factors' for each centre. Skillsmart Retail would recommend the following, but Awarding Organisations should feel free to recommend alternative risk factors, which would be more appropriate.

- The turnover of assessors and internal verifiers.

- The throughput of candidates.

- The ratio of candidates to assessors and internal verifiers, taking account of whether the assessors and internal verifiers are full-time or part-time in their roles.

- Whether public funding is being accessed for the training of candidates towards/assessment of candidates for the competence-based qualifications.

- Whether candidates are in employment (paid or voluntary), on work placements or learning in a realistic working environment (see section 4.1.2 for definition).

The Awarding Organisation must have a **method of rating** each centre against each of the risk factors noted above and, also, producing an overall rating which identifies the level of risk associated with the centre. The rating should then be used by the Awarding Organisation to assist in determining the level of ongoing support for the centre, including the level of external verification activity.

Appendix 1: Qualifications covered by these Assessment Principles

Competence-based

Level 1 Award in Retail Skills
Level 1 Certificate in Retail Skills
Level 1 Diploma in Retail Skills

Level 2 Award in Retail Skills
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Skills
Level 2 Diploma in Retail Skills

Level 3 Certificate in Retail Skills (Sales Professional)
Level 3 Certificate in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising)
Level 3 Certificate in Retail Skills (Management)

Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Sales Professional)
Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Visual Merchandising)
Level 3 Diploma in Retail Skills (Management)

Knowledge-based

Level 1 Award in Retail Knowledge
Level 1 Award in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting)

Level 2 Award in Retail Knowledge
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting – Building)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting – Domestic Heating and Plumbing)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting - Commercial Heating)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting – Timber)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting – Electrical)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting – Climate Management)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting –Building Interiors)
Level 2 Certificate in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting –General)
Level 2 Diploma in Retail Knowledge
Level 2 Diploma in Retail Knowledge (Construction and Electrical Merchanting)

Level 3 Award in Retail Knowledge
Level 3 Certificate in Retail Knowledge
Level 3 Diploma in Retail Knowledge
Level 3 Diploma in Retail Knowledge (Garden Retail)

Appendix 2: Retail Skills units for which simulated activities are allowed

This list includes only Skillsmart Retail's units. For guidance on assessing imported units, please refer to the relevant sector's own assessment principles.

SR ref.	Unit title	URN on RITS
B.01	Move goods and materials manually in a retail environment	F/503/5656
B.02	Keep stock at required levels in a retail environment	J/503/5657
B.17	Organise own work to meet a dough production schedule in a retail environment	A/503/5672
C.01	Wrap and pack goods for customers in a retail environment	K/503/5683
E.01	Recognise and report security risks in a retail environment	F/503/5723
E.02	Comply with workplace health and safety requirements in a retail environment	J/503/5724
E.03	Work effectively in a retail team	L/503/5725
E.04	Keep the non-food retail environment clean and tidy	R/503/5726
E.06	Protect own and others' health and safety when working in a retail environment	Y/503/5727
E.07	Reduce security risks in a retail environment	D/503/5728
E.11	Manage the prevention of wastage and loss in a retail environment	H/503/5732
E.18	Monitor and maintain health and safety in a retail environment	M/503/5734

Appendix 3: Retail Skills units for which expert witness testimony is allowed if the assessor is not expert in the specialism covered by the unit

This list includes only Skillsmart Retail's units. For guidance on assessing imported units, please refer to the relevant sector's own assessment principles.

SR ref.	Unit title	URN on RITS
B.11	Hand-process fish in a retail environment	K/503/5666
B.12	Process greengrocery products for sale in a retail environment	M/503/5667
B.13	Finish meat products by hand in a retail environment	T/503/5668
B.17	Organise own work to meet a dough production schedule in a retail environment	A/503/5672
B.20	Maintain food safety while working with food in a retail environment	F/503/5673
B.21	Maintain food safety while working with food in a retail environment	J/503/5674
B.22	Monitor and help improve food safety in a retail environment	L/503/5675
B.35	Finish bake-off food products in a retail environment	H/503/5679
B.36	Glaze, coat or decorate bake-off products for sale in a retail environment	Y/503/5680
C.09	Process applications for credit agreements offered in a retail environment	F/503/5690
C.12	Promote loyalty schemes to customers in a retail environment	J/503/5691
C.17	Provide a bra fitting service in a retail environment	Y/503/5694
C.18	Follow guidelines for planning and preparing visual merchandising displays	D/503/5695
C.19	Dress visual merchandising displays to attract customers	H/503/5696
C.20	Order and position signage and graphics for visual merchandising displays	K/503/5697
C.21	Dismantle and store props and graphics from visual merchandising displays	M/503/5698
C.22	Make props and decorate fixtures and panels for visual merchandising displays	T/503/5699
C.23	Assemble visual merchandising displays	D/503/5700
C.24	Choose merchandise to feature in visual merchandising displays	H/503/5701

SR ref.	Unit title	URN on RITS
C.25	Manage the use of signage and graphics in visual merchandising displays	K/503/5702
C.26	Evaluate the effectiveness of visual merchandising displays	M/503/5703
C.27	Manage budgets for visual merchandising projects	T/503/5704
C.28	Contribute to improving a retail organisation's visual merchandising policy	A/503/5705
C.29	Design visual merchandising display layouts	F/503/5706
C.37	Provide National Lottery products to customers	L/503/5708
C.42	Advise customers on the fixing and care of tiles	R/503/5709
C.45	Help customers to choose alcoholic beverages in a retail environment	J/503/5710
C.47	Promote a retail store's credit card to customers in a retail environment	R/503/5712
C.52	Help customers to apply for a retail store's credit card and associated insurance products	M/503/5717
C.54	Help customers to choose delicatessen products in a retail environment	T/503/5718
C.55	Portion delicatessen products to meet customer requirements in a retail environment	A/503/5719
C.59	Demonstrate make-up and skincare products to customers at a beauty counter in a retail environment	T/503/5721
C.60	Operate a customer record card system on a beauty counter in a retail environment	A/503/5722
E.12	Produce staffing schedules to help a retail team to achieve its targets	K/503/5733

Annexe D: Additional requirement for qualifications that use the term 'NVQ' in a qualification title

Please go to www.ofqual.gov.uk to access the document '*Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in a qualification title'*.