

Version 2020

To include in all translations: This is a translation of the original English version of the EFESC handbook and its appendices. This translated version is subordinate to the original English version.



Appendix 1

Code of Practice

European Forestry and Environmental Skills Council

Assessors

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Purpose:

To provide Assessors with the guidance and advice necessary to enable them to:

- Carry out assessments of European Forestry and Environmental Skills Council, consistently and rigorously, to the minimum prescribed standards
- Conduct a rigorous, effective, professional and courteous assessment, within a safe environment.

Part 1. Becoming an approved EFESC Assessor:

The process of applying and qualifying to be a European Forestry and Environmental Skills Council approved Assessor for a specified qualification(s) is set out in the **Appendix 2. 'Assessor Approval Guidance Notes'**

Assessors are approved and appointed by the National Agencies.

When the criteria for becoming an assessor (according to the EFESC handbook) is fulfilled, Assessors will be issued with an approved Assessor Number / Name & I.D. by the National Agency and their details added to EFESC Assessor Register.

Part 2. Retaining approval:

To retain their status on EFESC Assessor Register, Assessors should comply with the quality assurance requirements of the National Agency for each of the qualification(s) they assess.

2.1 Verification Requirements for all Qualifications:

Lead Verifiers are appointed by National Agencies to ensure Quality Assurance of assessors is carried out. Each AC appoints a Verifier. The Verifier must also be an Assessor.

Verification is carried out with new Assessors first assessment as the final part of the application process and then again within 12 months of this date; thereafter verification is required at least every 3 years, by the National Agency.

The first verification will be undertaken by the National Agency Lead Verifier. The most important aspect of maintaining industry credibility of the certification system and a consistently high trans-national standard of delivery requires that random spot checks are undertaken by the National Agency Lead Verifier, of assessments taking place. This will be managed in conjunction with the relevant National Agency and rotated in a frequent basis between NA's.

An Assessor should ensure that they notify their National Agency well in advance that they need verifying. (See 3.1)

Assessments **cannot** be carried out if an Assessor's verification date has expired, If an Assessor wishes to be re-instated they will be asked to comply with the National agency requirements.

2.2 Update Requirement for all Qualifications:

ECC Assessor Updates will be held as and when they are required according to the demands of **new legislation, new information, EFESC changes, qualification changes and technical developments**. Assessors will be required to attend appropriate Updates as informed by their National Agency. There will be a minimum of 1 every 3 years and are likely to be more regular in response to the criteria highlighted above.

National Agencies will also advise Assessors (also via Assessment Centres) of particular events to support their Continuous Professional Development.

2.3 Other Requirements to retain Approval:

1. All assessments should be conducted according to the EFESC standards.
2. All the appropriate activities and criteria should be assessed.
3. Satisfactory and consistent standards should be maintained during the assessment particularly in the identification of critical faults.
4. Correct Performance Evaluation should be determined and recorded.
5. Satisfactory and consistent standards should be maintained in the completion and return of the documentation.

2.4 First Aid Requirements:

1. Assessors for Chainsaw should hold an up to date **First Aid at Work** certificate. This Certificate should be renewed on a regular basis

Failure to comply with the requirements in 2.1 to 2.4 will lead to an Assessor being registered as 'inactive' and unauthorised to carry out further assessments until there is proof of compliance.

Part 3. Verification:

3.1 Arranging the Verification:

- Verification (an assessment in the presence of a Verifier) should be undertaken at least every 3 years for an Assessor to remain active.
- When due for verification, Assessors should contact the National Agency. A mutually convenient date, time and venue can then be agreed with the Verifier.

Please note – it is the Assessors responsibility to ensure they arrange a verification before their current verification period expires.

3.2 Assessor Continuous Professional Development:

The National Agency needs to ensure that assessors are keeping up to date with technical and procedural updates as required (requirements see Appendix 2).

Part 4. Assessor Responsibilities:

4.1 An Assessor may only assess a Candidate if:

- He/she is an approved Assessor for the qualification and units to be assessed and is currently registered with National Agency as active.

4.2 An Assessor cannot assess Candidates who are instructed or trained by him/her, on a specific ECC level. Whether exceptional circumstances apply is to be decided by Lead Verifier and National Agency.

An Assessor must avoid assessing Candidates who are:

- Supervised / managed / employed by the Assessor
- Related to the Assessor
- Social acquaintance / friend of the Assessor
- Employed by a business competitor of the Assessor, where success or failure of the Candidate may have a commercial advantage to the Assessor/ Assessor's employer.

Part 5. Arranging the assessment:

Each National Agency has its own procedure for arranging assessments.

5.1 The Assessor should check the following points:

- Have the Venue, Date and Time for the assessment been arranged by the NA or Assessment Centre or does the NA / Centre expect the Assessor to arrange it?
- Has the NA / Centre provided sufficient information to the assessor to enable the assessment to be arranged?
- How many Candidates are to be assessed? Is this practical in the time available?
- Will there be sufficient suitable resources and equipment on site for the number of Candidates being assessed?
- Are the Candidate(s) aware of the Date, Time and Venue of the assessment?
- Have the Candidates been provided with a contact number in case an unforeseen circumstance prevents their attendance at the specified time?
- Have any of the Candidates declared a particular need /assessment requirement/ health or medical conditions?

5.2 The Assessor should ensure that the following documents are available for each assessment:

- The correct Score Sheet for each Candidate produced by the NA / Assessment Centre; this must be up to date
- Relevant Site-Specific Risk Assessment / Emergency Procedure form.

5.3 Site constraints

- Any necessary permissions to access site and fell trees must be in place.
- The current regulations for transport, handling and storage of fuel and oils must be complied with.
- Provision must be made to avoid the risk of environmental pollution.

- Wildlife constraints on site must be respected by Assessor and candidates.

Part 6. Conducting the Assessment:

6.1 Pre assessment procedure:

The Assessor should:

- Arrive in good time.
- Check that the site, facilities and equipment comply with current best practice guidelines and are suitable for the assessment to be conducted:
 - Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the assessment taking place
 - Ensure a spare working chainsaw and an appropriate winch is available on site
 - Have a Squad First Aid Kit meeting current regulations, of the appropriate size for the number of persons, available on site
 - Personal First Aid Kit for belt or pocket in line with current industry good practice

NB: All Protective Clothing (PPE) used must comply with relevant EN/ISO Standards:

- Safety Helmet
- Eye Protection
- Ear Defenders
- Appropriate working Gloves
- Chainsaw Trousers
- Chainsaw Boots with good grip
- High-Visibility Jacket or Vest

6.2 Meeting and briefing the Candidate:

The Assessor should:

- Greet the Candidate in a positive and friendly manner.
- Introduce himself / herself by name.
- Identify the Candidate by checking their Name, Date of Birth and Address (Further identification can be asked for by the Assessor if there is any doubt)
- Complete a written Site Specific Risk Assessment, involving the Candidate in the process, and then ask the Candidate to sign to confirm understanding.
- Explain the format of the assessment to the Candidate and the documentation involved.
- Ask the Candidate if there are any questions he/she wishes to ask before the assessment commences.
- Explain to the Candidate his/her rights regarding clarification of questions or instructions
- Clearly identify the start of the assessment.

6.3 Conducting the assessment:

The Assessor should:

- Strictly follow the appropriate EFESC standards.
- Ask all questions in a clear, direct and open format without leading the Candidate.
- Make all instructions clear and uncomplicated and check that the Candidate fully understands what is required before allowing him/her to proceed.
- Take a safe position with a clear view of the activity being carried out - close enough to be in control of the assessment in case of an emergency but without 'crowding' the Candidate.
- Record appropriate marks or comments on the score-sheet as the assessment of each activity is completed
- Check that all of the appropriate activities have been assessed before declaring the assessment completed.

6.4 Do's and Don'ts when conducting Assessment:

DO:

- Maintain a professional appearance and manner at all times
- Turn your mobile phone to **SILENT** – please do not take or make calls whilst you are assessing, this could be very off-putting for the candidate
- Cultivate and maintain a pleasant atmosphere from the point of contact with the Candidate
- Find time to relax the Candidate during the introduction period
- Ensure that there are no undue barriers for the Candidate other than the requirement that they must be able to achieve the assessment criteria
- Maintain a positive manner even if the Candidate is not performing well
- Temper all negative feedback with some positive aspects even where a Candidates' performance was never going to be competent
- When the Candidate has not been successful, provide positive, constructive guidance on what is required to achieve the qualification at a future date
- If you suspect there is a discrepancy in that the training does not satisfy one or more of the EFESC assessment criteria, keep it to yourself. Keep an open mind and discuss your concerns with the National Agency
- Respond positively to any criticism or complaint that the Candidate may record on the score-sheet
- If any of the activities in the standards are omitted by the candidate it is reasonable that the assessor asks that these be performed

DO NOT

- Make any 'off the cuff' remarks that could bring disrepute to the training or assessment process
- Make derogatory remarks, sexist or racist jokes
- Continue the assessment if feeling unwell or threatened

- Show signs of disapproval such as frowning, 'tutting', looking away as in disapproval or any other action that may be off putting to the Candidate or be interpreted that they are not doing well
- Make any comment about the apparent standard of training that the Candidate has received. Remember you were not present at that training so have no way of knowing whether it was satisfactory or not
- Offer your services as either a Trainer or Assessor by handing out cards or advertising of any kind

6.5 Post assessment:

The Assessor should:

- Inform the Candidate whether a competent or not yet competent result is to be recommended.
- Complete the score-sheet and sign it making supportive written comments as appropriate.
- Provide positive feedback on the areas where the Candidate's performance was good.
- Highlight the Candidate's weaker areas and provide encouraging advice.
- Ask the Candidate for his/her comments.
- Ask the Candidate to sign the score-sheet and invite them to make a written comment. If the Candidate does not wish to make a written comment then they should write 'NONE' in the comment section to show they were invited to comment but declined.

6.6 Distribution/retention of the documents:

To the Candidate:

- A digital copy of the score sheet will be issued to the Candidate by the NA or Assessment Centre upon request, explaining either the certification process for 'competent' Candidates or the re-assessment process for those 'not yet competent'.

To the National Agency / Assessment Centre within a reasonable time set down by the NA (See Section 7):

- The completed score-sheet (or copy) for each Candidate, from the Assessor.

To be retained by the Assessor or Assessment Centre (or both):

- The Site Specific Risk Assessment.
- The score-sheet (or copy) for each candidate

Part 7. When things go wrong with customer care:

7.1 Poor assessment practices or maladministration:

If the requirements of this Code of Practice are followed, even if there is a complaint from a

Candidate or their employer, the National Agency will be well placed to deal with it efficiently, with minimum cost and every chance of retaining respect of the customer.

Occasionally poor assessment practices or maladministration leads to a complaint. This may arise as a result of failure to understand certain issues, forgetfulness, mistakes, etc. EFESC recognises that these are things that we all experience from time to time and will expect the NA to act to address the issues with the Assessor. It is likely that the NA / Assessment Centre will deal with the complaint in the first instance and will provide EFESC with details of any issues relating to the Assessor.

The NA's first approach should be almost invariably supportive and a range of actions that might be taken are indicated below:

- Letter to the Assessor asking for their details of the event
- Letter to Assessor to require confirmation that specific actions will be undertaken

Assessors should note however, that repeated instances, either of the same or different poor assessment practice or maladministration could lead to Assessor approval being withdrawn.

7.2 Malpractice:

Malpractice relates to more serious and/or deliberate issues. Where there is evidence of malpractice Assessor approval may be withdrawn forthwith and if necessary further proceedings taken.

Examples of Malpractice are:

- Repeated failure to return paperwork to the NA / assessment Centre on time
- Deliberately falsifying paperwork
- Making sexist or racist remarks
- Repeated failure to comply with Action Plans following verification visits
- Repeated failure to respond to emails or letters from the NA or Assessment centre
- Not following the correct EFESC standards
- Assessing under the influence of illness, alcohol, drugs or medication that could impair judgement or affect response to a safety issue

7.3 Co-operation with investigations:

Assessors should co-operate with investigations relating to either 7.1 or 7.2 above and with any actions upon them arising out of such investigations. Failure to do so may put in jeopardy an Assessor's continuing approval. Investigations may be carried out either by the NA upon receipt of a complaint or by EFESC.

Where an NA investigates, any findings that relate to the performance of an Assessor or their adherence to the Code of Practice should be sent to EFESC in writing

Assessors will be informed in writing of the outcome of any investigation and of any actions they are required to take or of decisions relating to their Assessor approval.