

PVQ/CVQ Basic Information about the Schemes

Each candidate assembles a portfolio of evidence of competence for each performance criterion. There is no time limit set by the IST for completion of the qualifications after the candidate has been registered but candidates are generally able to complete their portfolios within 6 to 12 months.

The occupational standards are expressed as Units of Competence, which relate, in general to scientific and technical skills and cover areas such as:

- familiarity with the scientific working environment
- health and safety procedures in the laboratory
- general laboratory procedures
- the techniques of laboratory measurement
- use of laboratory services
- use of basic laboratory equipment

Benefits of the Scheme

Employers :

- know what their technicians can do to a given standard
- qualified, well-trained technicians contribute to the 'good name' of the institution

Technicians :

- know the standards expected of them
- their achievements are recognised
- their confidence, self-esteem and motivation is enhanced
- their skills are relevant to any science laboratory within or without their institution allowing mobility between work centres

For technicians who work in education, there are further benefits for students:

- they are provided with a high quality science education in a safe environment
- they work in a safe environment
- they develop skills in good laboratory practice
- their examination performance in science is enhanced
- they may be motivated to pursue science as a subsidiary or major subject

The Institute has designed comprehensive support packages, consisting of detailed exercises and the associated documentation to cover all the performance criteria included in the Vocational Qualifications, which may be used for guidance to complement the training and assessment arrangements at the workplace.

The qualifications are offered through Registered Centres and for details of these Centres can be obtained through the awarding body, PAA\VQSET (<http://www.paa-uk.org>)

Preliminary Vocational Qualification (PVQ)

Unit 1

This unit forms an introduction to the working environment. The candidate is expected to demonstrate familiarity with and awareness of employment-related aspects and facilities, communications within the team and compliance with the organisations procedures for security.

Unit 2

This unit enables the candidate to demonstrate awareness of basic health and safety requirements and procedures.

Unit 3

This unit deals with everyday operations and use of services, procedures and systems. It also includes preparation and maintenance of living and non-living materials.

Unit 4

This unit introduces basic techniques for measuring mass, length, volume, temperature, time and relative density.

Unit 5

This unit introduces safe use of laboratory services including water, gas, electricity and the fume cupboard. It also includes procedures for dealing with faults and emergencies.

Unit 6

This unit is concerned with identification, location, use, care and maintenance of common items of laboratory equipment and apparatus.

PVQ List of Exercises

ROUTINE AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Exercises REP1, REP2, REP3, REP4, REP5, REP6.

RECOGNITION, USE AND CARE OF BASIC LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

Exercises BLE1, BLE2, BLE3, BLE4, BLE5.

HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION

Exercises H1, H2, H3.

LABORATORY SERVICES

Exercises SV1, SV2, SV3, SV4, SV5.

PERSONAL PROTECTION

Exercises PP1, PP2, PP3.

MEASUREMENT

Exercises M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7.

WATER FOR USE IN THE LABORATORY

Exercises W1, W2, W3, W4, W5.

SOLUTIONS

Exercises S1, S2, S3, S4.

PLANTS AND PLANT MATERIAL

Exercises P1, P2, P3, P4, P5.

COLLECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF ORGANISMS

Exercises CMO1, CMO2, CMO3.

WRITTEN EXERCISES

Extract from PVQ Checklist of Competence

|was able to: | PC Ref | Date | Initials | Date | Initials | Date | Initial |
|---|-----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|---------|
| prepare solutions as required | 3.3b | | | | | | |
| label solutions as required | 3.3 a-e | | | | | | |
| produce purified water to meet requirements | 3.3f | | | | | | |
| light a Bunsen burner correctly | 3.4b 6.4a | | | | | | |
| locate risk assessments for the Department | 3.6a | | | | | | |
| act upon information given by signs | 3.6c | | | | | | |