



Deer Stalking Certificate 2

Approved Witness Briefing

Part 2 of 4

Working as an Approved Witness



Introduction

This is part two of your DMQ Approved Witness introductory briefing and covers the following:

- Important changes in the way DMQ administers portfolios
- The role of a DMQ Approved Witness
- Candidate questioning by an Approved Witness
- Procedure prior to conducting witnessing
- Portfolio differences



Changes in candidate portfolio administration

In October 2016, DMQ changed the way they administer candidate's portfolios and are no longer issuing paper based portfolios to candidate's registering for their DSC2.

In line with modern delivery techniques, the DSC2 has become entirely electronically based and candidate's have access to their DMQ ePortfolio via the internet.

Candidate's registered prior to the launch of ePortfolio will have received a paper based portfolio to complete their evidence in as before. Candidate's with access to ePortfolio, do not have an actual portfolio to present. Approved Witnesses will therefore be required to operate two independent systems possibly until October 2019 when paper based portfolios will no longer be in the system.

A full explanation of how you will work with each system is detailed in parts three and four of your introductory briefing document.



Changes in candidate portfolio administration

Irrespective of which candidate portfolio system you are acting as a witness for, your fundamental role and conduct as an Approved Witness remains the same. This is detailed in the following pages:



The role of an Approved Witness

Your main role as an Approved Witness is to observe that a candidate you are witnessing for their DSC2 evidence achieves the requirement of each Performance Criteria (PC) and associated Key Features detailed for that PC. When you are satisfied that a task has been completed in full, you will sign the portfolio accordingly in the space provide against each PC.

There will be times when you are required to ask a candidate questions which will be to support or provide evidence. When you do ask a candidate questions, you are required to detail the question and the corresponding answer given by the candidate in the relevant part of an Individual Cull Record (ICR).

On occasions, simulation will need to be conducted to satisfy evidence requirements. You must record the details of the simulation you devised and the candidates response and actions in carrying out the simulation.



The role of an Approved Witness

When acting as an Approved Witness you may not, guide, steer, prompt, advise, train, or coach a candidate in any way when they are demonstrating skills or actions required as part of a PC or corresponding key feature.

If a candidate appears inept and in your opinion they require training to acquire the skill or knowledge to fulfil the requirement of a PC, you must stop witnessing if it is clear the candidate will not satisfy the PC requirement.

You may consider the candidate would benefit from training and you may be prepared to offer training if the candidate is in agreement. At this point all witnessing must cease and ICR's closed off prior to the commencement of training. If the candidate becomes skilled in a task as a result of your help, any relevant PC may not be signed off until a candidate has completed the task unaided on a subsequent occasion.



The role of an Approved Witness

When witnessing, you are required to accompany the candidate at all times during the completion of any part of an ICR.

You must be close enough to observe that all requirements of a PC is fully achieved, that is, to be with a candidate at all times and in a position where you can intervene if required to maintain safe or legal practice. This could for example be; to ensure that a safe back stop is in place prior to a shot being taken, or that the correct use of a safety catch is demonstrated by the candidate.

When you are satisfied that a PC has been fully covered and achieved by the candidate you are witnessing either by observation, simulation and where appropriate by question or, a combination of all, you may sign off and date each relevant PC in the area provided within an ICR.



The role of an Approved Witness

All evidence must be generated by the candidate and all actions are to be candidate led. To repeat and reinforce what has been stated previously; you are not permitted to help, train, steer, prompt or guide a candidate in any way during the witnessing of a PC.

For example:

If, during a stalk through woodland, you observe deer that a candidate has clearly not seen, it is not for you to draw their attention to any deer they have not observed otherwise you are fulfilling the PC, not the candidate.



The role of an Approved Witness

If during an outing it becomes clear to you that the candidate is not seeing deer, you may decide that the candidate is lacking this skill and decide not to sign off the relevant PC. Rather than abandon the outing which is your decision to take, you could alternatively point out to the candidate a deer you have seen.

If the candidate can then confirm the animal is in the cull plan as agreed prior to the commencement of the outing, they could continue with the remainder or the ICR so that an opportunity to gather some evidence within the ICR was not wasted.

The PC which has not been signed off must of course be completed satisfactorily by the candidate under witness at another time.



The role of an Approved Witness

During any outing used for evidence gathering, a candidate must clearly take the lead with you the witness, carefully following. You may decide that a candidate has insufficient skill or knowledge to complete a large proportion of an ICR and suggest the outing is abandoned and resumed when the candidate has obtained the necessary skills to complete.

You might offer to provide suitable training to the candidate however, if accepted, successful achievement during a training phase cannot form any part of the witnessing process and no PC's can be deemed to have been achieved.

If any such training is offered by you, then you must also advise the candidate what level of training is required, over what period of time and at what cost to the candidate if you propose to charge for your services.



The role of an Approved Witness

Before any outing commences it should be decided and agreed which deer are to be shot within the ICR cull plan.

If a group of deer are stalked into, it is the candidate who must lead the stalk and determine which animal meets the agreed cull requirement and make this clear to you before talking the shot.

It is for a candidate to instigate inspection of relevant lymph nodes as required within the corresponding PC. You are not to prompt inspection or indicate the location of the lymph sites for a candidate.

If a head is removed by a candidate and discarded without inspection, the PC appertaining to inspection clearly must not be signed off. You might then wish to explain to the candidate why you are not signing off the PC of that occasion and then prompt the candidate to inspect the discarded head so they may remember or to gain experience for when they repeat the task on a future occasion.



The role of an Approved Witness

You can and should intervene if it appears to you that a candidate is about to do anything dangerous, unsafe or illegal.



In the example shown, if a candidate is not aware that they may have induced a muzzle blockage and cleared it, obviously it would be dangerous to allow them to carry on. PC 2.1 requires that a candidate handles a firearm safely at all times. Irrespective of what might be a faultless performance of firearm safety during the remainder of the day, this PC could not be signed off on this occasion.



Questions Asked by a Witness

As part of your witnessing for DSC2, you will often need to ask questions. This may be because a PC requires it, a PC cannot be achieved in any other way, or as a means of supplementing your observed evidence demonstrated by a candidate.

The number of questions you have to ask will vary between candidates and may be dependent on circumstances. It is hoped that wounded deer situations do not arise and if this is the case, you will need to question the candidate to ensure they would know what to do if it became necessary.

If an appropriate larder is not used then again you will have to ask questions appertaining to the use of a larder. The number of questions will also depend on the type of portfolio a candidate is working under. With paper based portfolios you will be required to ask more than you would for a candidate working with an electronic portfolio.



Questions Asked by a Witness

When you do ask questions, they must be relevant and essential to a PC and must be recorded with the answers given by the candidate.

Performance Criteria	Key features
3.5 Take appropriate action when carcass abnormality is identified according to legal requirements	Significant abnormalities located when present. Candidate aware of action to take

Record of Questions as by witness (Paper based portfolio example)		
Date	PC Number and Question	Candidates Answer
11/1/09	Have you ever discovered a notifiable disease	No
		Not relevant to PC
11/1/09	If you found blisters between the hooves and a spotty tongue on a deer would you think it was suffering from foot and mouth disease	Yes
		Leading and closed
11/1/09	What are the symptoms of foot and mouth disease and what action would you take if you suspected it in a culled animal	Blisters between the hooves, perhaps bare flesh directly above them and a yellowy spotted tongue. I would isolate the carcass and notify the Animal Health Divisional Office without delay and take further advice from them
		Appropriate



Questions Asked by a Witness

You may find that you witness more than one ICR for a candidate and you may witness all three.

There will be frequent occasions when a number of PC's cannot be directly observed by you throughout all three ICR's and you can only sign them off satisfactorily by questioning. Whenever this occurs, always make the question relevant to the PC and ask a different question for the same PC for each ICR. For example in relation to their not being a wounded deer you might ask:

- You have shot at a deer which you know to have been hit which then hunches up and moves slowly into cover. Describe what action are you going to take?
- You have foolishly shot at a deer's head which then staggers, does not fall and appears dazed whilst moving in a circular fashion on the spot. What do think has happened and what are you going to do?
- You have shot at a deer which runs off at speed into cover with a leg flaying. What action are you now going to take?



Questions Asked by a Witness

Within a paper based DSC2 portfolio there are a number of different ways you may record your questions and the answers received:

Questions can be recorded by you writing them in at the appropriate place in a portfolio and recording the candidates answer given to the questions.

You may ask a candidate to write down the questions you asked and to also write down their answers. This must be done in your presence.

You can if you prefer, type out all the questions asked and the answers given on a separate sheet of paper and staple it onto the relevant page in a portfolio. If this method is used, you must write a statement at the bottom of each page saying that the questions and answers detailed are a true record and date and sign it.



Questions Asked by a Witness

You must not allow a candidate to depart from you with a portfolio in which there are unanswered questions written in by you. If a candidate is unable to answer a question the you must note this in the corresponding answer section.

There may be occasions when you may wish to retain a candidates portfolio to write up questions and answers from your notes at your leisure. This might be for example be if you have returned late from a stalk and the larder. Providing you have a note of any questions asked and the answers given, you may wish to complete the candidates portfolio entries the following day. If you post a portfolio onto a candidate, you must use Recorded Delivery to avoid it being lost in the postal service.

You must not retain portfolios in an attempt to encourage candidate's to return to you for the remainder of any outstanding ICR. Candidates are advised to contact their Assessor if a portfolio is not returned to them within an acceptable time period.



Questions Asked by a Witness

It is seldom practical or advisable to take a candidates portfolio with you during your witnessing of a candidate. For a candidate, their portfolio is a valuable and sometimes an irreplaceable record of their DSC2 evidence to date and it will not benefit from being out in the pouring rain all day or left behind on a clump of heather or in the middle of a wood.

You might instead wish to take a small notebook with you to record questions, answers and anything of significance which you can write into a portfolio on your return.

There are some witnesses who use a digital recording device which can be purchased for a small amount and have the capacity for many hours of recording or, may use the recording facility often found on a Smart Phone



Before Witnessing

Candidates will normally contact you by telephone or email to see if you are agreeable to act as an Approved Witness on their behalf. During this initial contact, if you are able to assist and before meeting with a candidate you should:

- Establish as far as possible that the candidate is sufficiently skilled and knowledgeable to partake in and complete DSC2.
- Agree a time and place to meet with clear instructions given.
- Inform the candidate to arrive fully equipped to complete an ICR
- Tell them to bring their FAC, insurance and paper portfolio if using that system.
- If using ePortfolio, they should be told to bring their FAC, insurance, photo ID if a non FAC holder and the name and contact email address of their portfolio Assessor.
- Agree any cost implication for the candidate.



Portfolio Information

You are reminded that until October 2019, two different DSC2 portfolio systems will be used by candidates which you will need to recognise and operate in accordance with each system requirement.



There will be the paper based Edition 6 portfolio,
and:

The electronic based ePortfolio



Some of the more significant differences between each system is detailed on the following page:



Portfolio Differences

Paper Based Portfolio	Electronic ePortfolio
Candidate on registration is issued with Edition 6 Paper Based portfolio	Candidate on registration is given access to a website holding their ePortfolio
Candidate brings Approved Witness their portfolio for completion	Approved Witness downloads an electronic ICR from DMQ website
Candidate has details of their Assessor within their portfolio	Approved Witness obtains candidates Assessors name from them
Witness completes ICR within a paper based portfolio	Witness completes ICR on computer using notes taken during ICR outing
Witness asks candidate as many questions as required	Witness asks far fewer questions leaving the bulk of questions for the Assessor
Witness hands back portfolio and ICR information to candidate	Witness completes ICR in full or part and without showing it to candidate sends it by email direct to Assessor



Portfolio Differences

Part three of this introductory briefing covers in detail what is required of you and how to act when dealing with an ePortfolio candidate.

Part four, covers your operating procedures when witnessing for a paper based portfolio candidate.

You must carefully read and understand both parts 3 and 4 if you are to be proficient in your work as an Approved Witness.



Questions

If you have any questions relating to this part of the DMQ Introductory AW Briefing, please contact DMQ.

Please now read and understand Part 3