PAA\VQ-SET

Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

Centre Qualification Handbook

Competence-based Qualifications

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INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

This qualification sits within the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

This Qualification Handbook has been developed to ensure that PAA\VQ-SET Centres understand the requirements of the qualification. The Handbook contains the following information:

- Qualification Structure
- Assessment Requirements
- Assessment Methods
- Glossary
- Qualification Units

This Qualification Handbook has been developed to provide support in the implementation of the qualification as well as giving information to ensure that the assessment and quality assurance is consistent, robust and reliable within each centre and nationally. The handbook also contains details of the skills and/or knowledge the learner must obtain to achieve the units and qualification.

Qualification Structure

This section of the handbook summarises the content of the qualification and the skills and/or knowledge learners that achieve it can be expected to gain. It also outlines the units required to achieve the qualification and will give the learner an idea of how long the qualification will take to achieve through the Total Qualification Time (TQT) and how much contact time they can expect through the Guided Learning Hours (GLH). It also provides information about possible progression opportunities once the qualification has been achieved.

Assessment Requirements

The assessment requirements for the qualification will cover any specific information about how the qualification may be assessed, such as whether assessors require specific qualifications or occupational competence and whether simulation is permitted in the achievement process.

Assessment Methods

This section summarises the different assessment methods and types of evidence that support assessment; these may be used to demonstrate competence or the achievement of knowledge and understanding.

Qualification Units

The unit overview summarises the content of the unit and the skills and/or knowledge the learner will have gained on achievement of the unit. The units may also contain additional information in the assessment context which will describe the areas to be covered and any appropriate assessment guidance and evidence requirements which will outline additional assessment requirements and should be built into assessment plans and included on assessment records. The unit detail will also confirm whether simulation is permitted for that particular unit.

Qualification Assessment and Support Materials

Centres will be sent the following qualification assessment and support materials:

- Assessment Forms – it is not mandatory to use these forms. Centres may wish to use their own assessment documentation – these should be approved by the External Verifier prior to use.
- Learner Guide
- Qualification Handbook
- Registration Spreadsheet & Certification Claim Forms

LEVEL 4 AWARD IN THE EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES AND PRACTICE

Qualification Summary

This qualification is intended for those who maintain the quality of assessment from outside an organisation or assessment centre, usually on behalf of an awarding organisation.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning Hours are the time the learner is under the immediate supervision or guidance of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider or education or training.

The GLH for this qualification is 75

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time is comprised of 2 elements:

1. GLH plus
2. an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by (but not under the immediate supervision of) a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider or education or training

The TQT for this qualification is 120

Achieving the Qualification

To achieve the qualification learners must complete two Mandatory Units.

Mandatory Units

Unit No.	Unit Name	Credit Value
6	Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment	6
7	Externally assure the quality of assessment	6

Progression

This Award is part of a suite of qualifications developed from the Learning and Development National Occupational Standards (NOS) at Levels 3 and 4 which cover assessment and the quality assurance of assessment.

Further information can be found on the PAA\VQ-SET website www.paa-uk.org or on the Register of Regulated Qualifications website http://register.ofqual.gov.uk

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Assessors must ensure that, when assessing the skills, knowledge and/or understanding, the evidence produced by learners is:

- Valid – does evidence meet the requirements described in the unit?
- Authentic – has the learner produced the evidence?
- Current – has the evidence been produced recently and does it demonstrate current competence?
- Sufficient – is there enough evidence to demonstrate competence?

to enable reliable and consistent judgements to be made about the achievement of all the requirements of the unit(s) and qualification.

PAA\VQ-SET Centres must ensure that people involved in the assessment process have the appropriate expertise and are adequately informed and supported to fulfil their responsibilities.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

This section is compiled from information taken from the Assessment Strategy for the qualification:

- Quality Assurance
- Requirements for Assessors
- Requirements for Internal Quality Assurance
- Requirements for External Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance

Centres offering these qualifications must provide internal quality assurance to ensure assessment meets all awarding organisation requirements and is standardised across individual assessors, assessment locations and learners. In addition, the awarding organisation must ensure there is a robust system of external quality assurance to ensure quality and standardisation across centres.

Awarding organisations should apply appropriate risk rating measures to individual assessment centres and ensure that robust quality assurance systems are in place to manage these risks on an individual basis.

Lifelong Learning UK will also expect the different awarding organisations offering these qualifications to meet on a regular basis through an Awarding Organisation Forum to compare practice and identify issues of concern.

Requirements for Assessors

All those who assess these qualifications must:

- already hold the qualification (or previous equivalent qualification) they are assessing and have successfully assessed learners for other qualifications; if assessing quality assurance roles, they must have experience as a qualified quality assurance practitioner of carrying out internal or external quality assurance of qualifications for a minimum of two assessors
- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance
- hold one of the following qualifications or their recognised equivalent: ○ the Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment *or* ○ the Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, *or* ○ A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods, *or* ○ D32 Assess candidate performance and D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence. ▯ show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.

Requirements for Internal Quality Assurance

All those who quality assure these qualifications internally must:

- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance
- hold one of the following assessor qualifications or their recognised equivalent:

○ the Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment, or ○ the Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, or ○ A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods, or ○ D32 Assess candidate performance and D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence.

- hold one of the following internal quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
  ○ the Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ the Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process, or ○ D34 Internally verify the assessment process.
- show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.

Requirements for External Quality Assurance

All those who externally quality assure these qualifications must:

- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance
- hold one of the following assessor qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
  ○ the Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment or ○ the Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, or ○ A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods, or ○ D32 Assess candidate performance and D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence. □ hold one of the following external quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
  ○ the Level 4 Award in the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ the Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ V2 Conduct external quality assurance of the assessment process, or ○ D35 Externally verify the assessment process.

- show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.

Best practice would suggest that external quality assurance staff should also hold an appropriate internal quality assurance qualification, either: ○ the Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ the Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice, or ○ V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process, or ○ D34 Internally verify the assessment process.

ASSESSMENT METHODS AND TYPES OF EVIDENCE

The following section gives information on the different assessment methods/types of evidence that support assessment. The following assessment methods/types of evidence may be used to demonstrate competence or that the learner has achieved the required level of knowledge and understanding.

Observation of Performance

Observation allows the assessor to see learners carrying out their work activities. It will take place primarily in the workplace but can also be undertaken in a training scheme. Natural discussion should take place where possible during observation, allowing the assessor to ask questions relating to what they are observing at the time. Assessors must capture their observations either by a written report and/or other methods (e.g. video, audio recording).

Questioning

This method of assessment can be used to ensure that the learner has knowledge and understanding to support their skills. Questions can be used to check knowledge - these questions can either be verbal during or at the end of an observation, or they can be set in a written format in formal or informal conditions. As some units may focus entirely on learners' knowledge, assessors may encourage a variety of evidence to meet the requirements of the unit – use of verbal and/or written questions, learner statements and professional discussion (see below). Verbal questioning or professional discussion should be captured, either by written notes or audio recording.

Products

Work product evidence may be generated as a result of work activities undertaken by learners, and could include reports, letters, or records of work carried out.

Witness Statement or Testimony

A Witness Statement or Testimony is confirmation by others that the learner carried out an activity or series of activities relevant to the requirements of the unit. It could be written by the learner and signed by the witness to confirm that it did take place, or the witness may write the statement. Alternatively, the assessor could speak to the witness and record the discussion. The statement can then be used as evidence within an assessment.

There may be occasions when an Expert Witness may be required to contribute to the assessment process. PAA\VQ-SET's definition of an Expert Witness is 'an experienced employee who works in partnership with the assessor, by observing the learner carrying out their duties and recording their observations in line with the assessment procedures'. It should be noted that while the Expert Witness makes a valued contribution to the assessment process, it is the assessor who makes the assessment decision.

Simulation

Simulations are a source of performance evidence showing how an activity is carried out. Simulations require careful planning to ensure that they reflect as near as possible "real life" conditions and the requirements of the qualification(s). As a result of this the costs to set up a simulation may be considerable. Simulations are likely to be used in the following situations:

- they occur infrequently (e.g. dealing with emergencies)
- they involve unusual working conditions (e.g. working in isolation, outside the workplace)
- the work is hazardous
- it is not cost effective

Any use of simulation should be discussed and agreed with the PAA\VQ-SET External Verifier and approved prior to implementation.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

This is the process whereby credit is given to experienced individuals for their previous achievements. It requires careful mapping of the individual's experience to the unit(s) to ensure that it meets the requirements. This exercise must be referred to the External Verifier to ensure that all the evidence presented is acceptable.

Professional Discussion

A Professional Discussion gives the learner the opportunity to tell their assessor what they are doing and why they are doing it in a particular way. The discussion should be supported by appropriate evidence – an observation report, work product or witness testimony. Professional Discussions should be planned to give the learner the chance to prepare, and should be recorded.

Learner Statements

A Learner Statement is an account of an activity that took place, described by the learner. A detailed statement could demonstrate skill, and also provides evidence of knowledge and understanding. Learner statements should be authenticated by an appropriate person.

Photographs and use of other media

Photographs and use of other media, e.g. video and audio, can provide detail of work activities carried out and questioning. Photographs are more effective when used with supporting statements. Video and audio evidence should be effectively referenced to allow specific activities or questioning to be found easily. It is important to note that if photographs and other media are to be used, the learner and assessor should ensure that permission is gained from all people who may be involved.

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Access Arrangements	Arrangements that are approved in advance of an examination or assessment to allow achievement to be demonstrated by learners with a disability, special learning needs (including where the learner's first language is not English, Welsh or Irish) or to avoid unlawful discrimination
Appeal	The process through which an awarding organisation may be challenged on the outcome of an enquiry about results or, where appropriate, other procedural decisions affecting a centre or an individual learner
Assessment	The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the requirements of a unit, or any additional assessment requirements of a qualification

Assessor	A person who assesses a learner's work
Award of Qualifications	A certificate (electronic or paper-based) issued to an individual that recognises their achievement
Award	A qualification with a TQT value between 10 and 129
Awarding Organisation	A body recognised by the qualifications regulators to award qualifications
Centre	An organisation accountable to an awarding organisation for assessment arrangements leading to the award of qualifications
Centre Recognition	A process through which a centre wishing to offer an award or awards is confirmed as being able to maintain the required quality and consistency of assessment, and comply with other requirements of the awarding organisation
Certificate (1) for a Unit or Qualification	A record of attainment of a qualification issued by an awarding organisation
Certificate (2)	A qualification with a TQT value between 130 and 369
Credit	An award that may be made to a learner in recognition of the achievement of a unit or qualification
Credit Value	The number of credits that may be awarded to a learner for the successful achievement of a unit or qualification
Diploma	A qualification with a TQT value of 370 or above
Guided Learning Hours	The number of hours of teacher-supervised or directed study time required to teach a qualification or unit of a qualification
Learning Time	The amount of time a learner at the level of the unit is expected to take, on average, to complete the unit to the standard required
Level	An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement, and/or the autonomy of the learner in demonstrating that achievement

Term	Definition
Mandatory Units	Units that must be achieved for the qualification to be awarded
National Occupational Standards (NOS)	Describe what a person needs to do, know and understand in a job to carry out the role in a consistent and competent way
Optional Unit	A unit that a learner may choose to complete to achieve the required number of units for award of the qualification
Pathway	A route to the achievement of a qualification that requires particular units to be achieved and is identified by an endorsement to a qualification title
Qualification	An award made to a Learner for the achievement of the required units or other components for that qualification
Qualification Level	An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement, and/or the autonomy of the learner, represented by a qualification
Qualifications Regulators	Government-designated statutory organisations required to establish national standards for qualifications and secure consistent compliance with them
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	A method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning
Sector Skills Council	A body responsible for formulating and reviewing occupational standards for a specific sector across the UK, and for supporting the development of units and qualifications based on these standards. Each SSC is an employer-led, independent organisation and is licensed by government
Standardisation Of Assessment	A process to ensure that assessment leading to the award of qualifications is applied consistently by individuals, centres and awarding organisations
Unique Learner Number (ULN)	The unique number that is used to identify an individual learner
Unit	A component of a qualification

LEVEL 4 AWARD IN THE EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES AND PRACTICE

CONTENT OF THE QUALIFICATION

MANDATORY UNITS

UNIT 6	**UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF EXTERNALLY ASSURING THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT**
LEVEL	**4**
CREDIT VALUE	**6**
GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	**45**

Unit Overview

The aim of this unit is to assess the knowledge and understanding a learning and development practitioner requires for the external quality assurance of assessment.

Assessment Guidance and Evidence Requirements

The learner should provide evidence to meet all the required knowledge and understanding within this unit. This could be provided through different types of evidence and assessment methods, for example learner statements, questioning and professional discussion which should be recorded for verification.

- This unit is subject to the requirements set out in the LLUK Assessment Strategy for the Assessing and Assuring the Quality of Assessment qualifications.

There is no requirement for each unit to be assessed separately. Assessors are advised to adopt a holistic approach and, where possible, to use one activity as evidence for learning outcomes and assessment criteria for both units. For example, a discussion for 'Externally assure the quality of assessment' might provide some evidence for 'Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment'. However, it is essential that evidence for the assessment criteria in each unit is also identified individually.

All learning outcomes in this unit must be assessed using methods appropriate to the assessment of knowledge and understanding.

There must be valid, authentic and sufficient evidence for all the assessment criteria. However, one piece of evidence may be used to meet the requirements of more than one assessment criterion.

Learning Outcome and Assessment Criteria

Learning outcomes The learner will:	**Assessment criteria The learner can:**
1. Understand the context and principles of external quality assurance	1.1. Analyse the functions of external quality assurance of assessment in learning and development 1.2. Evaluate the key concepts and principles of external quality assurance of assessment

	1.3. Evaluate the roles of practitioners involved in the quality assurance process 1.4. Explain the regulations and requirements for external and internal quality assurance in own area of practice
2. Understand how to plan the external quality assurance of assessment	2.1. Evaluate the importance of planning and preparing external quality assurance activities 2.2. Explain what an external quality assurance plan should contain 2.3. Summarise the preparations that need to be made for external quality assurance activities, including: • information collection • communications • administrative arrangements • resources 2.4. Explain how to adapt external monitoring and evaluation approaches to meet customer need without compromising quality standards
3. Understand how to externally evaluate the quality of assessment and internal quality assurance	3.1. Explain the procedures for externally monitoring and evaluating internal quality assurance arrangements and practices 3.2. Interpret the requirements for externally monitoring and evaluating internal assessment arrangements and practices 3.3. Evaluate different techniques for externally sampling evidence of assessment, including those that use technology
4. Understand how to externally maintain and improve the quality of assessment	4.1. Critically compare the types of feedback, support and advice that internal assessment and quality assurance staff may need to maintain and improve the quality of assessment 4.2. Evaluate standardisation requirements relevant to the external quality assurance of assessment 4.3. Explain the importance of providing feedback, support and advice to internal assessment and quality assurance staff that is consistent with standardisation requirements 4.4. Explain the relevant procedures to follow when there are disputes concerning quality assurance and assessment
5. Understand how to manage information relevant to external quality assurance	5.1. Evaluate the requirements for information management, data protection and confidentiality in relation to external quality assurance
6. Understand the legal and good practice requirements relating to external quality assurance	6.1. Evaluate legal issues, policies and procedures that are relevant to external quality assurance, including those for health, safety and welfare

	6.2. Critically compare different ways in which technology can contribute to external quality assurance 6.3. Evaluate requirements for equality and diversity and, where appropriate, bilingualism, in relation to the external quality assurance of assessment 6.4. Explain the value of reflective practice and continuing professional development in relation to external quality assurance

UNIT 7	**EXTERNALLY ASSURE THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT**
LEVEL	**4**
CREDIT VALUE	**6**
GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	**30**

Unit Overview

The aim of this unit is to assess the performance of a learning and development practitioner with responsibility for the external quality assurance of assessment – usually an external verifier.

Assessment Guidance and Evidence Requirements

- This unit is subject to the requirements set out in the LLUK Assessment Strategy for the Assessing and Assuring the Quality of Assessment qualifications.

All learning outcomes in this unit must be assessed using methods appropriate to the External Quality Assurance (EQA) candidate's performance. These must include:

- observation of performance examining products of work
- questioning

Direct evidence of this kind may be supplemented, where necessary, by professional discussion, reflective accounts or witness testimony.

Simulations are not allowed.

There is no requirement for each unit to be assessed separately. Assessors are advised to adopt a holistic approach and, where possible, to use one activity as evidence for learning outcomes and assessment criteria for both units. For example, a discussion for 'Externally assure the quality of assessment' might provide some evidence for 'Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment'. However, it is essential that evidence for the assessment criteria in each unit is also identified individually.

There must be valid, authentic and sufficient evidence for all the assessment criteria. Holistic assessment is encouraged and one piece of evidence may be used to meet the requirements of more than one learning outcome or assessment criterion.

Evidence must come from performance in the work environment. There must be evidence of carrying out at least two external centre visits, including the preparation for and actions after the actual visit itself.

Learning Outcome and Assessment Criteria

Learning outcomes **The learner will:**	**Assessment criteria** **The learner can:**
1. Be able to plan the external quality assurance of assessment	1.1. Plan procedures for the external quality assurance of assessment

	1.2. Communicate procedures for external quality assurance to the organisations and individuals concerned 1.3. Ensure arrangements and resources are in place for external monitoring and evaluation
2. Be able to externally evaluate internal quality assurance and assessment	2.1. Carry out monitoring activities to quality requirements 2.2. Evaluate the quality of internal quality assurance systems 2.3. Evaluate the quality of internal administrative arrangements 2.4. Evaluate the quality of internal staffing and internal staff expertise and competence 2.5. Determine whether assessment arrangements, methods and decisions meet quality requirements
3. Be able to maintain and improve internal quality assurance processes	3.1. Provide staff with feedback, advice and support which help them maintain and improve the quality of assessment 3.2. Apply procedures for the standardisation of assessment practices and outcomes
4. Be able to manage information relevant to the external quality assurance of assessment	4.1. Apply procedures for recording, storing, reporting information relating to external quality assurance 4.2. Apply procedures to maintain confidentiality of information relating to external quality assurance
5. Be able to maintain legal and good practice requirements when externally monitoring and maintaining the quality of assessment	5.1. Apply policies, procedures and legislation relevant to the external quality assurance of assessment, including those for health, safety and welfare 5.2. Apply requirements for equality and diversity and, where appropriate, bilingualism, to the external quality assurance of assessment 5.3. Critically reflect on own practice in externally assuring the quality of assessment 5.4. Maintain the currency of own expertise and competence as relevant to external quality assurance