



**a helping  
hand.**

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## Introduction

This handbook contains supporting information that relates to NCFE and CACHE qualifications and will assist in planning, delivery and assessment. It must be used alongside the mandatory Qualification Specification linked on the webpage which contains specific information about individual qualifications.

All information contained in this handbook is correct at the time of publishing.

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## Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning is the activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, Tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

For these purposes, the activity of ‘participating in education or training’ shall be treated as including the activity of being assessed if the assessment takes place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, Tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

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## Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

Total Qualification Time comprises:

- the Guided Learning Hours for the qualification
  - 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 guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, Tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.
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## Essential skills

While completing a qualification, learners may develop the knowledge, understanding and essential skills employers look for in employees. These range from familiar 'key skills', such as team working, independent learning and problem solving, to more tricky-to-measure skills, such as:

- an appreciation for appropriate behaviour and dress
  - appropriate interpersonal skills
  - communicating with professional colleagues/peers and/or hierarchical seniors
  - supporting other aspiring employees
  - personal manners
  - understanding work practices and how different roles and departments function within an organisation.
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## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

For some qualifications, centres may recognise prior learning at their discretion if they are satisfied that the evidence provided meets the requirements of a qualification.

For more information, please refer to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) Policy on the Policies & Documents page on QualHub.

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## Direct Claim Status

To encourage best practice, we offer a system called Direct Claim Status (DCS). When you achieve DCS, you will be able to claim learner certificates without needing authorisation from your External Quality Assurer (EQA).

DCS is awarded for an individual qualification and is based on quality criteria that are measured and reported on through the external quality assurance visits carried out by your External Quality Assurer (EQA). DCS is available for most of our regulated qualifications once a centre has met the criteria to be awarded DCS.

For more information about Direct Claim Status, please visit the Direct Claim Status page on QualHub.

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## Qualification dates

Regulated qualifications have operational end dates and certification end dates.

We review qualifications regularly, working with sector representatives, vocational experts and stakeholders to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments.

If a decision is made to withdraw a qualification, we will set an operational end date and provide reasonable notice to our centres. We will also take all reasonable steps to protect the interest of learners.

An operational end date will only show on the Regulator's qualification database and on our website if a decision has been made to withdraw a qualification. After this date, we can no longer accept learner registrations. However, certification is allowed until the certification end date so that learners have time to complete any programmes of study. The certification end date will only show once an operational end date has been set. After this date, we can no longer process certification claims.

Where a qualification has an external assessment, this can only be taken up to the last assessment date set by us. No external assessments will be permitted after this date so learners will need to be entered in sufficient time. Please visit QualHub for more information.

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## Staffing requirements

Centres delivering any of our qualifications must:

- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Assessors to assess the volume of learners they intend to register
- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Internal Quality Assurers to internally quality assure the anticipated number of Assessors and learners
- ensure that all staff involved in assessment and internal quality assurance are provided with appropriate training and undertake meaningful and relevant continuing professional development
- implement effective internal quality assurance systems and processes to ensure all assessment decisions are reliable, valid, authentic, sufficient and current. This should include standardisation to ensure consistency of assessment
- provide all staff involved in the assessment process with sufficient time and resources to carry out their roles effectively
- provide the sufficient number of invigilators for external assessments. All invigilators must be suitably trained and prepared to meet the requirements of the role.

Please refer to the summary section within the Qualification Specification for any specific staffing requirements.

Staff involved in the assessment and internal quality assurance of the qualification must be able to demonstrate that they have (or are working towards) the relevant occupational knowledge and/or occupational competence at the same level or higher as the units being assessed and internally quality assured. This may be gained through experience and/or qualifications.

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## Quality assurance

### Internal quality assurance

Internal quality assurance is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is assessing to the same standards. It is the responsibility of Internal Quality Assurers to ensure that Assessors' decisions are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency and fairness. Internal Quality Assurers are also responsible for supporting Assessors by offering advice and guidance.

The Internal Quality Assurer will follow the centre's own sampling strategy in selecting the sample to be internally quality assured. See the guidance on sampling on our website.

The Internal Quality Assurer provides the vital link between the Assessors and the External Quality Assurer and acts as the centre's Quality Assurance Agent.

### External quality assurance

External quality assurance monitors the IQA activity of the centre. External quality assurance of internal assessments is carried out at least once a year to ensure that assessment and grading decisions are in line with required standards. External quality assurance is carried out by External Quality Assurers who are appointed, trained and monitored by us. External Quality Assurers are responsible for monitoring and sampling learners' evidence to ensure that internal assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair and consistent with national standards. Centres are notified of their External Quality Assurer's contact details on registration of learners with us.

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## **Support for centres**

There are a number of support documents available that you might find useful for delivery. These are available to download from the Policies & Documents page on QualHub, or can be requested from the Customer Support team.

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## **Customer Support team**

Our Customer Support team will support you with approvals, registrations, external quality assurance, external assessment, results and certification.

## **Fees and Pricing**

The current Fees and Pricing Guide is available on the Policies & Documents page on QualHub.

## **Training and support**

We can provide training sessions for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers. Bespoke subject-specific training is also available. For further information, please contact our Quality Assurance team.

## **Progression Maps**

Our suite of Progression Maps showcase many of the qualifications we have available within each sector and how they connect to each other. They demonstrate how you can plot progression routes for your learners at different levels from Entry Level right through to higher education or the workforce, with supporting qualifications along the way. The Progression Maps can be found in our Product Guides, which are available on the Routes to Success page on QualHub.

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## **Equal opportunities**

We fully support the principle of equal opportunities and oppose all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and social background. We aim to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted and that unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is eliminated both in our employment practices and in access to qualifications. A copy of our Equal Opportunities Policy is available on request.

## **Diversity, access and inclusion**

Our qualifications and associated assessments are designed to be accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. We regularly evaluate and monitor the 6 diversity strands (gender, age, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation) throughout the development process as well as throughout the delivery, external quality assurance and external assessment processes of live qualifications. This ensures that positive attitudes and good relations are promoted, discriminatory language is not used and our assessment procedures are fully inclusive.

## **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy**

This policy is aimed at anyone who uses our products and services and who submits requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations. Learners who require reasonable adjustments or special consideration should discuss their requirements with their Tutor.

For more information on the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy, please visit the Policies & Documents page on QualHub.

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***\* To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.***