



Specification

IAO Level 2 Certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Conditions

Qualification number: 603/6664/3

Contents

Change Control Sheet	3
Innovate Awarding Organisation	4
Qualification Summary	5
Qualification Structure	6
Target Audience	6
Progression Opportunities	7
Support Materials	7
Funding	7
QUALIFICATION UNITS	8
APPENDIX	21
The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)	26
Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles	29
Occupational Competence Requirements	38
Additional Information	40

Change Control Sheet

Innovate Awarding will continuously review all support material to ensure its accuracy. All amendments will be recorded on the change control table below.

Version Number	Date Revised	Description of Revision	Page Affected
4	June 2026	Correction to Guided Learning Hours	5, 6 and 11

Innovate Awarding Organisation

Innovate Awarding is an Ofqual regulated awarding organisation offering a wide range of Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) approved Qualifications ranging from Level 1 to Level 7, including skills for life and bespoke Qualifications.

This Specification version number is 4. We will inform centres of any changes to this Specification. Centres can keep up to date by visiting our website

www.innovateawarding.org

This Specification provides details on administration, Quality Assurance policies and requirements as well as responsibilities that are associated with the delivery of vocational qualifications.

For more information on our range of Qualifications, email

contactus@innovateawarding.org

Qualification Summary

Qualification Title	IAO Level 2 Certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Conditions		
Qualification Number (QN)	603/6664/3	RQF Level	2
Operational Start Date	1st October 2020		
Qualification Appropriate For Age Ranges	16 and over		

Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Qualification Credit Value
270	118	27

Qualification Objective

This qualification is designed for learners who want the knowledge and understanding of mental health and the problems that can cause mental ill health. This could be used to support their role in the workplace, or where they may work or interact with individuals with mental-health conditions.

Assessment Requirements

This qualification is internally assessed and internally quality assured by Centre staff and externally quality assured by Innovate Awarding External Quality Advisors (EQAs).

Learners must compile a portfolio of evidence demonstrating how they meet the assessment criteria. To pass the qualification, the learner must demonstrate that they have met all the learning outcomes and their associated assessment criteria. If the learner has not demonstrated competence, they will be provided with feedback by their assessor for the criteria not yet met.

Portfolio of Evidence

The Portfolio of Evidence may include workplace documentation and workplace records, witness statements and professional discussion. This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources are allowed.

Statement of Authenticity

Learners will need to provide a Statement of Authenticity to confirm that work submitted for assessment is their own and that they have not copied it from someone else or allowed another learner to copy it from them.

Qualification Structure

Mandatory Units

The learner must achieve all the mandatory units.

Unit Number	Unit Title	Level	Credit Value	GLH
A/618/4836	Understanding mental health	2	3	12
F/618/4837	Understanding stress and anxiety	2	4	14
J/618/4838	Understanding phobias	2	2	9
L/618/4839	Understanding forms of depression	2	4	21
F/618/4840	Understanding bipolar disorder	2	2	9
J/618/4841	Understanding schizophrenia	2	2	9
L/618/4842	Understanding dementia	2	2	9
Y/618/4844	Understanding eating disorders	2	2	9
T/618/4852	Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder – ADHD	2	2	8
L/618/4856	Understanding Obsessive Compulsive Disorder – OCD	2	2	9
R/618/4857	Understanding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD	2	2	9

Target Audience

This knowledge-based qualification is suitable for learners who work or wish to work in health and social care.

There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification.

This qualification is regulated for learners aged 16 years old and over.

Progression Opportunities

Learners who achieve this qualification could progress into or within employment in a number of health and social care roles or continue their study in this or other areas.

Learners who complete this qualification may go on to further study in related areas such as:

- Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate
- Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care
- Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support

Support Materials

The following support materials available for this qualification are:

- Portfolio Evidence Locator

All the support materials for this qualification can be found on Quartz, including the Assessment Key Verbs Document.

Funding

This qualification is not eligible for public funding.

QUALIFICATION UNITS

Unit Title Understanding mental health

Unit Number A/618/4836
Level 2
Credit Value 3
GLH 12

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will understand what is meant by mental ill-health and its impact. They will also look at the legal frameworks which ensure high quality care is provided

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1. Understand what is meant by mental health and mental ill health	1.1 Define what is meant by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mental health • mental ill-health 1.2 Describe the components of mental well-being 1.3 Describe the risk factors associated with developing mental ill health 1.4 Identify examples of mental ill health
2. Understand how mental health care has changed over time	2.1 Describe how mental health care has changed in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • historical approaches to care • the introduction of community care 2.2 Explain the impact of the changes in mental health care on individuals accessing services 2.3 Explain the difficulties individuals with mental health problems may face in day to day living
3. Understand the social context of mental ill health	3.1 Describe social and cultural attitudes to mental ill health 3.2 Describe media attitudes to mental illness 3.3 Explain the impact of these attitudes on individuals and their care

<p>4. Understand the legal context of mental ill health</p>	<p>4.1 Identify relevant legislation in relation to mental ill health</p> <p>4.2 Outline the implications of legislation for the provision of care to an individual with mental ill-health</p> <p>4.3 Outline legal provisions for individuals who are unable to make decisions for themselves due to mental ill-health</p>
<p>Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body</p>	
<p>This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.</p>	

Unit Title Understanding stress and anxiety

Unit Number F/618/4837
Level 2
Credit Value 4
GLH 14

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of stress and its causes, as well as the effects stress can have on individuals. Learners will also explore ways in which stress can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1. Understand the term 'stress'	1.1 Define the term 'stress' 1.2 Describe possible causes of stress 1.3 Describe internal and external demands in life which may result in stress
2. Understand how stress can affect an individual	2.1 Explain how behaviour can be interpreted as a form of expression 2.2 Explain how behaviour may be a symptom of something else 2.3 Explain possible reasons for the behaviour 2.4 Describe how stress can affect an individual
3. Understand how stress can be managed	3.1 Describe strategies that could be used by an individual to reduce or manage stress in life 3.2 Describe support available to individuals experiencing stress
4. Understand anxiety	4.1 Define the term 'anxiety' 4.2 Describe what is meant by a 'panic attack' 4.3 Describe possible causes of anxiety
5. Understand the impact of anxiety on the individual and others	5.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing anxiety 5.2 Describe how anxiety can affect an individual 5.3 Describe how an individual's anxiety may affect others
6. Understand factors that may affect anxiety	6.1 Describe what happens in a cycle of negative thinking 6.2 Explain how an individual's personality and outlook on life could affect their anxiety levels

7. Understand how anxiety can be managed	7.1 Describe examples of self-help for anxiety 7.2 Describe activities which may help an individual manage anxiety 7.3 Describe resources and treatments available to individuals experiencing anxiety problems
Additional Information	
Others: Family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support group	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.	

Unit Title Understanding phobias

Unit Number **J/618/4838**
Level **2**
Credit Value **2**
GLH **9**

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of phobias, the causes of phobias and the effect they can have on the individual and others. Learners will also explore ways in which phobias can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1. Understand the term 'phobia'	1.1 Define the term 'phobia' 1.2 Explain the main groups of phobias 1.3 Describe examples of specific and social phobias 1.4 Describe possible causes of phobia
2. Understand the impact of phobia on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing a phobia 2.2 Explain how a phobia could prevent an individual from leading a normal life 2.3 Describe how an individual's phobia may affect others
3. Understand how phobias can be managed	3.1 Describe examples of self-help for phobias 3.2 Describe examples of treatments for phobias 3.3 Describe the resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing a phobia
Additional Information	
Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.	

Unit Title Understanding forms of depression

Unit Number L/618/4839
Level 2
Credit Value 4
GLH 21

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of depression, the causes of depression and how it can affect individuals and others. Learners will also gain an understanding of ways in which depression can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1. Understand the term 'depression'	1.1 Define the term 'depression' 1.2 Differentiate between feeling low and clinical depression 1.3 Describe the factors associated with psychotic depression 1.4 Describe possible causes of depression
2. Understand the impact of depression on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing depression 2.2 Describe examples of how depression may affect the individual and their life 2.3 Describe how an individual's depression may affect others
3. Understand how depression can be managed	3.1 Describe resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing depression 3.2 Identify the resources and treatment required to manage a person with psychotic depression
4. Understand the term 'postnatal depression'	4.1 Define the term 'postnatal depression' 4.2 Differentiate between the terms 'baby blues' and 'postnatal depression' 4.3 Describe possible risk factors for developing postnatal depression 4.4 Describe the preparations for birth that may reduce the risk of postnatal depression
5. Understand puerperal psychosis	5.1 Describe the features of puerperal psychosis 5.2 Describe the resources a person with puerperal psychosis would require 5.3 Describe the treatments a person with puerperal psychosis would require

<p>6. Understand how postnatal depression can affect the mother and others</p>	<p>6.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing postnatal depression</p> <p>6.2 Describe the ways postnatal depression can affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the mother • bonding with the baby • others
<p>7. Understand how postnatal depression may be managed</p>	<p>7.1 Describe self-help measures for postnatal depression</p> <p>7.2 Describe possible treatments for postnatal depression</p> <p>7.3 Describe resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing postnatal depression</p>
<p>Additional Information</p>	
<p>Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups</p>	
<p>Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body</p>	
<p>This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.</p>	

Unit Title Understanding bipolar disorder

Unit Number F/618/4840
Level 2
Credit Value 2
GLH 9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of bipolar disorder, its causes and the effect it can have on individuals and their daily lives. Learners will also explore ways in which bipolar disorder can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand the term 'bipolar disorder'	1.1 Define the term 'bipolar disorder' 1.2 Describe possible causes of bipolar disorder 1.3 Describe symptoms which may occur in a manic and depressive episode 1.4 Describe the demands of daily life that may influence symptoms of bipolar disorder
1 Understand the impact of bipolar disorder on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing bipolar disorder 2.2 Describe the ways bipolar disorder affects the individual and their life 2.3 Explain how an individual's bipolar disorder may affect others
2 Understand how bipolar disorder can be managed	3.1 Give examples of medical interventions for bipolar disorder 3.2 Describe ways in which an individual with bipolar disorder can help to manage their illness when entering a manic and depressive episode 3.3 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with bipolar disorder to manage their illness 3.4 Describe resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing bipolar disorder
Additional Information	
Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups	

Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body

This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.

Unit Title Understanding schizophrenia

Unit Number J/618/4841
Level 2
Credit Value 2
GLH 9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of schizophrenia, the causes of schizophrenia and media representation of the condition. Learners will also gain an understanding of ways in which schizophrenia can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand the term 'schizophrenia'	1.1 Define the term 'schizophrenia' 1.2 Describe possible causes of schizophrenia
2 Understand the impact of schizophrenia on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual with schizophrenia may experience 2.2 Describe the ways schizophrenia affects the individual and their life 2.3 Describe how an individual's schizophrenia may affect others 2.4 Describe how media coverage may cause fear and misunderstanding about schizophrenia
3 Understand how schizophrenia can be managed	3.1 Describe possible interventions for schizophrenia 3.2 Describe ways in which the individual with schizophrenia can help manage their illness 3.3 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with schizophrenia to manage their illness 3.4 Describe local resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing schizophrenia
Additional Information	
<p>Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups</p>	

Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body

This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.

Unit Title Understanding dementia

Unit Number	L/618/4842
Level	2
Credit Value	2
GLH	9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of dementia, its causes and how it can affect the individual and others. Learners will also gain an understanding of the ways in which dementia can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand the term 'dementia'	1.1 Define the term 'dementia' 1.2 Identify types of dementia 1.3 Describe the functions of the brain that are affected by dementia 1.4 Describe possible causes of dementia
2 Understand how dementia can affect the individual and others	2.1 Describe the likely signs and symptoms of the most common causes of dementia 2.2 Explain the difficulties individuals with dementia may face in day to day living 2.3 Describe how an individual's dementia may affect others
3 Understand how dementia may be managed	3.1 Describe possible interventions for dementia 3.2 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with dementia to manage their illness 3.3 Describe the resources and treatments that would be available to an individual experiencing dementia
Additional Information	
Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.	

Unit Title Understanding eating disorders

Unit Number Y/618/4844
Level 2
Credit Value 2
GLH 9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of eating disorders, the causes of eating disorders and how they can affect the individual and others. Learners will also explore ways in which eating disorders can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand the term 'eating disorder'	1.1 Give a definition of the term 'eating disorder' 1.2 Describe types of eating disorders 1.3 Describe possible causes of eating disorders
2 Understand the impact of an eating disorder on the individual and others	2.1 Give examples of the signs and symptoms associated with eating disorders 2.2 Describe the feelings an individual with an eating disorder may experience 2.3 Describe some of the ways an eating disorder may affect the individual and their life 2.4 Explain how an individual's eating disorder may affect others
3 Understand how eating disorders can be managed	3.1 Describe different approaches to the treatment of eating disorders 3.2 Explain what others could do to help an individual recover from a specific eating disorder 3.3 Describe local resources and treatments that would be available to an individual experiencing an eating disorder
Additional Information	
<p>Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups</p>	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
<p>This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.</p>	

Unit Title **Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder – ADHD**

Unit Number **T/618/4852**
Level **2**
Credit Value **2**
GLH **8**

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of ADHD, the causes of the condition and the effect it can have on an individual and others. Learners will also explore ways in which ADHD can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand the term 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder' (ADHD)	1.1 Define the term 'ADHD' 1.2 Identify those most likely to be diagnosed with ADHD 1.3 Describe possible causes of ADHD 1.4 Explain the symptoms associated with ADHD
2 Understand the impact of ADHD on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the ways ADHD affects the individual and their life 2.2 Explain how an individual's ADHD may affect others
3 Understand how ADHD can be managed	3.1 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with ADHD to manage their condition 3.2 Describe local resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing ADHD
Additional Information	
Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.	

Unit Title Understanding Obsessive Compulsive Disorder – OCD

Unit Number L/618/4856
Level 2
Credit Value 2
GLH 9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of OCD, the causes of OCD and how it can affect the individual and others. Learners will also gain an understanding of ways in which OCD can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	1.1 Define the term 'OCD' 1.2 Describe possible causes of OCD 1.3 Describe the types of thoughts and behaviours associated with OCD
2 Understand how OCD can affect the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing OCD 2.2 Describe the ways OCD affects the individual and their life 2.3 Explain how an individual's OCD may affect others
3 Understand how OCD may be managed	3.1 Describe ways in which an individual with OCD can help to manage their illness 3.2 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with OCD to manage their illness 3.3 Describe local resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing OCD
Additional Information	
Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.	

Unit Title Understanding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD

Unit Number R/618/4857
Level 2
Credit Value 2
GLH 9

Unit Aim

In this unit learners will gain an understanding of PTSD, its causes and how it can affect the individual and others. Learners will also gain an understanding of the ways in which PTSD can be managed.

Learning outcome The learner will	Assessment criteria The learner can
1 Understand Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	1.1 Define the term 'PTSD' 1.2 Describe possible causes of PTSD 1.3 Describe symptoms associated with PTSD
2 Understand the impact of PTSD on the individual and others	2.1 Describe the feelings an individual may have when experiencing PTSD 2.2 Describe the ways PTSD affects the individual and their life 2.3 Explain how an individual's PTSD may affect others
3 Understand how PTSD may be managed	3.1 Describe ways in which an individual with PTSD can help to manage their condition 3.2 Describe ways in which others can help the individual with PTSD to manage their condition 3.3 Describe local resources and treatments available to an individual experiencing PTSD
Additional Information	
<p>Others: family, friends, colleagues, outside agencies, support groups</p>	
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body	
<p>This unit needs to be assessed in line with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles.</p>	

APPENDIX

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)

What is the RQF?

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) is an Ofqual regulated system of cataloguing qualifications. Qualifications on the RQF can be found by their size or level. Qualifications at a given level can differ depending on their content and purpose.

All of Innovate Awarding's qualifications are on the RQF.

Qualification Level

The level reflects the challenge or difficulty of the qualification. There are eight levels of qualification from 1 to 8, supported by three 'Entry' levels.

Qualification Size

The size of a qualification reflects the estimated total amount of time it would take the average learner to study and be assessed. The size of a qualification is expressed in terms of Total Qualification Time (TQT). The time spent being taught or supervised, rather than studying alone, is the Guided Learning Hours (GLH).

Qualifications can sit at different levels but require similar amounts of study and assessment. Similarly, qualifications at the same level can take different amounts of time to complete.

Credit Values

Every unit and qualification on the RQF has been given a credit value, which denotes the number of credits that will be awarded to each candidate who successfully completes the unit or qualification.

- **1** credit represents **10** notional learning hours.

Notional learning hours represent the amount of time a learner is expected to take, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard required within the assessment criteria. It is important to note that notional learning hours is not the same as guided learning hours (GLH). GLH represents the hours during which a tutor or trainer is present and contributing to the learning process. Notional learning hours represents the hours which are needed to successfully cover all the learning required to achieve the unit, either guided or independently.

RQF Terminology

Whilst the evidence outcomes required from RQF and NVQ units are the same, the RQF units use different terminology to the NVQ units. The assessment criteria for NVQ units are 'what you must do' and 'what you must know' whereas the RQF units are all 'the Learner can' or 'the Learner is able to'.

Rules of Combination (RoC)

Every qualification on the RQF is structured through Rules of Combination. Rules of Combination are important because they define the number of credits which need to be achieved and where these credits must come from in order for a Learner to achieve the qualification. Rules of Combination also state what the potential is for Learners who wish to transfer credits between qualifications and awarding organisations.

Assessment Principles

Learners must be registered with the Awarding Organisation before formal assessment commences.

Assessors must be able to evidence and justify the assessment decisions that they have made.

Where an assessor is occupationally competent but not yet qualified as an assessor, assessment decisions must rest with a qualified assessor. This may be expressed through a robust countersigning strategy that supports and validates assessment decisions made by as yet unqualified assessors, until the point where they meet the requirements for qualification.

Assessment of knowledge-based learning outcomes:

- May take place in or outside of a real work environment
- Must be made by an occupationally qualified and knowledgeable assessor, qualified to make assessment decisions
- Must be robust, reliable, valid, and current; any assessment evidence using pre-set automated tests, including e-assessment portfolios, must meet these requirements and can only contribute to overall decisions made by the assessor.

Those involved in assessment must demonstrate their continuing professional development, up to date skills, knowledge and understanding of practice at or above the level of the unit.

Regardless of the form of recording used for assessment evidence, the guiding principle must be that evidence gathered for assessment must comply with policy

and legal requirements in relation to confidentiality and data protection. Assessors must ensure they are satisfied the evidence presented is traceable, auditable and authenticated and meets assessment principles.

Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance is key to ensuring that the assessment of evidence is of a consistent and appropriate quality. Those carrying out internal quality assurance must be occupationally knowledgeable in the unit they are assuring and be qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

Those involved in internal quality assurance must have the authority and the resources to monitor the work of assessors. They have a responsibility to highlight and propose ways to address any challenges in the assessment process (e.g. to ensure suitable assessors are assigned to reflect the strengths and needs of particular learners).

Those carrying out external quality assurance must be occupationally knowledgeable and understand the policy and practice context of the qualifications in which they are involved.

Those involved in external quality assurance have a responsibility to promote continuous improvement in the quality of assessment processes.

Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles

The Innovate Awarding Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate must be delivered and assessed in accordance with the Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles. The following information has been adapted from the principles and applies to Innovate Awarding, training providers approved by Innovate Awarding, tutors, assessors and internal and external quality assurers.

1. Assessment Principles

1.1. Good practice dictates the following:

- Robust initial assessments are needed to identify and plan for each learner's needs, ensuring their role and responsibilities meet all qualification requirements, including the mandatory and optional units.
- Centres should have in place processes to identify and recognise opportunities for use of Accredited Prior Learning (APL) and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and these should meet the requirements of the AO/B.
- Centres should also have in place processes to support reasonable adjustments, and again, these should meet the requirements of the AO/B.

1.2. The centre must monitor that learners are registered with the AO/B **before** formal assessment continues.

Assessors must be able to fully evidence and justify the assessment decisions they have made in line with the principles of validity, authenticity, reliability, currency and sufficiency. Assessment records should be accurate, legible and complete, and meet requirements set out by the AO/B and associated assessment strategy where this is in place.

1.3. Skills-based assessment must include direct observation as the principal and most reliable assessment source of evidence, carried out by the assessor in person with the learner in their workplace. Observation must be carried out over an appropriate period of time and not be end-loaded. Evidence should be naturally occurring and minimise the impact on individuals who use care or support, their families and carers.

Where a centre has valid and genuine reasons for being unable to meet the direct observation requirements, short-term flexible approaches may be permitted. These approaches must be standardised, and the centre must discuss and agree this with the awarding organisation.

1.4. Assessment decisions for skills-based learning outcomes must be made during the learner's normal work activity by an occupationally qualified, competent and knowledgeable assessor.

- 1.5. Assessors must demonstrate occupational competence and sector knowledge at or above the level they assess, maintaining this through ongoing continual professional development.
- In examples where assessors are returning to practice, a professional development plan should be in place to ensure current sector competency against the level, the subject matter being assessed, and overall assessment practices.
 - If an assessor is occupationally competent but not yet qualified, a qualified assessor must make the final assessment decisions. These must be validated through countersigning and supported by robust internal quality assurance, sampling plans and activities until qualification requirements are met.
 - It is the responsibility of the AO/B to confirm that assessors in centres are suitably qualified and competent to make assessment decisions.
- 1.6. Simulation must only be used to assess skills-based learning outcomes when specified in the unit assessment requirements or agreed with the awarding organisation or agreed with the External Quality Assurer acting on behalf of the awarding organisation.
- 1.7. Witness testimony from others, including those who use services, their families and professionals, can be an important contribution to evidence in the assessment process and can enrich and triangulate other evidence obtained. A witness testimony does not replace direct observation and should not be used as the only evidence of skills. A witness testimony and an expert witness testimony are two different types of evidence. Informed consent must be gained for those providing witness testimonies.
- 1.8. Expert witnesses play an important role in assessments. They must:
- have a working knowledge of the relevant units
 - be occupationally competent in the relevant units, and
 - have either a qualification in workplace assessment or a role evaluating staff performance within their area of expertise.
- 1.9. Appropriate processes to identify and recruit, confirm, support, and standardise suitable expert witnesses should be applied by the centre and assured by the awarding organisation.
- 1.10. The expert witness is a reliable source of evidence:
- where the assessor is not occupationally competent in a specialist area e.g. a healthcare task, an expert witness testimony can be used for direct observation of the unit (not the whole qualification) where they have occupational expertise in the specialist area.

- when used as a method to enrich, supplement, and add triangulation to other assessment methods and outcomes.
- in supporting flexibility where there are valid and genuine factors in not being able to obtain direct observation in the workplace e.g. individual considerations, environment and practice sensitivities. Occasions where this is needed must be discussed and agreed with the AO/B. This should not be the sole primary method used in place of all observations.
- where allowed as per the assessment strategy.

1.11. The use of expert witnesses should be determined and agreed by the assessor, in line with internal quality assurance arrangements and AO/B requirements for assessment of units within the qualification and the sector. The assessor remains responsible for supporting the expert witness through the process and making the final assessment decision.

2 **Assessment of knowledge-based learning outcomes:**

2.1. The assessment of knowledge-based learning outcomes:

- may take place in or outside of a real work environment
- must be made by an occupationally qualified and knowledgeable assessor, qualified to make assessment decisions
- must be robust, reliable, valid and current
- can be supported by eLearning programmes to support overall summative assessment, by helping learners acquire and review knowledge, but they cannot replace practical assessment in a real work environment
- may include pre-set automated tests (such as multiple-choice questions) which contribute evidence towards summative decisions. However, they must be complemented by direct assessment methods that demonstrate the learner's ability to apply knowledge in real work situations
- must take into account APL/RPL to avoid duplication of learning.

3 **Recording and documentation**

3.1. All assessment and quality assurance evidence, regardless of format, must comply with confidentiality and data protection laws. Information must be traceable, auditable, authenticated, and meet assessment principles. In addition, no recordings should compromise anyone's privacy or dignity. As such, clear and robust referencing is necessary to establish a relationship between the evidence and the assessment standard, which validates competence. Referencing should clearly indicate the specific location within the evidence where the relevant skills and knowledge are claimed, either in paper-based or e-portfolios.

4 Use of technology in the assessment process

- 4.1. Centres should have in place robust policies and procedures regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology, and these must meet requirements as set out by the awarding organisation.
- 4.2. Technology, platforms, and e-portfolios can support assessment by enabling planning, reviews, learner reflection, professional discussions, and capturing evidence from expert witnesses. When using technology in these contexts, ensure:
 - recording, storage, and access comply with confidentiality and data protection legislation
 - individuals receiving care or support and others are not unintentionally recorded
 - informed consent must be freely given by everyone involved in the assessment and this must be documented.
- 4.3. Using technology to observe and verify learner competency (remote observation) is not allowed if it risks anyone's privacy, dignity, or confidentiality.
- 4.4. Where permitted by sector or qualification guidelines, technology may be used to remotely observe learners' task-based competencies, such as online meetings or remote support to colleagues. Such evidence must be clearly marked and distinguished from other types. It should not be used when there is a requirement for direct interaction with individuals using care or support services or others.
- 4.5. The remote observation approach in 4.4 is supplementary and does not replace direct observation as the primary assessment method. It should be used to support and enhance planned direct assessments throughout the qualification.
- 4.6. Centre practices in the use of technology are to be monitored and assured by the awarding organisation, and this should include centre consideration of the following:
 - Use aligns to adherence to any additional guidance set by the awarding organisation, the qualification, which is being assessed, any specific sector considerations and associated assessment strategies in place.
 - The centre understands the ethical considerations in the use of technology in the sectors and has policies and procedures in place to support use.
 - Robust approaches to risk assessment are used to ensure risks to individuals and others are eradicated.
 - Centre practices and approaches are guided and supported by thorough standardisation.
 - Technology and programmes used are standardised, accessible, safe and reliable.

- If the centre allows assessor and internal quality assurer use of personal devices (e.g. phones, tablets, or personal laptops), then procedures should be in place to ensure data and confidentiality aspects. This includes consideration of where and how devices are accessed to view learner evidence.
- Assessment planning and discussion should capture the relevant and safe opportunities to use technology, along with the approach used to explore and mitigate any risks.
- Evidence recording methods and assessment outcome processes do not increase the risk of any data or confidentiality breaches.
- Assessment outcomes and decisions and outcomes generated by use of technology in the process are reliable, sufficient and traceable.
- All protocols are upheld in the 'observation' context e.g. permissions sought and confirming the purpose of the assessment activity.
- Assessment activities where technology is used, must be incorporated in internal and external quality assurance sampling planning and activities.
- Learners are not disadvantaged by the use of technology and they are aware of its use.
- Learning requirements, support, skill development or other developmental needs of the learner are fully supported throughout the qualification process.
- Technology is used well to genuinely enhance the assessment process, experience, outcomes and digital skills of the learner.
- Practices and lessons learned should be shared by all to support review and continuous improvement.

4. Internal quality assurance

- 5.1 Internal quality assurance is key to ensuring the assessment of evidence is of a consistent and appropriate quality. This process should be supported by robust sampling plans and activity that takes place at beginning, middle and end of the qualification journey and accounts for any potential risks in the assessment process. Those carrying out internal quality assurance must be occupationally knowledgeable in the unit they are assuring and be qualified to make quality assurance decisions. It is the responsibility of the AO/B to confirm that those involved in internal quality assurance are suitably qualified for this role.
- 4.1 If the internal quality assurer is knowledgeable but not yet qualified, a qualified internal quality assurer must make final decisions. A clear countersigning strategy should support and confirm decisions by unqualified staff until they are fully qualified.
- 4.2 Those involved in internal quality assurance must have the authority and the resources to monitor the work of assessors. They have a responsibility to highlight and propose ways to address any challenges in the assessment

process (e.g. to ensure suitable assessors are assigned to reflect the strengths and needs of particular learners).

- 5.4 Those carrying out external quality assurance must be occupationally knowledgeable and understand the policy and practice context of the qualifications in which they are involved. It is the responsibility of the awarding organisation to confirm that those involved in external quality assurance are suitably qualified for this role.

Those involved in external quality assurance have a responsibility to promote continuous improvement in the quality of assessment processes.

5. Definitions

Occupationally competent: This means that each assessor must be capable of carrying out the full requirements of the specific qualification units they are assessing. Occupational competence may be at unit level for specialist areas: this could mean that different assessors may be needed across a whole qualification, while the final assessment decision for a qualification remains with the lead assessor. Being occupationally competent also means being occupationally knowledgeable. This occupational competence should be maintained annually through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development.

Occupationally knowledgeable: This means that each assessor and internal quality assurer should possess knowledge and understanding relevant to the specific qualifications and / or units they are assessing or internally quality assuring. This occupational knowledge should be maintained annually through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development. It is crucial that internal quality assurers understand the nature and context of the assessors' work and that of their learners.

Qualified to make assessment decisions: This means that each assessor must hold a qualification suitable to support the making of appropriate and consistent assessment decisions. Awarding organisations will determine what will qualify those making assessment decisions according to the unit of skills under assessment. A list of general assessor qualifications is included in Appendix B. Please also refer to additional guidance for qualifications in the relevant nation, where available.

Qualified to make quality assurance decisions: AO/B will determine what qualifies those undertaking internal and external quality assurances to make decisions about that quality assurance. A list of general internal qualification assurance qualifications is included below. Please also refer to additional guidance for qualifications in the relevant nation, where available.

Witness testimony: Witness testimony is an account of practice that has been witnessed or experienced by someone other than the assessor and the learner.

Occupational Competence Requirements

Tutors, Assessors and Quality Assurance Staff

All Tutors, Assessors and Quality Assurance Staff must:

- Have a specific qualification equivalent to the qualification or units being taught/assessed or quality assured
- Have relevant industry experience
- Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry relevant Continued Professional Development during the last two years (this may be discipline/context specific or relevant to tutoring assessing or quality assurance)

Tutors

Tutors must hold or be working towards a teaching qualification. The following are acceptable:

- Level 3 Award, Level 4 Certificate or Level 5 in Education and Training
- Level 3 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS)
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTTLS)
- Qualified Teacher Status
- Relevant predecessor tutor qualifications, such as Level 3 Awards and Certificate in Assessing the Quality of Assessment (QCF), Certificate in Education in Post Compulsory Education (PCE) or L&D9DI - Assessing workplace competence using Direct and Indirect methods (Scotland)

Assessors

Assessors must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching (Further Education and Skills) (September 2024) to be discussed with Awarding Organisation to ensure relevant units have been undertaken
- Level 3 Learning and Skills Assessor Apprenticeship (March 2023)
- Level 5 Learning and Skills Teacher Apprenticeship (January 2019)
- L&D9DI - Assessing workplace competence using Direct and Indirect methods (Scotland) (2015)
- L&D9D - Assessing workplace competence using Direct methods (Scotland) (2015)
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training (2014)

Relevant assessing units:

- Teaching, learning and assessment in education and training

- Developing teaching, learning and assessment in education and training
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training (2014)
- Relevant assessing units:**
 - Assessing learners in education and training
 - Assess occupational competence in the work environment
 - Assess vocational skills, knowledge and understanding
- D32 Assess Candidate Performance and D33 Assess Candidate Using Differing Sources of Evidence (2012)
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) (2012)
- Teaching Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) (2012, 2007)
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (for competence/skills learning outcomes only) (2010)
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement (for knowledge learning outcomes only) (2010)
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (2010)
- A1 Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods and A2 Assessing Candidates' Performance through Observation (2002)
- HEI Certificate in Education
- Qualified Teacher Status Certificate in Education in Post Compulsory Education (PCE)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Education

Internal Quality Assurers

Internal Quality Assurers must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training (2014)
- Relevant IQA unit:**
 - Internally assure the quality of assessment
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training (2014)

Relevant IQA units:

- Assessing learners in education and training
- Internally assure the quality of assessment
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (2014) or
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (2014)
- D34 Unit Internally verify the assessment process (2012)
- V1 Verifiers Award (2012)
- L&D11- Internally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment (Scotland) (2010)

External Quality Assurers

External Quality Assurers must hold or be working towards any of the following:

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

External verifiers holding historical qualifications such as unit V2 – Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process, are required to demonstrate that they meet the same standards for monitoring assessment processes and decisions as current assessment practice requirements. Suggested evidence that demonstrates this requirement may include CPD records, a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or records of work completed.

It is recommended that external quality assurance staff also hold a relevant assessing and internal quality assurance qualifications as detailed above.

All new assessors and quality assurance staff must be given a clear action plan for achieving the appropriate qualification(s) and should be countersigned by an appropriately qualified individual until the qualification(s) are achieved.

Occupational Competence Requirements

Tutors, Assessors and Quality Assurance Staff

All Tutors, Assessors and Quality Assurance Staff must:

- Have a specific qualification equivalent to the qualification or units being taught/assessed or quality assured
- Have relevant industry experience
- Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry relevant Continued Professional Development during the last two years (this may be discipline/context specific or relevant to tutoring assessing or quality assurance)

Tutors

Tutors must hold or be working towards a teaching qualification. The following are acceptable:

- Level 3 Award, Level 4 Certificate or Level 5 in Education and Training
- Level 3 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS)
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTTLS)
- Qualified Teacher Status
- Relevant predecessor tutor qualifications, such as Level 3 Awards and Certificate in Assessing the Quality of Assessment (QCF), Certificate in Education in Post Compulsory Education (PCE) or L&D9DI - Assessing workplace competence using Direct and Indirect methods (Scotland)

Assessors

Assessors must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement

Assessors holding historical qualifications such as unit A1, unit A2, or Level 4 Awards and Certificates in Assuring the Quality of Assessment (QCF), are required to demonstrate that they meet the same standards as current assessment practice requirements. Suggested evidence that demonstrates this requirement may include CPD records, a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or records of work completed.

Internal Quality Assurers

Internal quality assurers must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

Internal Verifiers holding historical qualifications such as unit V1 – Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process, are required to demonstrate that they meet the same standards for monitoring assessment processes and decisions as current assessment practice requirements. Suggested evidence that demonstrates this requirement may include CPD records, a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or records of work completed.

It is recommended that internal quality assurance staff also hold a relevant assessing qualification as detailed above.

External Quality Assurers

External Quality Assurers must hold or be working towards any of the following:

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

External verifiers holding historical qualifications such as unit V2 – Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process, are required to demonstrate that they meet the same standards for monitoring assessment processes and decisions as current assessment practice requirements. Suggested evidence that demonstrates this requirement may include CPD records, a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or records of work completed.

It is recommended that external quality assurance staff also hold a relevant assessing and internal quality assurance qualifications as detailed above.

All new assessors and quality assurance staff must be given a clear action plan for achieving the appropriate qualification(s) and should be countersigned by an appropriately qualified individual until the qualification(s) are achieved.

Additional Information

Centre Approval

We approve organisations such as colleges, schools, providers and employers as approved centres. As an approved centre you will be able to deliver our qualifications.

To become an approved centre complete our Centre Approval Application Form which can be download from our website. Our support team will contact you within two working days to help you through the process.

Feedback

Your feedback is very important to us. We're always open to suggestions when it comes to enhancing and improving our services, products and systems.

Email contactus@innovateawarding.org or call 0117 314 2800.

Complaints

If we do get things wrong, we will make every effort to resolve your issues quickly and efficiently. If you'd like to raise a formal complaint, then we recommend you read our Complaints Procedure which can be found on our website.

Fees

Our fees structure is transparent and straightforward. Our fees are published on our website in a clear format with no hidden charges. Unlike other awarding organisations, we do not charge an annual centre fee. Visit our website to compare our fees.

Enquiries and Appeals

We recognise that sometimes decisions are made that a centre (or learner) may wish to appeal. We have an Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Process on our website that sets out guidelines on grounds for appeal and the process.

Data Protection

Innovate Awarding takes the protection of data seriously; we have a data protection statement outlining how we and our centres, comply with the current legislation on data protection. This statement can be found on our website.

Equality and Diversity

Innovate Awarding is committed to giving everyone who wants to gain one of our qualifications an equal opportunity of achieving it in line with current UK legislation (Equality Act 2010) and EU directives.

Centres are required, as conditions of approval, to use an equality and diversity policy that works together with ours and that they maintain an effective complaint and appeals process. We expect centres to tell learners how to find and use their own equality and diversity and appeals processes. For information, please visit our website.

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration

All learners must be treated fairly and equally and be given every opportunity to achieve our/the qualifications. A copy of our policy on Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations, and application form, can be found on our website.

Malpractice and Maladministration

Innovate Awarding has a responsibility to do everything it can to prevent any malpractice or maladministration from occurring, and where it has already occurred, ensuring action is taken proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence.

A copy of our policy and procedure on Malpractice and Maladministration is available on our website.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and referencing

Learner submissions such as reports, presentations, business projects and portfolios must be produced by themselves. Correctly cited quotes and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to enhance and support the document, but the document itself must be the learner's own work and not generated by AI.

Innovate Awarding expects all forms of plagiarism to be treated very seriously by staff at centres, and centres should have in place their own plagiarism policy and process for handling suspected cases of plagiarism.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL recognises how the contribution of a learner's previous experience could contribute to a qualification or unit. Innovate Awarding have produced guidance on RPL, and this can be found within our Information and Guidance for Centres on our website.

Please note the above is not a comprehensive guide to running qualifications. Once approved, centres must adhere to the Centre Agreement and Information and Guidance for Centres.