

Assessor and Quality Assurance Guidance 2018

The context of assessment and quality assurance is changing and will continue to change significantly in the next 24 months, particularly in relation to:

- Move from apprenticeship frameworks to apprenticeship standards leading to an increase in assessment being based on standards rather than qualifications.
- Accredited schemes (such as the Care Certificate) that are not regulated qualifications.

The following is issued in order to help assessors, quality assurance staff, employers, qualification providers and awarding organisations in their usage of the Assessor and Quality Assurance qualifications in the current context.

This guidance concentrates on the qualifications that assess and quality assure **occupational competence** and **vocationally related achievement**.

Purpose of the Assessor Qualifications

The purpose of the qualifications is and has always been to upskill the assessor workforce and to ensure that those who are assessing learners are competent and qualified to do so. This aim is if anything more important in the current climate, where the roll out of Apprenticeship Standards will require a large number of assessors both for Gateway (on programme) and end-point assessment (EPA).

Gateway assessment – A responsible employer or Training Provider would ensure that an assessment professional is involved in the very important Gateway decision. This assessor will need to judge whether a learner is ready to enter the Gateway phase. This will involve significant formative assessment similar to current qualification programmes and a final summative assessment. Feedback and coaching will also be required in this role. An assessor qualification will not be mandatory for this, but many employers will consider that this is good practice.

End Point assessment - An assessor will have to judge in a single summative assessment whether the learner is occupationally competent. This will be a different assessor to the one that has made the judgement that the learner is ready to enter gateway. For some Standards it is mandatory for assessors to hold an appropriate assessor qualification.

What are Assessor qualifications designed for?

These are designed for assessing vocational qualifications and measure learner occupational competence in assessment. These qualifications ensure the assessor is capable of handling the range of evidence possibilities and judging these against the relevant criteria.

In addition, these are recommended as having application in the delivery of apprenticeships because the qualifications:

- provide an assessor with the confidence to deal with matching the Apprenticeship Standards to a candidate's workplace performance to allow formative feedback about progress – whether the candidate is now able to move on to another standard or area of standards
- provide the skills necessary to make an overall judgement as to whether a candidate has demonstrated suitable competences to be ready for Gateway: is the candidate competent across the range of standards to be assessed?
- support assessors in their ability to assess across the range of standards and evidence requirements for EPA.

The length of time that learners take to achieve an assessor qualification will vary dependent on the amount of assessing that they are undertaking and their previous experience. It is expected, however that learners should take at least 10 weeks to achieve the award-sized qualifications [ie the 2 unit knowledge and competence based awards]

Occupational competence

Assessors are making a judgement about whether the learner is competent in the role that they are undertaking.

Assessment of occupational competence in a work environment requires assessors to provide assessments, formative and/or summative, of candidate performance against relevant standards: national, apprenticeship or employer specified. Where this relates to a qualification, this should be a competence-based qualification assessed in a work environment but it does not have to be a regulated qualification. It could also potentially include assessment of National Occupational Standards (NOS), employer standards or a new Apprenticeship Standard.

Any judgements made by a trainee assessor as part of their training must be countersigned by a qualified and competent assessor before being accepted as valid.

Vocationally related achievement

Assessment of vocationally related achievement involves assessment in environments other than the workplace: workshops, classrooms and simulated environments.

Any judgements made by a trainee assessor as part of their training must be countersigned by a qualified and competent assessor before being accepted as valid.

Quality assurance qualifications

Quality assurance qualifications can be achieved through quality assuring regulated qualifications, employer standards, National Occupational Standards or the new Apprenticeship Standards as is the case for the Assessor qualifications.

Programme providers will want to ensure they have a means of assuring the quality of their programmes and the Internal Quality Assurance qualifications will help to provide the relevant QA personnel with the competence to check the process. Being able to question and sample the work of the formative assessors will give reassurance to the provider that

trainees' needs are being met and candidates are not being submitted for Gateway too early or too late. Similarly EQA qualifications are applicable to the QA of the EPA as EQAs will be competent to sample both directly and indirectly assessment decisions made during EPA.