

Section 1: Qualification Overview

NCFE Level 4 Award in Understanding the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice - QAN 501/0884/0

NCFE Level 4 Award in Externally Assuring the Quality of Assessment Processes and Practices - QAN 501/0883/9

NCFE Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice - QAN 501/0891/8

Qualification Overview

Introduction

We want to make your experience of working with NCFE as pleasant and easy as possible. This Qualification Specification contains everything you need to know about these qualifications and should be used by everyone involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of the NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance Staff.

About this qualification

The NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance Staff have been accredited by the qualifications regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland¹, and are part of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

These qualifications are eligible for funding under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 under Section 97. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.

¹The qualifications regulators ('regulators') are Ofqual in England, DCELLS in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.

Geographical coverage

These qualifications have been accredited for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We're able to provide the Qualification Specification and assessment materials in the Welsh and/or Irish language where requested and appropriate.

Things you need to know

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

- Qualification accreditation number: 501/0884/0
- Aim reference: 50108840
- Guided learning hours (GLH): 45
- QCF level: 4
- Qualification credit value: 6
- Assessment requirements: internally assessed and externally moderated portfolio of evidence

NCFE Level 4 Award in Externally Assuring the Quality of Assessment Processes and Practices

- Qualification accreditation number: 501/0883/9
- Aim reference: 50108839
- Guided learning hours (GLH): 75
- QCF level: 4
- Qualification credit value: 12
- Assessment requirements: internally assessed and externally moderated portfolio of evidence

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

- Qualification accreditation number: 501/0891/8
- Aim reference: 50108918
- Guided learning hours (GLH): 100
- QCF level: 4
- Qualification credit value: 17
- Assessment requirements: internally assessed and externally moderated portfolio of evidence

Aims and Objectives of the qualifications

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

This qualification is intended for those who wish to gain an understanding of the principles and practices of external quality assurance without any requirement to practice.

NCFE Level 4 Award in Externally Assuring the Quality of Assessment Processes and Practices

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.

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

This qualification is intended for those who lead a team of

people responsible for assuring the quality of assessment from outside an organisation or assessment centre, usually on behalf of an awarding organisation.

Entry guidance

These qualifications are designed for learners aged 19 and above.

There aren't any specific recommended prior learning requirements for these qualifications, however learners might find it helpful if they've already achieved a Level 3 qualification.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that these qualifications are appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the assessment criteria and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy and health and safety aspects of these qualifications.

Learners registered on these qualifications shouldn't undertake another qualification at the same level with the same, or a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding levels.

Achieving the qualifications

These qualifications consist of a mixture of 3 units:

- Unit 01 Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment
- Unit 02 Externally assure the quality of assessment
- Unit 03 Plan, allocate and monitor work in own area of responsibility

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

Learners are required to successfully complete **Unit 01**.

NCFE Level 4 Award in Externally Assuring the Quality of Assessment Processes and Practices

Learners are required to successfully complete **Unit 01 and Unit 02**.

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

Learners are required to successfully complete all 3 mandatory units.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit are provided in Section 3 page 13.

To achieve the NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance Staff, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes and assessment criteria detailed in this Qualification Specification for the relevant units. Grades are not awarded.

Learners who aren't successful can resubmit work within the registration period, however, a charge may apply. A Credit and Unit Summary Certificate can be requested for learners who don't achieve the full certificate but who have achieved at least one whole unit.

Progression opportunities

Learners who have completed the NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance Staff may progress to further learning by undertaking a Level 4 qualification in a related discipline.

It's also anticipated that successful completion of these qualifications will lead directly into employment as a lead external verifier.

Credit Transfer

One of the benefits of the QCF is that learners can transfer credit from one qualification to another. Learners who've already achieved one or more of the units included in these qualifications elsewhere can transfer the credit already achieved. Simply let us know which units are being achieved by credit transfer on the Certificate Claim Form.

Please see www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk for information about the units in these qualifications.

Accreditation and certification end dates

All qualifications on the QCF have accreditation and certification end dates to ensure that qualifications remain current and valid. The accreditation end date is the last date we can register learners on a qualification, and the certification end date is the last date that learners can be certificated.

Learners have up to 3 years after the accreditation end date to complete this qualification and claim their certificate (unless the certification end date passes before the end of the 3 year period). For further information about accreditation and certification end dates please refer to the information about this qualification on our website www.ncfe.org.uk or alternatively you can check the information on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk.

What happens at the end of an accreditation period?

We review qualifications that are near the end of their accreditation period, working with sector representatives to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments. In most cases we'd apply to the regulators for an extension to the accreditation period. If an accreditation period is extended the certification period will also change.

We'll post information relating to changes or extensions to qualifications on our website www.ncfe.org.uk, and centres approved to offer the qualification will be kept updated.

Resource requirements

There aren't any specific resource requirements for these qualifications.

For staffing resources required for these qualifications, please refer to our Occupational Competence Guidelines, available on our website www.ncfe.org.uk.

Support for centres

There are a number of documents available that you might find useful. These are available to download from our website www.ncfe.org.uk, or can be requested from the Centre Support team on 0191 239 8000 or by emailing info@ncfe.org.uk.

Centre Support Guide

This explains everything you need to know, from how to apply to become an NCFE-approved centre, to registering your learners, claiming certificates for your learners and everything in between. Centres must seek approval to offer a qualification; only learners from approved centres can be certificated.

Directory of Products and Services

This provides summary information about all of NCFE's qualifications and awards including mandatory and optional units, learner registration and certification fees and assessment information.

Fees and Pricing

Published in the spring for the forthcoming academic year.

Occupational Competence Guidelines

Provides details of qualifications and experience required for Assessors and Internal Moderators/Verifiers of NCFE qualifications and awards.

Training and support

We can provide training sessions for Assessors and Internal Moderators who may not hold the A1 and V1 Assessment and Verification units. Training is also available for portfolio building as well as bespoke subject specific training. For further information please contact our Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

Support for learners

Candidate Learning Log (CLL)

This gives information about the qualification and can help learners keep track of their work. CLLs can be downloaded

free of charge from www.ncfe.org.uk. Learners don't have to use the CLL, instead you can devise your own materials.

Any materials you produce should allow learners to track their achievement against each required learning outcome and assessment criteria and include:

- information on the content, availability and location of NCFE's procedures and policies
- advice on support mechanisms for learners who are experiencing difficulties with their studies
- a mechanism for Assessors and Internal Moderators to authenticate evidence and achievement for each unit.

Links to National Skills Standards

These qualifications are mapped to the 2004 Key Skills standards. The complete standards and guidance documents are available from QCDA. We've also highlighted where learning opportunities for the Functional Skills qualifications may be found.

These qualifications can be used to develop learners':

- Communication/Literacy/English skills
- Application of Number/Numeracy/Maths skills
- Information and Communication Technology skills

The activities learners carry out whilst completing this qualification could help prepare them for their Basic Skills or Functional Skills assessments.

Section 4 page 27 shows how evidence can be generated for Key Skills through this qualification. The aim has been to target Level 4 Key Skills although work can be designed for other levels, depending on the needs of individual learners or groups.

It's not a mandatory requirement of the NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance Staff to complete a Key Skills portfolio. However, while completing these qualifications, learners will generate a portfolio of evidence which could be used towards certain components of a Key Skills qualification.

If a learner wishes to be assessed for a Key Skills qualification, they must complete a portfolio of evidence, as well as achieve the relevant Key Skills external assessment paper before applying for certification.

Once a whole qualification has been assessed and achieved, certification can then be requested.

If a learner wishes to gain a Basic Skills or Functional Skills qualification, they must successfully pass the relevant Basic Skills or Functional Skills assessment.

This section indicates where, within these qualifications, opportunities exist to generate evidence for a Key Skills portfolio, indicating where each piece of evidence is intrinsic or requires some further activity.

NB The information in Section 4 indicates where evidence is likely to occur. It is the Assessor's role to assess the Key Skills evidence against the criteria.

We've also shown in Section 4 where the qualifications present opportunities for learners to gather evidence towards the personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) framework.

Section 2: Assessment and Moderation

Assessment and Moderation

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a candidate's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in the qualification.

Internal Assessment

The NCFE Level 4 Qualifications for External Quality Assurance staff are internally assessed.

Each candidate is required to create a portfolio of evidence which demonstrates achievement of all learning outcomes and assessment criteria associated with each relevant unit.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria specify what each candidate has to achieve and are included within Section 3 of this Qualification Specification.

The main pieces of evidence for the portfolio could include:

- Assessor observation – completed observational checklists and related action plans
- witness testimony
- candidate product
- worksheets
- assignments/projects/reports
- professional discussion
- record of oral and written questioning
- candidate and peer reports
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Assessment guidance is provided for each unit. Assessors can use other methods of assessment as long as they're valid, reliable and maintain the integrity of the assessment and of the standards required of the qualification. Acceptable methods of assessment could be drawn from the list above.

Assessors must be satisfied that candidates have achieved all learning outcomes and assessment criteria related to the unit being assessed prior to deciding whether candidates have been successful. Assessors are also responsible for supporting

candidates through the assessment process.

For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact the Quality Assurance team on 0191 239 8000.

The assessment arrangements for these qualifications are in accordance with the criteria set out by the regulatory authorities.

How does moderation work

What is Moderation?

Moderation is the process by which we confirm that assessment decisions in centres are:

- made by competent and qualified Assessors
- the product of sound and fair assessment practice
- recorded accurately and appropriately

We do this by:

- internal moderation - which you carry out
- external moderation - which we carry out through our External Moderators who, by supporting you, will make sure that assessments meet nationally agreed standards and that your quality assurance systems continue to meet our centre approval criteria.

The Internal Moderator provides the vital link between the Assessors and the External Moderator and acts as the centre's quality assurance agent.

If you'd like to know more about the responsibilities of Assessors, Internal and External Moderators please refer to our Centre Support Guide.

Section 3:

Structure and Content

Structure and Content

This section provides details of the structure and content of the qualifications.

The unit summary provides an overview of each unit including:

- the unit title
- the unit overview
- guided learning hours
- an indication of whether the unit is mandatory or optional
- credit value
- level

Following the unit summary there's detailed information for each unit containing:

- the unit number and title
- learning outcomes (the learner will) and assessment criteria (the learner can)
- suggested types of evidence for internal assessment

The regulators' accredited unit number is indicated in brackets for each unit (eg M/100/7116). However to make cross-referencing assessment and moderation easier, we've used a sequential numbering system in this document.

For further information or guidance about the qualification please contact our Research and Product Development team on 0191 239 8000.

Unit Summaries

Unit 01

Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment

(regulators' unit accreditation no. F/601/5322)

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.

Guided learning hours: 45

Credit value: 6

Level: 4

This unit is **mandatory for all 3 qualifications**

Unit 02

Externally assure the quality of assessment

(regulators' unit accreditation no. J/601/5323)

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.

Guided learning hours: 30

Credit value: 6

Level: 4

This unit is **mandatory for Level 4 Award in Externally Assuring the Quality of Assessment Processes and Practices and Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice**

Unit 03

Plan, allocate and monitor work in own area of responsibility

(regulators' unit accreditation no. H/600/9674)

This unit helps learners to plan, allocate and monitor work in own area of responsibility, and make any necessary changes to original work plans.

Guided learning hours: 25

Credit value: 5

Level: 4

This unit is **mandatory for Level 4 Certificate in Leading the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice**

Unit 01 Understanding the principles and practices of externally assuring the quality of assessment (F/601/5322)

The learner will:

1 Understand the context and principles of external quality assurance

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

2 Understand how to plan the external quality assurance of assessment

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

3 Understand how to externally evaluate the quality of assessment and internal quality assurance

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

4 Understand how to externally maintain and improve the quality of assessment

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

5 Understand how to manage information relevant to external quality assurance

The learner can:

5.1 Evaluate the requirements for information management, data protection and confidentiality in relation to external quality assurance

The learner will:

6 Understand the legal and good practice requirements relating to external quality assurance

The learner can:

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

Assessment Guidance - Unit 01

The aim of this unit is to assess knowledge and understanding of the principles and practices that underpin the external quality assurance of assessment.

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.

The types of evidence listed above are for guidance purposes only. Within candidates' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally moderated.

Unit 02 Externally assure the quality of assessment (J/601/5323)

The learner will:

1 Be able to plan the external quality assurance of assessment

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

2 Be able to externally evaluate internal quality assurance and assessment

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

3 Be able to maintain and improve internal quality assurance processes

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

4 Be able to manage information relevant to the external quality assurance of assessment

The learner can:

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

The learner will:

5 Be able to maintain legal and good practice requirements when externally monitoring and maintaining the quality of assessment

The learner can:

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

Assessment Guidance - Unit 02

The aim of this unit is to assess performance in assuring the quality of assessment from outside an organisation or assessment centre, usually on behalf of an awarding organisation.

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

- observation of performance
- examining products of work
- questioning

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

Simulations are not allowed.

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 assessment criterion.

Evidence must come from performance in the work environment. There must be evidence of carrying out at least 2 external centre visits, including the preparation for and actions after the actual visit itself.

The types of evidence listed above are for guidance purposes only. Within candidates' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally moderated.

Unit 03 Plan, allocate and monitor work in own area of responsibility (H/600/9674)

The learner will:

1 Be able to produce a work plan for own area of responsibility

The learner can:

- 1.1 Explain the context in which work is to be undertaken
- 1.2 Identify the skills base and the resources available
- 1.3 Examine priorities and success criteria needed for the team
- 1.4 Produce a work plan for own area of responsibility

The learner will:

2 Be able to allocate and agree responsibilities with team members

The learner can:

- 2.1 Identify team members' responsibilities for identified work activities
- 2.2 Agree responsibilities and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) objectives with team members

The learner will:

3 Be able to monitor the progress and quality of work in own area of responsibility and provide feedback

The learner can:

- 3.1 Identify ways to monitor progress and quality of work
- 3.2 Monitor and evaluate progress against agreed standards and provide feedback to team members

The learner will:

4 Be able to review and amend plans of work for own area of responsibility and communicate changes

The learner can:

4.1 Review and amend work plan where changes are needed

4.2 Communicate changes to team members

Assessment Guidance - Unit 03

The aim of this unit is to assess performance in leading the work of a team responsible for the external quality assurance of assessment centres.

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

- observation of performance
- examining products of work
- questioning

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

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 assessment criterion.

Evidence must come from performance in the work environment.

The types of evidence listed above are for guidance purposes only. Within candidates' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally moderated.

Section 4:

Links to National Skills Standards

Links to National Skills Standards

The information below shows where evidence for Key Skills can be gained.

We've also highlighted where learning opportunities for the Key Skills, Basic Skills and Functional Skills qualifications may be found. The activities learners carry out whilst completing these qualifications could help prepare them for their Basic Skills or Functional Skills assessments.

We've also highlighted which of the Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) links into the units of the qualifications.

For further information please contact a member of the Research and Product Development team.

Communication / English Unit 01, Unit 02 and Unit 03

Application of Number / Maths No explicit opportunities to develop this skill

ICT Unit 01

Working with others Unit 02 and Unit 03

Improving own learning and performance Unit 01, Unit 02 and Unit 03

Problem solving Unit 01, Unit 02 and Unit 03

PLTS Independent enquirers Unit 01

PLTS Creative thinkers Unit 01

PLTS Reflective learners Unit 01

PLTS Team workers Unit 02 and Unit 03

PLTS Self-managers Unit 02 and Unit 03

PLTS Effective participators Unit 02 and Unit 03
