ASSESSMENT CENTRE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Agile Career Training Ltd delivers relevant qualifications through its approved Assessment Centre.

In order for Agile Career Training Ltd to maintain its centre's approval(s) the awarding organisation undertakes yearly external quality assurance inspections. Ensuring that standards are maintained by all approved centre's forms a key role of an awarding organisation's responsibilities.

Awarding organisations are themselves subject to regulatory inspection and approval from the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), which was established in 2009 by the *Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act and Education Act 2011*

Delivering RQF qualifications form a major part of the Development Strategy for Agile Career Training Ltd, and this policy document is primarily aimed at supporting the operation and administration of all regulated qualifications.

QUALIFICATION CREDIT FRAMEWORK (RCF)

Qualifications that use the RQF rules are made up of units. This provides flexible ways to get a qualification. Each unit has a credit value which tells you how many credits are awarded when a unit is completed. The credit value also gives an indication of how long it will normally take you to prepare for a unit or qualification. One credit will usually take you 10 hours of learning.

Units build up to qualifications. There are three different types of qualification in the RCF:

- **Award** with 1 to 12 credits
- **Certificate** you will need 13 – 36 credits
- **Diploma** you will need at least 37 credits.

Units and qualifications are each given a level according to their difficulty, from entry level to level 8. The title of a qualification will tell you its size and level.

Units awarded by different awarding organisations can be combined to build up qualifications.

MANAGERIAL SYSTEMS FOR THE 'APPROVED ASSESSMENT CENTRE'

The approved assessment centre, is managed by the Centre Manager (Quality Nominee) who is responsible for managing the systems in place to ensure that quality control is maintained. The Quality Nominee is a qualified assessors and internal quality assurers.

A network of 'sector competent' assessors, and internal quality assurers (IQAs) qualified to nationally recognised standards are available to assess and quality assure the levels of knowledge and competence reached by learners undertaking qualifications. All assessors and IQAs are issued with legally binding contracts prior to undertaking any assessment activities.

The centre employs an examination invigilator to support the delivery of online examinations, the examination invigilator adheres to assessment practice and principles.

There may be occasions where staff working at levels lower than those shown above are invited to undertake training and demonstrate competence as assessors or internal quality assurers.

Where new qualifications for assessment and internal quality assurance replace existing ones, there will no requirement for individuals to re-qualify. However, they will be required to carry out their

practice in accordance with the current standards for assessment and internal quality assurance.

They must attend professional updating or CPD training sessions to ensure that they maintain their assessment and/or internal quality assurance practice to required standards.

All new assessors, examination invigilators, and internal quality assurers will receive an induction which will cover the requirements of the role, relevant policies, procedures and documentation. They will be formally registered for the appropriate qualification and will work towards this under the direction and guidance of their appointed assessor.

All assessment decisions by unqualified assessors or unqualified internal quality assurers (working towards the appropriate qualification) will be checked, authenticated and countersigned by a qualified and occupationally competent assessor who will also act as their mentor.

It is the responsibility of the Quality Nominee, for ensuring that there are sufficient competent and qualified assessors, examination administrators, and internal quality assurers to meet service needs.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION STRATEGY AND SECTOR COMPETENCE

The Awarding Organisation is responsible for determining the assessment strategy for the qualifications being offered. This sets out the overarching principles for assessment and quality assurance. It is incorporated within the standards documentation for each qualification and are available from the Agile Career Training Ltd's website https://www.agilecareertraining.co.uk. The following key principles are embedded within this strategy.

Requirement for Assessors, Expert Witnesses, Internal Quality Assurers and Examination methods
These are key roles within the process and essential for ensuring validity, fairness and reliability of assessment and therefore the 'integrity and professionalism' of individuals undertaking these roles is of 'paramount importance'. The assessment strategy emphasises the importance for organisations to provide sufficient time for appointed assessors and internal quality assurers to carry out their role effectively.

i.   Required competence of assessors

Assessors are required to be 'occupationally competent'; in other words, competent in the functions covered by the units they are assessing. Occupational competence will be identified by the use of job descriptions and CV's. It is the responsibility of Quality Nominee to make sure that the assessor has the necessary occupational competence to undertake the assessment process.

Assessors must be familiar with the qualification units they are assessing. They must show that they maintain their occupational competence by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities.

ii.   Required competence of examination invigilator

The invigilator is responsible for the conduct and integrity of all examinations, whether written, online or practical. Agile Career Training Ltd invigilators are responsible for familiarising themselves with Awarding Organisations requirements including the Regulations for the conduct of examinations.

iii.   Required competence for expert witnesses

Expert witnesses must be occupationally competent. They must be familiar with the qualification for which they are providing testimonies. Expert witnesses must also maintain their occupational competence by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities.

iv. **Required competence of internal quality assurers**

Agile Career Training Ltd internal quality assurers must be occupationally knowledgeable about the range of units for which they are responsible. They must understand the content, structure and assessment requirements for the qualification they are verifying. They must maintain their occupational competence by actively engaging in continuous development activities.

Internal quality assurers working for and with Agile Career Training Ltd must occupy a position that gives them authority and resources to, provide authoritative advice, call meetings as appropriate, visit and observe assessment practice and carry out all the other important roles of internal quality assurance.

v. Principles of assessment

When assessing competence in the workplace, wherever possible, there should be direct observation of the candidate by a competent assessor or testimony from an expert witness. This can be achieved face to face or utilising current technology such as webcam or video conferencing (as long as validation of identification occurs prior to acceptance of evidence).

Where not possible or practicable to obtain direct observation alternative methods of assessment are acceptable, such as work products, records, reflective accounts and professional discussion.

Each Awarding Organisation assessment strategy also provides guidelines and principles regarding the use of simulation. For example, simulation is acceptable only where evidence in the workplace will not be demonstrated within an acceptable timeframe or where the nature of the work activity presents high risk/danger to the candidate and/or others.

Simulations must be planned and organised and must make neither more nor less demands on the candidate than would be experienced in a real work situation, i.e. they must replicate realistic scenarios that the candidate may reasonably face.

Knowledge and understanding can be assessed utilising a number of methodologies including:
- Questioning, both written, oral, and online examination
- Examination of product
- Professional discussion submitted by audio file, telephone, video conferencing and webcam

vi. Principles of Examination

All question papers, on-line assessments and computer-based assessments forms carry copyright. They must not be retained or copied in any form in whole or in part unless otherwise specified in subject-specific documentation.

Online Assessment

Agile Career Training Ltd will ensure appropriate security systems and procedures are in place to prevent candidates using computers in examinations, having unauthorised external communications.

For on-line assessment, it is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that both the identity of the candidate is established and that the candidate's name and identity matches the name and identity on the on-line test screen. If candidates sit an examination in another candidate's name (whether or not this is intentional), this may constitute malpractice.

Prior to assessment candidates will be informed of the date, time and place of the examination and the conditions under which it will be held.

The invigilator will take all reasonable steps to make sure that the following conditions are met:

- they are able to establish the identity of all candidates sitting online assessments. The head of centre must make sure that appropriate arrangements are in place so that all invigilators can carry out adequate checks on the identity of all candidates. Candidates must show documentary evidence to prove that he/she is the same person who entered/registered for the assessment e.g. passport or photographic driving licence.
- candidates only take into the examination room those instruments or materials which are clearly allowed in the instructions on a question paper. Unauthorised items will be removed before the assessment starts.
- mobile phones and other means of electronic communication are not allowed in any assessment. Candidates should be warned of this rule in advance and reminded at the start of each examination.
- for on-line examinations, the test must be unlocked for the correct candidate. The invigilator must check the identity of the candidate and then ensure that the correct ID and password are issued. The invigilator must oversee the input of the id and password for each candidate and check to see that the name on the test screen matches the name of the candidate.

If in spite of these checks either the invigilator or candidate becomes aware that the candidate is sitting a test in a different candidate's name then the test should be aborted. The Awarding Organisation should be notified immediately.

ROLES OF PERSONNEL WITHIN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Role of the Candidate

- Prepare for assessment by making sure he/she is familiar with the standards, what is to be assessed and how he/she will be assessed
- Make sure he/she understands the process of assessment and plays a positive and active role in this
- Carry out specified activities
- Gather and present evidence for assessment
- Receive and act on feedback from the assessor and other people involved in the assessment process
- Ensure the confidentiality and security of evidence in accordance with legislative, organisational and awarding organisation requirements

Role of the invigilator

The invigilator referred to in this document is the person nominated by the Centre Manager to take responsibility for the arrangement of examinations or tests.

- checks on the identity of all candidates
- provide and induction to testing procedure and an outline of the qualification
- security of question paper/question bank/test documentation
- examination/test conditions, including on-line and computer-based assessments, which ensure that the work submitted is that of the candidate alone using only the items/materials specified.
- Ensure that appropriate software, computers, and/or other equipment are being used for candidates registered for online test with remote invigilation.

A robust approval and booking procedure will exist for online testing (See separate Policy & Procedure 'online testing'. Rigorous and auditable security procedures will be put in place to prevent candidates, taking on-line examinations having unauthorised communications with other users. On- line examinations may be taken within a time period set within the system for each candidate.

Role of the assessor

An assessor has a key role in the development of the candidate and in ensuring that the candidate is able to perform to the required standards. The assessor is also a 'guardian' of the standards which means making sure that assessment judgements and decisions are safe. A summary of principal responsibilities of the assessor are given below:
- Provide an induction and an outline of the qualification and what is expected of the candidate
- Carry out initial assessment of the candidate and make sure that arrangements are put in place to manage any identified additional support needs
- Consider any application by the candidate for recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- Explain how the assessment process will be conducted
- Give details of the candidate's responsibilities with reference to the qualification, development and collection/presentation of evidence
- Agree and record assessment plans with the candidate
- Carry out assessments in accordance with the awarding organisation requirements and those of the centre
- Ensure that evidence meets the requirements for validity, authenticity, sufficiency, fairness and reliability
  - Make judgements on the evidence provided and record assessment decisions against the standards
- Provide the candidate with prompt, accurate and constructive feedback
- Maintain accurate records of assessment and achievement in accordance with the awarding organisation and centre requirements
- Regularly review the candidate's progress and agree new assessment plans where further evidence is required
- Carry out assessment practice in accordance with relevant regulation and organisation policies, such as equality of opportunity, health and safety and data protection
- Take part in standardisation meetings and activities
- Maintain occupational competence and keep records of CPD activities
- Contribute to quality assurance of the qualification in line with the requirements of the centre, awarding organisation, relevant sector skills council, Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and Office of the Qualifications & Examinations Regulator (Ofqual)

Role of the internal quality assurer

Internal quality assurers are responsible for maintaining and improving assessment within the centre. They must ensure that procedures are in place to support assessors in making robust and reliable assessment decisions. A summary of the key aspects of the role is given below.
- Carry out inductions with new members of the assessment invigilation team and identify any training or support needs
- Make sure that assessors and invigilators have the right competence and expertise to carry out their role
- Carry out standardisation activities to ensure that there is consistency of assessment and that appropriate assessment methodologies are used by assessors
- Make sure that there is an effective system for recording candidate achievement
- Keep accurate and up to date records of internal quality assurance
- Provide advice and guidance to assessors and invigilators to ensure that assessment and testing meets the requirements for sufficiency, authenticity, validity and consistency
- Take appropriate corrective action where necessary
- Take part in the formal stage of an appeal
- Carry out sampling and monitoring activities to ensure that assessors' judgements and decisions are consistent, fair and reliable
- Observe assessors and invigilators carrying out their practice

- Give feedback and support to enable them to maintain the quality of assessment and improve on their performance
- Make sure that the requirements for equality and diversity are being met
- Monitor the impact of legal issues including health safety and welfare of others
- Apply centre procedures for managing information such as recording, storing and reporting including maintaining confidentiality
- Monitor and manage own continuous professional development and that of the assessment team
- Contribute to centre meetings for assessors and internal quality assurers and take an active part in making sure that assessment and internal quality assurance is 'fit for purpose'
- Obtain feedback from candidates to ensure they are receiving the support and access to assessment to which they are entitled

Role of the external quality assurer

- Monitor and ensure the quality of internal quality assurance across a number of centre's
- Plan how external quality assurance will take place
- Monitor and critically evaluate the quality of the centre's internal quality assurance systems, administrative arrangements, staffing levels and staff expertise and competence, arrangements for assessment, the methods used and the assessment decisions made, providing advice and support to centre's
- Complete required documentation as required by the awarding organisation
- Giving feedback and support to centre's

Role of the centre manager (quality nominee)

The Centre Manager who acts as the Quality Nominee, and is the main point of contact between the centre and awarding organisation for information relating to quality assurance. Responsibilities are outlined below.
- Make sure that all staff are aware of the awarding organisation's requirements
- Manage the centre quality assurer meetings
- Receive and share with invigilators, assessors, internal quality assurers and other relevant personnel, information from the awarding organisation relating to the delivery of approved programmes
- Make sure that assessment and internal quality assurance is effective on all approved programmes
- Liaise with the external quality assurer regarding quality assurance practice and standards verification
- Give feedback to senior managers, internal quality assurers and assessors following external quality assurance, quality review and development processes
- Manage the training and support of new invigilators, assessors and internal quality assurers
- Provide opportunities for continuous professional development for assessors and internal quality assurers

Role of the support administrator

This is the person designated by the centre to provide administrative support to the Centre Manager (Quality Nominee), internal quality assurers, assessors and candidates. Key responsibilities are:
- Ensure all records are up to date and accurate
- Update candidate records to reflect unit or qualification achievement
- Register candidates with relevant awarding organisation following approval from the Quality Nominee
- Prepare notification documentation to relevant personnel on candidate achievement

- Carry out quarterly checks on the accuracy of internal records containing details of online testing, remote invigilation, traditional invigilation, candidates, assessors and internal quality assurers
- Keep accurate records of internal Quality Assurance meetings
- Maintain files and records held by the Assessment Centre
- Carry out periodic audits to check and confirm the accuracy of data held by the centre

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS *(For further information see detailed Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy)*

Agile Career Training Ltd is committed to ensuring that all learners are given equality of opportunity and access to qualifications. An individual who may require a reasonable adjustment to help reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places him or her at substantial disadvantage in the assessment process. It is stressed that this adjustment will reflect the normal working practice of the candidate within the occupational area and the specified assessment criteria for a particular qualification will still be met. Reasonable adjustment will not affect the validity or reliability of the assessment outcome or give an advantage over other candidates. Adaptations to be made to the physical environment for access purposes or adaptation to equipment will be acceptable as long as these do not impact on the standards being tested.

Discussions regarding reasonable adjustments will take place prior to the assessment process. It is important that invigilators and/or assessors provide opportunities for candidates to raise any concerns regarding assessments and to make application for reasonable adjustments during induction and assessment planning stages. Any reasonable adjustments will comply with awarding organisation's policy and guidance. Advice on reasonable adjustments can be requested from the Equal Opportunities Adviser and Centre Manager.

APPEALS PROCEDURE *(For further information see detailed Appeals Policy)*

Agile Career Training Ltd provide a written appeals procedure for any candidates who are dissatisfied with the conduct or outcomes of their assessment. Throughout the assessment process it is in the interest of all parties to ensure that the judgement of the candidates is accurate and fair.

Where assessors are unsure whether the candidate has demonstrated competence, the assessor is advised to declare the candidate "not yet competent". Whilst the candidate may believe that he/she is competent and has demonstrated competence, after discussing this concern with his/ her assessor, the candidate may lodge an appeal if he/she still feels aggrieved.

WHEN APPEALS MAY BE LODGED
Appeals regarding the conduct of an assessment may be made if the candidate feels that:

- He/she has not had access to assessment against the relevant criteria
- The conditions of assessment were not appropriate
- The judgement of the assessor conflicts with the standards

MALPRACTICE *(For further information see detailed Malpractice Policy)*
Agile Career Training Ltd has in place a published centre policy on malpractice. In this context, malpractice is defined as any act which undermines the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damages the authority of those responsible for conducting assessment and certification. It is the responsibility of all training and development staff to be vigilant regarding malpractice and where it occurs or where it is attempted it must be dealt with in an open and fair manner.

EXAMPLES OF MALPRACTICE BY THE CANDIDATE
- Work that does not belong to the candidate, such as evidence that has been falsified, plagiarised or copied
- Alteration of any documents such as witness testimonies or certificates of achievement

PREVENTING MALPRACTICE

The centre will take all reasonable steps to minimise the possibility of malpractice.   These will include:
- Informing candidates of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice. This information should be given during the induction period and included in written information given to the candidate
- Checking the validity and authenticity of candidates' written answers to questions
- Use of oral questions with candidates to check their knowledge and understanding and explore how this is applied in their workplace
- Developing an awareness of candidates' written style, way of working and abilities so that a judgement can be made on the authenticity of evidence that has been provided by other means than through direct observation or oral questioning
- Ensuring the integrity of candidate login and passwords to computer systems.

DEALING WITH MALPRACTICE

Any malpractice or attempted act of malpractice which has influenced the assessment outcome, must be reported to the Quality Nominee so that this can be logged and the incident communicated to the awarding organisation. The centre will be required to carry out an investigation and to report the findings to the awarding organisation. The Centre Manager must notify the individual under investigation of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven. The individual must be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations made. The Centre Manager must also inform the individual of the avenues for appealing should a judgement be made against him/her.

A full investigation will then take place by the awarding organisation and the centre will be expected to cooperate fully with this. Where a candidate certificate has been awarded, this may be recalled and declared invalid.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Candidates will be registered by the Assessment Centre for the relevant qualification using the awarding organisation's online registration process.   A record will be made of the candidate's registration number and date of registration.

Candidates may (if acceptable by the awarding organisation) take certain tests online by remote invigilation.

CANDIDATE PORTFOLIOS

ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO SYSTEMS
Evidence of candidates' competence can be saved electronically.
An electronic portfolio system has a number of advantages over a paper-based system. Candidates, assessors, internal quality assurers and centre staff have access to the portfolio whenever needed. The system removes the need to transport candidate portfolios from one location to another and there is no physical storage needed.

The system is secure and is backed up every 15 minutes so there is no risk of losing the portfolio as could occur with a paper-based document. Candidates' progress can be easily tracked and there are useful reports available to learners, assessors, internal quality assurers and centre staff. The system supports the uploading of a range of different media such as audio, video and photographs.

PORTFOLIO CONTROL AND SECURITY

Portfolios are the collective evidence required to demonstrate that a candidate has met the standards necessary to achieve the qualification.

The integrity and safe keeping of an electronic portfolio is easily ensured through the requirement for a login and password. Users must not divulge their passwords to another person. If a user feels that the integrity and confidentiality of their account has been compromised the password should be reset immediately.

RETENTION OF CANDIDATE PORTFOLIOS

The awarding organisation requires that assessment records are retained for a minimum of three years following certification. Electronic portfolios are held for five years and, after this period, notification is sent to the centre asking if the portfolio can now be destroyed.

REVIEWING AND TRACKING CANDIDATE PROGRESS

The purpose of tracking a candidate is to ensure timely achievement and also to alert the assessor, internal quality and Quality Nominee to the potential need for additional help and advice, guidance when progress is slow. 'Tracking' is the monitoring of a candidate's progression through the qualification process, from the time of the initial application through to completion and achievement of the qualification. Progress will be monitored by the assessor, internal quality assurer and Quality Nominee using the reporting mechanisms within the system. Records held on the system will show completion and certification of all qualifications.

EVALUATION OF STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

The Quality Nominee shall arrange quarterly Quality Assurance meetings. The purpose of the meetings will be to ensure effective communication within the Assessment team, and address the following issues: -

- The provision of information, advice and guidance to candidates and prospective candidates
- Reviews of current learning resources and those in development in relation to provision of 'underpinning knowledge' requirements of regulated qualifications
- Reviews of the quality and fairness of the assessment procedures and the provision of resources required for candidates with additional learning needs
- The effectiveness of the appeals procedure and policy on malpractice
- The appropriateness and range of the assessment methods/resources used
- The effectiveness of quality assurance procedures
- The effectiveness of assessment and internal quality assurance records
- Health and safety and any issues relating to equality of opportunity
- Review of assessment and internal quality assurance practice and discussions of recommendations for further improvements and developments
- Sharing of good practice
- Updates from the awarding organisation, external quality assurer, sector skills council and other stakeholders
- Discussion and implementation of new standards

DOCUMENT CONTROL PROCEDURES

All 'active 'documents use by personnel for the implementation, monitoring, assessment and control of qualifications will be kept within Agile Career Training Ltd document library. Policies, procedures and documents will be reviewed annually or as required by change in regulation or good practice.

Each document will carry a unique reference number and date of issue and review date.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

External Quality Assurance visits are carried out on an annual basis and are conducted by representatives from the awarding organisation.

The Quality Nominee will be the contract point for communications between Agile Career Training Ltd and the awarding organisation and will be responsible for facilitating these visits. However, as well as meeting with the Quality Nominee, Awarding Organisation representative will want to speak to programme leaders, assessors, invigilators and internal quality assurers. They may also wish to consult with senior managers to examine the Service's overall strategy for qualification development and delivery. All personnel involved in the process are expected to make every effort to be available and to support and cooperate fully with these visits, if requested.

This policy has been approved & authorised by:

Name: Eileen Dooley

Position: Director

Date: 10 October 2019

Signature: *Eileen Dooley*

Review of Policy: 10 October 2020

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCREDITATION
The process through which the qualifications regulators confirm that a qualification conforms to the requirements of the RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework) arrangements.

APPEAL
The process through which a challenge is made on the outcome of an enquiry about a result, conditions of assessments or procedural decision affecting a centre or an individual candidate.

APPROVED ASSESSMENT CENTRE
'Approved Assessment Centres' that have been approved by the Awarding Organisation (e.g. RSPH). This approval is given when the Centre's demonstrate they have in place specific criteria essential to the consistent, fair and reliable assessment of candidates.

ASSESSMENT
The process of making judgements about the extent to which a candidate's work meets the assessment criteria for a unit, or any additional assessment requirements of a qualification.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
Descriptions of the requirements a candidate is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.

ASSESSMENT STANDARD
The standard that a candidate is expected to reach in order to achieve credit for a unit, expressed through a combination of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of that unit.

ASSESSOR
Assessors are responsible for explaining the assessment process to candidates. They work with candidates to draw up Assessment Plans and to ensure that candidates are prepared for assessment. They judge candidates' evidence and make decisions on a candidate's competence against the national standards.

AWARD (UNDER RQF)
A qualification with credit values between 1 and 12.

AWARD OF CREDITS OR QUALIFICATIONS
A certificate issued to an individual that recognises an achievement.

AWARDING
The process by which candidates' results are determined on the basis of the evidence produced through their assessment.

AWARDING ORGANISATION
A body recognised by the qualifications regulators against the requirements set out in the regulatory arrangements to award credits and qualifications.

CENTRE
An organisation accountable to an awarding organisation for assessment arrangements leading to the award of credit or qualifications.

CENTRE RECOGNITION
A process through which a centre wishing to offer an award or awards is confirmed as being able to maintain the required quality and consistency of assessment and comply with other requirements of the awarding organisation.

CERTIFICATE FOR A UNIT OR QUALIFICATION
A record of attainment of credit or a qualification unit or qualification issued by an awarding organisation.

CERTIFICATE (UNDER RQF)
A qualification with a credit value between 13 and 36.

COMPETENCE
The ability to consistently achieve the stated outcomes of workplace performance within an individual's role. In order to do this the individual will need to demonstrate both skills and knowledge in the area of work undertaken.

CREDIT
An award made to a candidate in recognition of the achievement of the designated learning outcomes of a unit.

CREDIT ACCUMULATION
The process of putting together a combination of credits to meet the achievement requirements of a qualification.

DIPLOMA (UNDER RQF)
A qualification with a credit value of 37 or above.

EVIDENCE
A body of assessed material, generated in the learning process, which demonstrates achievement of the learning outcomes.

EXEMPTION
The facility for a candidate to claim exemption from some of the achievement requirements of a RQF qualification, using evidence of certificated, non-RQF achievement deemed to be of equivalent value.

EXTERNAL VERIFIER
External Verifiers are utilised to audit the assessment procedures being carried out by the 'Approved Centres'. These external verifiers are independent of the Approved Centre and are appointed by the Awarding Body. They are an essential part of the quality assurance system, which ensures that standards are being maintained.

INTERNAL VERIFIER
Internal Verifiers sample the evidence gathered in a candidate's portfolio to check that it meets the required standards for the award being undertaken. Additionally, they moderate the assessment process to ensure that it is reliable and fair in order to ensure the quality and consistency of assessment decisions.

INVIGILATOR
An invigilator supervises and monitors candidates throughout the process of examination.

KNOWLEDGE
Understanding possessed by the candidate which may be expressed through performance of activities or through explanation of a process or reasoning behind an action.

LEARNER/CANDIDATE
A learner/candidate is the person undertaking a qualification.

LEVEL
An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of an achievement and/or the

autonomy of the candidate in demonstrating that achievement.

MALPRACTICE
The deliberate or wilful contravention or ignoring of the regulatory requirements of the RQF by an organisation recognised to operate within the framework.

MANDATORY UNITS
Units in a set of rules of combination that must be achieved for the qualification to be awarded.

OFQUAL
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. It is responsible for regulating general and vocational qualifications in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

OPTIONAL UNIT
A unit named in a set of rules of combination that a candidate may choose to complete to achieve the required number of units/credits for award of the qualification.

QUALIFICATION
An award made to a candidate for the achievement of the specified combination of credits, or credits and exemptions, required for that award.

QUALIFICATION LEVEL
An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement and/or the autonomy of the candidate, represented by a qualification.

RQF
Regulation Qualifications Framework. This framework is designed to provide candidates, learning providers and employers with an inclusive and flexible regulated qualifications framework containing units and qualifications that recognise the widest possible range of quality assured learning achievements. At the heart of this structure is the recognition of candidate achievement through the award of credits.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS
Defined in the Disability Discrimination Act as reasonable steps to ensure disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people, 'substantial' being more than minor or trivial.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)
A method of assessment that considers whether a candidate can demonstrate that he/she can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

RELIABILITY OF ASSESSMENT
The extent to which assessment results are an accurate measurement of a candidate's achievement against the requirements of a unit – reliable assessment repeatedly produces the same outcome without inherent bias or variability in the assessment instrument.

SAMPLING
Sampling involves identifying areas of risk where the quality of assessment could be compromise the integrity of a qualification. It is involves identifying areas of good practice and sharing these among the team. Internal quality assurers should carry out regular checks on the quality and effectiveness of all aspects of assessment practice.

SECTOR COMPETENCE
Sector competence in this procedure applies to assessors and internal quality assurers. In this context, it requires an assessor and internal quality assurer to be competent in the area of work (task) that they are assessing or internally quality assuring.

SECTOR SKILLS COUNCIL (SSC)
A body responsible for formulating and reviewing occupational standards for a specific sector across the UK and for supporting the development of units and qualifications based on these standards. Each SSC is an employer-led, independent organisation and is licensed by government.

SKILL
The relevant knowledge and experience needed to perform a specific task or job and/or the product of education, training and experience which, together with relevant know-how, is the characteristic of technical knowledge.

STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE
These 'standards' are a nationally produced 'benchmark' to reflect the application of skills, knowledge and understanding required in the working environment

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION
A process that allows candidates that suffer from temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of an assessment to demonstrate the achievement they are capable of for the units that are subject to special consideration.

STANDARDISATION OF ASSESSMENT
A process to ensure that assessment leading to the award of credits and qualifications is applied consistently by individuals, Centre's and awarding organisations.

UNIT
A coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria with a title, credit value and level.