

Delivering ATHE Qualifications Handbook

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About ATHE

The ATHE mission is to provide outstanding qualifications, customer service and support, enabling centres to thrive and their learners to achieve and progress.

We will deliver this mission by:

- providing qualifications which enable learners to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to society both socially and economically
- delivering the highest standards of customer service
- delivering support and guidance which meet the needs of all centres and enable them to improve performance
- upholding and maintaining the quality and standards of qualifications and assessments
- having a commitment to lifelong learning and development

Role of the Regulators

- ATHE is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), which is the independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England. ATHE is regulated by Qualifications Wales for qualifications which are delivered in Wales and it is also regulated by agencies and inspectorates based in countries outside the UK.
- These Regulators set conditions upon all awarding organisations which must be adhered to, in order to ensure their continued recognition. The Conditions are comprehensive covering all aspects of the work of awarding organisations and are amended in order to meet changing circumstances. The Regulators also monitor the performance of awarding organisations such as ATHE, to ensure they are working to the required standards.
- The Regulators report directly to their respective parliament/assembly.

ATHE is committed to being an equal opportunities organisation. ATHE is opposed to discrimination on any grounds, including those of race, language, colour, nationality, ethnicity, regional or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religious belief, disability or social background.

Data Protection

ATHE is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of data protection law. ATHE will therefore follow procedures that aim to ensure that all employees, contractors, agents, consultants and other partners of ATHE who have access to any Personal Data held by or on behalf of ATHE, are fully aware of and abide by their duties and responsibilities.

In accordance with signed Centre Agreements, ATHE and Centres are required to have in place policies in relation to data protection which recognise and reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Both parties to these Agreements are therefore bound by the relevant privacy standard in place from time to time which sets out the correct and lawful treatment of Personal Data.

Centre Assessment Scrutiny Strategy

ATHE has developed a Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy (CASS) as required by the regulator Ofqual.

This document states how ATHE will ensure that assessment decisions on learner work, made by centres, are accurate, robust and in line with the requirements of ATHE qualifications. It also outlines the processes in place to moderate or verify centre assessment decisions and internal quality assurance activities.

The CASS is available to centres on the ATHE website.

Becoming a Recognised ATHE Centre in the UK

What is centre recognition?

Centre recognition is a process which a potential centre completes in order to deliver ATHE qualifications. Recognition status is granted based upon the centre's capacity to comply with the ATHE standards and requirements. It cannot be achieved without a formal application and a Centre Recognition Quality Assurance (CRQA) check which is conducted by an External Quality Assurer (EQA).

Who can become a recognised ATHE centre?

Any organisation can become a recognised ATHE centre if it can demonstrate it is able to provide evidence that it meets the ATHE standards required for delivery, assessment and quality assurance of ATHE qualifications.

To become a recognised ATHE centre, the applicant first has to complete the centre recognition application form. To access the initial form go to <https://www.atheportal.co.uk/application-form/>

Centre recognition application form

The application form is intended to provide ATHE with information on the centre applying for recognition. You will need to submit the completed application form online. When the application form has been submitted, an invoice for the application and recognition fee will be issued. The invoice is split into two parts: you will initially be invoiced for your CRQA check completed by an EQA and when this process is complete, part two of the recognition fee will be invoiced.

Initial centre check

Once the first invoice has been cleared, ATHE will conduct an initial desk check on your organisation. This desk-based activity will enable ATHE to check through some details, including whether your centre is a registered company/charity and if the organisation is regulated by the appropriate authorities. Upon successful completion you will be sent details of what to expect during the CRQA check, guidance on the documents required and a copy of the centre agreement.

Centre Recognition Quality Assurance (CRQA) Check

When ATHE has completed the initial centre check, an EQA will contact you to arrange a CRQA check. The CRQA check is designed to ensure your centre is able to deliver, assess and quality assure qualifications to the required standard and you are able to meet the contractual agreement with ATHE. The EQA will ask to see a range of evidence, which is listed below under the 'Centre Policies and Processes' section of this document.

After the CRQA check, the EQA will produce a report with recommendations for a Regional Standards Manager (RSM) / Quality and Assessment Manager (QAM) to approve. If there are shortfalls in the standards required, the EQA will produce actions for your centre to complete within defined timescales. These actions are intended to help your centre improve the quality of provision and ATHE will assist you in achieving the standards needed. If there are serious shortfalls the centre will not be recognised, and it will need to address the action points within the given timescales before recognition will be gained.

ATHE Centre Agreement

An agreement will be issued for the centre to sign and return to ATHE electronically. The agreement clearly specifies the roles and responsibilities of ATHE and the recognised centre.

Centre recognition documents

Upon completion of the centre recognition process, your centre will be sent a copy of the ATHE recognition certificate and the signed ATHE centre agreement.

Timescales

We aim to contact the centre to arrange a CRQA check visit within 3 working days of successful completion of the initial checks, and send a centre recognition pack to centres within 3 working days of the notification of recognition.

Initial training

All newly recognised centres are required to undertake an initial training session provided by ATHE, the cost of which is included within the centre recognition fee. The training will be conducted remotely, so that all centres irrespective of their location will be able to participate. It will be related to the outcomes of the CRQA process undertaken at centre recognition and the action points identified by the EQA. Regular sessions will be scheduled and it is required that new centres attend the training within three months of recognition.

Attendees from centres are expected to include:

- Head of centre, Programme Manager, or Head of Department as applicable
- Lead IQA
- Tutors
- Assessors
- Other personnel managing the Centre QA process as applicable
- Administrative personnel managing ATHE registrations and results

Maintaining Recognised Centre Status

ATHE will support and work with centres to ensure recognised centre status is maintained. In this way ATHE is assured that the required standards for delivery and assessment of the qualifications are upheld and that learners have the opportunity to achieve.

ATHE will monitor the quality of centres in a number of ways. This will be through Monitoring and Development visits which check that centre policies and procedures, which impact on teaching, learning and assessment, are being implemented. These visits will also provide an opportunity to give centres some initial feedback on learner work and whether it is meeting the standards required. We will also track centre progress using each centre report and other information as appropriate. This will ensure we have a complete picture of centre performance.

ATHE will take appropriate action where centres have not attempted to complete action points, do not respond to requests for information or the standards of delivery, assessment and quality assurance fall below what is required. This action will be in accordance with the ATHE Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and may lead to sanctions being applied in line with ATHE's Sanctions Policy. Possible interventions include:

- early moderation of learner work, so that issues with internal assessment/verification are identified and the centre can take corrective action
- training for tutors, assessors and the internal verifier(s) based on centre needs
- Monitoring and Development visit to undertake a detailed review of centre provision

Throughout these processes ATHE is striving to constantly improve the quality of provision, in the interests of centres and their learners. Our experience shows that centres which embrace the quality agenda are the most successful organisations.

High Performing Status (HPS) for ATHE Centres

ATHE recognises that some centres have outstanding provision and outcomes for learners, in respect of the ATHE qualifications which are offered. Where a centre has demonstrated over time that it has the ability to manage, deliver, assess and quality assure ATHE qualifications to the correct standard, ATHE will judge the centre to be High Performing for the named qualification(s). This will mean that:

- sampling of learner work will be reduced at verification
- sampling can take place for learners who have not completed the learning but are substantively through their programme of study
- other financial benefits may be available as a key account customer

The criteria that ATHE uses to judge whether centres are eligible for HPS are shown on the ATHE website under Policies and Procedures.

Satellite Centres of Recognised ATHE Centres

What is a satellite centre?

A different centre and legal entity, but there is a formal agreement with a recognised ATHE centre. We recognise that the model of operations and the nature of the formal agreement may vary from one lead centre/satellite to another. For example, the satellite centre may utilise different policies and procedures for some aspects of its work. However, as far as the recruitment of learners, planning, delivery, assessment or the quality assurance of ATHE qualifications are concerned, the centre must work to the same standards as the lead centre. In this respect the satellite centre may use the same policies and procedures as the lead centre. Irrespective of the formal agreement with the satellite centre, the lead centre has responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of the quality of provision in the satellite centre meet ATHE standards.

How do lead centres get approved?

ATHE will use the following criteria to steer judgements on the ability of the lead centre to manage satellite provision.

- The centre has had three 'green' summative judgements in a row for external quality assurance visits. This shows that the centre is working to the required standards. At these visits there were no issues with the validity of assessment judgements or the internal quality assurance process.
- The centre has appropriate QA processes in place and action points are completed on time and to the required standards.
- The external quality assurance visits relating to learner certification have normally had a minimum of three months between them. The centre has had green status for other EQA visits during this period.
- There have been no documented cases of malpractice in the centre in the last 12 months and the centre produces evidence to show that all learner work is checked for malpractice in accordance with ATHE policy.
- All learners have been registered on time in accordance with ATHE policy.
- The learner records held at the centre and those submitted to ATHE are accurate
- All potential conflicts of interest at the centre, particularly as they relate to assessment and internal quality assurance, have been appropriately managed so there are no issues.
- There have been no complaints against the centre within the last 12 months that have required action from ATHE.
- ATHE has not received any adverse comments from other AOs.

We need the following information/evidence:

- CVs of staff who will administer, teach, assess and manage provision in the satellite centre
- how the lead centre monitors the quality standards of the satellite centre including assessment, quality assurance and malpractice
- evidence of physical resources in the satellite centre
- Centre application form
- how the lead centre will ensure that learners are appropriately informed about the qualifications on offer
- how the lead centre will manage the enrolment and registration of learners and ensure they meet the entry criteria for the chosen course of study

- evidence of a contractual relationship with the lead centre

This list of information is not exhaustive and other information may be required. ATHE will also use other information in the public domain for example inspection reports to support its judgements. In special cases, evidence of a previous track record of consistent good quality provision can be taken into account in granting lead centre status, for example in the case of established centres that are newly recognised with ATHE.

How ATHE will monitor the quality of provision in Lead Centres

As Lead Centres have responsibility for the quality of provision in their satellite centres, ATHE must be assured that this responsibility is being executed effectively. EQA reports for both the Lead Centre and its satellites will be primary sources of information. ATHE will need to be confident that any areas for improvement listed in these reports are actioned, leading to changes in practice which are embedded. In addition, all Lead Centres will have an annual Monitoring and Development visit. Any identified issues which are not addressed will impact on the continuation of Lead Centre status. The Lead Centre must continue to obtain 'green' status in the monitoring visits conducted by EQAs. If any issues emerge with the Lead Centre which give cause for concern, then ATHE will contact the satellite centre(s) to inform them of the concerns and any resulting change in status.

How ATHE will monitor the quality of provision in Satellite Centres

- The satellite centre may only register learners on qualifications for which the main centre is approved.
- The satellite centre may not appoint sub-satellite centres i.e. a centre which is a different legal entity. However, the satellite may wish to change its operations, for example move to a new premises. In this case the satellite must ensure the Lead Centre is aware of the new development and it should ensure a centre change form is submitted to ATHE. ATHE will need to check changes which are made, as appropriate, and this may entail a full CRQA visit. Annual visits by ATHE staff and associates to satellite centres will be made as appropriate.
- Video meetings with teaching, assessment and administrative staff in satellite centres
- Learner work will be subject to moderation.

The support ATHE will provide to satellite centres

- Access to sample assignments, teaching and learning guidance and reading lists.
- Service for checking any centre devised assignments, which are required to ensure validity of assessment.
- Sample policies and procedures.
- Training and support with teaching, assessment and administrative staff in satellite centres.
- Support with queries as they arise.

Starting the application process

To become a recognised ATHE Satellite Centre, the Lead Centre must first complete the initial online application form. To access this form go to <https://atheportal.co.uk/satellite-centre-application/>. Alternatively, the Lead Centre can contact the ATHE office to begin the application process.

Centre recognition application form

The centre application form is intended to provide ATHE with detailed information on a centre applying for recognition. The application process will expect the Satellite Centre or the centre with overall responsibility for the QA (Lead Centre) to return the completed form. Once submitted, an invoice for the application and recognition fee will be issued.

Initial centre check

Once the invoice has been cleared, ATHE will conduct an initial centre check on your organisation. This is a desk-based activity where ATHE will check through some details including whether the centre is a registered company/charity and if the organisation is regulated by the appropriate authorities. Upon successful completion you will be sent details of what to expect during the health check, guidance on the documents required and a copy of the centre agreement.

Centre Recognition Quality Assurance (CRQA) Visit

An EQA will make contact to arrange a CRQA visit to the Satellite Centre.

The purpose of the CRQA check visit is to ensure the Satellite Centre is able to deliver and assess ATHE qualifications to the required standard, and the Lead Centre is able to effectively manage the relationship with the Satellite Centre. After the visit the EQA will produce a report with recommendations for a RSM/QAM to approve. If the CRQA check judgement shows that the centre meets the standards required, the centre will be recommended for recognition. If there are areas requiring improvement, the EQA will produce actions for the centre to complete within stated timescales. If there are serious shortfalls, the centre will not be permitted to continue the recognition process. In these circumstances a centre may reapply, when it believes it has addressed the action points. In cases where there are serious shortfalls and there are concerns that the centre cannot deliver, assess or quality assure the qualifications to the required standards, ATHE will not allow the centre to reapply.

What evidence/information do we require in the CRQA visit?

In addition to the information listed above, other information needed for a standard CRQA check will also be required. A complete table is available in the Centre Policies and Processes section below. These lists are not exhaustive and other information may be required.

ATHE Centre Agreement

Before the Satellite Centre is recognised, it will receive the ATHE Centre Agreement which needs to be signed and returned to ATHE. After the centre has been recognised, one copy of the agreement will be returned, signed by an ATHE representative. The agreement specifies the roles and responsibilities of the centre and ATHE. A centre recognition pack will then be sent to you.

Centre recognition pack

Upon completion of the centre recognition process a pack will be sent to the centre which will include the certificate of recognition, the signed ATHE centre agreement, a copy of the CRQA report along with key ATHE policies and procedures.

Initial centre training

As with independently recognised centres, ATHE requires that all new satellite centres attend initial training, the cost included in the recognition fee. The training will be conducted remotely, and will be related to the outcomes of the CRQA process undertaken at centre recognition and the action points identified by the EQA. Regular sessions will be scheduled and it is required that new satellite centres attend the training within three months of recognition

Monitoring and Development (M&D) visit

Lead centres should expect an annual visit from an EQA to monitor their progress with delivering ATHE qualifications and managing the quality assurance of Satellite Centre provision. This visit will ensure the Satellite Centre and the Lead Centre obtain valuable feedback to enable further improvements to take place. The M&D visit will include reduced sampling of learner work on programme. Where appropriate and subject to prior agreement and arrangements, the annual visit will also provide an opportunity for customised training.

Centre Renewal

All centres sign a three-year agreement when they become recognised by ATHE. If centres wish to continue offering ATHE qualifications after their agreement has expired, it is essential they contact ATHE to begin the renewal process. Ideally this should be done six months before the expiration date but it must be no less than three months before the 'date of agreement', which can be found on the front page of the centre agreement.

Once the centre has notified ATHE of their intention to apply for renewal, we will take the following steps:

1. Complete an initial desk check to ensure the centre has not been involved in malpractice or maladministration and there are no other issues that would mean ATHE would not agree to progress the renewal.
2. A member of the ATHE Customer Service Team will contact the centre to explain the next steps, including payment of the renewal fee. Depending on the status of the centre it may be that:
 - a. A CRQA visit takes place – where the centre has not had an EQA or M&D visit of any kind for over a year
 - b. An M&D visit takes place – where the centre has had a recent visit but did not achieve a 'green' / 'amber' judgement
 - c. No visit required – where the centre has had a recent visit and received a 'green' / 'amber' judgement or where records show there is a pattern of high performance.
3. If the centre renewal is granted, a centre agreement will be issued to sign and return to ATHE, and the centre will then be recognised for a further three years.
If the centre is not permitted to renew, then the centre will be provided with the centre withdrawal procedure (this procedure can be found in the Qualifications Withdrawal Procedure – 'Centres withdrawing from ATHE qualifications').

Please note:

Where centre renewal is not approved, centres must transfer their learners to an alternative qualification and/or allow those learners to transfer to alternative ATHE centre. Please see the Qualifications Withdrawal Procedure on the ATHE website for more information.

Changes to centre requirements

It is possible that over time centres may wish to change ATHE approvals for qualifications and there may also be changes to the mode of delivery or location of centre premises. We need to manage this in a way which allows the centre to operate in the best interests of the learners and is not over bureaucratic but does ensure that standards have been checked and are being maintained.

In cases where a centre wishes to offer ATHE qualifications at another premises which is not owned or leased by the same legal entity, then this is covered under the rules and processes relating to satellite centres (detailed above).

For other cases the following rules and processes should apply:

Process

1. All centres will be required to complete the Centre Change Form available on the Qualifications Guidance webpage (Centre Portal). This form will enable the centre to provide information supporting their application to offer additional ATHE qualifications, deliver ATHE qualifications at different premises and/or apply for an additional mode of delivery. The information will include the reasons for changing the centre's provision, as well as information on the staffing and physical resources available.
2. Once the form and any supporting evidence has been submitted to ATHE a decision will be made to either:
 - a) Approve the changes to the centre's recognition. The centre will be informed and will be able to make the changes to their provision immediately.
 - b) inform the centre that an EQA visit will need to take place to assess in further detail the centre's ability to deliver, assess and quality assure the additional qualifications and/or the changed mode of delivery or at the new premises. The EQA will also check whether action points from previous visits have been addressed. Based on the findings of the EQA report, the centre will either be able to make the changes/additions or will have action points to address, before the approval is granted.
 - c) inform the centre the changes have not been approved at this point. The centre will be given feedback on which areas it needs to address before a further application will be considered.

Centre roles and responsibilities in relation to ATHE

This section gives details of the requirements and responsibilities of each role involved in the assessment, quality assurance and management of provision. The centre will need to identify members of staff to fill each of the centre roles described.

Centre roles

Principal/Head of Centre

The Principal/Head of Centre in conjunction with other senior staff, sets the vision and direction for the centre and together they ensure that structure, resources and effective systems are in place to assure the quality of experience for learners. Experience shows that where qualifications are managed effectively at strategic and operational levels standards are maintained and a culture of continuous improvement is more easily established.

The Principal/Head of Centre is the final point of accountability for the standards within an organisation and will usually be the individual who signs the centre agreement with ATHE and will be the person contacted in the case of a sanction being imposed.

Centre Contact/Quality Assurance Co-ordinator

The centre contact is the person responsible for ensuring that the administrative and quality assurance systems for all ATHE qualifications are properly maintained throughout the centre and that communications between ATHE and the centre are dealt with efficiently. In order to ensure this, the centre contact will have a secure email address to which correspondence can be sent. The centre contact must inform ATHE immediately if their details change.

The person undertaking this role for ATHE qualifications will need to:

- have an appropriate background in assessment, management, administration and quality assurance
- possess the necessary authority and time to ensure that management, administration, assessment and internal quality assurance co-ordination procedures are implemented correctly and consistently across the centre as a whole
- have regular contact with the assessors and internal quality assurers
- liaise closely with other staff members to obtain, and provide external quality assurers and other ATHE personnel with, detailed information on the overall operation of the centre
- co-ordinate visit arrangements for external quality assurance
- be responsible for ensuring that registrations/entries are sent to ATHE in accordance with specified procedures
- confirm registrations/entries have been received from ATHE and candidate enrolment numbers are checked
- ensure only appropriately qualified and experienced staff are used in the assessment process, in accordance with any specified vocational experience/qualification requirements
- ensure staff involved in assessment have access to and regularly participate in activities designed to promote continuous improvement
- ensure sufficient and effective quality assurance processes are available for confirming assessment decisions
- ensure any internally devised assignments are checked by ATHE before issue to learners
- ensure those involved in assessment apply equal opportunity principles to assessment

- ensure everyone involved with assessment is familiar with the qualifications they are assessing or quality assuring, including rules of combination and has a knowledge base sufficient to enable them to interpret the learning outcomes, assessment criteria and all documentation
- ensure staff are familiar with the recording systems, documentation and procedures for assessment and quality assurance of individual units and qualifications
- ensure staff are prepared for their role, supported and allowed sufficient time to carry it out effectively
- ensure staff have discussed EQA reports and any action plans agreed between the external quality assurer and the centre are met within the appropriate timescale
- provide proof of candidates' identities is obtained as appropriate
- ensure security arrangements are in place for written papers and assessments for coursework, project and practical work and are in accordance with regulations (where applicable)
- ensure administration of assessments including time constrained tests is in accordance with regulations
- ensure candidates' projects and other evidence are forwarded on time (where applicable)
- ensure appropriate records, results or other evidence of achievement are released to other centres or candidates (as applicable) in cases where candidates transfer to new centres
- ensure qualification and unit certificates received from ATHE are securely stored prior to issue to candidates
- ensure results and certificates are properly issued to candidates at the centre
- disseminate promptly all general correspondence from and to ATHE, the centre and the relevant staff (the QAC acts as the point of contact for such correspondence)

Assessors

The role of the assessor is to:

- ensure that learners understand the requirements of assessment for each unit
- produce and disseminate an assessment plan
- develop assignments, use ATHE sample assignments and/or produce other forms of assessment that enable learners to meet the learning outcomes and achieve the standards shown by the assessment criteria
- make valid, reliable and consistent assessment decisions
- take account of any reasonable adjustments or special considerations that have been granted and record this information on the assessment documentation
- provide learners with detailed feedback to show how they have met the learning outcomes at the standards set by the assessment criteria and where further evidence is required
- map evidence of learner achievement to the learning outcomes
- ensure that recommendations for the award of credit are valid, reliable and consistent
- record assessment decisions systematically and ensure that candidate records and centre documentation are completed in accordance with the requirements of the centre and ATHE

For information on the role of an Internal Quality Assurer please see the Practitioners Guidance section.

ATHE training support

In addition to required initial training for all new centres, ATHE offers a variety of ad hoc training and support to centres to enable further development and facilitate continuous improvement. Training and support are provided through online, bite sized presentations or there is bespoke training for centres, which addresses specific areas for development. This can be in the following areas:

- improving work with students in terms of planning and delivering teaching and learning
- improving the quality assurance processes in centres or developing quality assurance systems and processes
- improving the design of assignments and ensuring valid and reliable assessment decisions
- further improving the quality of assessment judgements leading to valid outcomes

Training may be delivered in small groups at centre premises or where required, at an external venue. If you would like to discuss training and support, please email support@athe.co.uk.

Please note ATHE may use previous learner work to facilitate activities in training days. The learner work will be anonymised. Please email support@athe.co.uk if you would prefer learner work from the centre is not used for training days.

In addition a series of training presentations are available on the ATHE Centre Portal. These provide guidance on a number of areas including Using the Portal, Assessment, Internal Quality Assurance, Assessing for Merit and Distinction Grades and Preparing for EQA.

Support materials for ATHE qualifications

All of the support materials below can be found on the Qualification Guidance page which is accessible via the online Centre Portal.

Specification Guide

ATHE provides a specification guide for each of its qualifications to support course planning and delivery.

Sample Assignments

These are example assignments which support lecturers and tutors in planning and delivering the specifications and the assessment of learners. Centre devised assignments may be used after approval has been given by ATHE.

Sample Materials

These include forms for use with curriculum planning, assessment, internal quality assurance, tracking sheets and documents to support RPL.

Additional Support Materials

There are a wide range of additional support materials available for staff to use to support the management, delivery and assessment of teaching and learning

Suggested Resources

Each unit is accompanied by a list of suggested resources to support lecturers and learners.

Teaching and Learning Guidance

This guidance is designed to help planning and ensure coverage of unit content.

Teaching and Learning Resources

ATHE is developing a range of premium teaching and learning materials for popular qualifications – centres should contact support@athe.co.uk for further details.

Learner Handbook

This Handbook is available via the Qualifications Guidance page on the Centre Portal. This comprehensive guide provides learners with a wide range of information to support their studies, from details of Ofqual's Regulated Qualifications Framework and Level Descriptors, to personal development planning and advice for progression.

Registration of Learners

Learner Registration

In order to register learners, the centre must have successfully completed the centre recognition process and can only register learners on qualifications it has been approved to deliver.

When to register

Learners must be registered within 28 days of enrolment on the course otherwise a late registration fee will apply. This is to ensure ATHE can provide all necessary support in qualification delivery and enable your learners to have the best chance of success. There is a minimum period between registration and results submission, typically half the Total Qualification Time published in qualification specifications for a learner in full-time study and no less than eight weeks. The minimum duration varies for each qualification (e.g. very small qualifications may be less than eight weeks study time) – please contact the ATHE office for further information and timeframes.

How to register

Centres can register learners online by going to <https://www.atheportal.co.uk/register-learners/>

Format for registrations

ATHE needs the following data to register learners for units and qualifications:

- The start date (when the learners started the course)
- The end date (when the learners are expected to finish the course)
- The learner's official forename(s) and surname
- The learner's date of birth
- The ULN (where available)
- Language of assessment

The centre must ensure that learners are aware that their information will be passed to ATHE for registration purposes. ATHE may use these details to contact learners where appropriate.

The registration template is provided on the portal for centres to use.

Determination and reporting learner results

ATHE is committed to ensuring that the determination and reporting of results for ATHE qualifications and units is undertaken in a manner which is clear, accurate and timely.

The process of recording results and producing certificates is managed using the ATHE Learner Management System (LMS). The summary below shows how results travel through the system. The key points where the LMS requires input from ATHE and centre staff are highlighted.

This process needs to be followed for every external quality assurance or resubmission of learners' work.

Stage 1 - Learner completes units

On completion of each unit or group of units the centre administrator logs onto their secure ATHE registration portal account and downloads a semi prepared result sheet for the cohort. The result sheet is then completed (units chosen and provisional grades recorded).

Stage 2 - Results submitted

The centre administrator then uploads the result sheet onto the ATHE portal. Once the result sheet has been submitted online, the assigned EQA is provided with the results and a copy of the previous report.

The EQA will contact the centre directly and normally within two working days to arrange the visit.

Stage 3 - Results quality assurance

The EQA will review the assessment decisions submitted by the centre in line with ATHE's sampling procedures, qualification specifications and required standards. This will lead to a report based on the moderation. The EQA's report will then be quality assured by an RSM/QAM, prior to confirming the outcome.

Stage 4 - Processing of results

Once the EQA report, RSM/QAM approval and results are confirmed within the LMS, the system will identify the qualifications where the learners have achieved the required credits and units.

Stage 5a – Certification

The system will then generate the qualification certificates. If the full qualification has not been achieved the learner may be eligible for a smaller qualification/certificate depending on the units achieved.

The certificates generated by the LMS are scanned to the centre's portal account and sent by recorded delivery to the centre (the system does not allow alteration or generation of certificates other than through the above process).

Stage 5b - Replacement certificates

Requests for replacement certificates can come from learners or centres. A form must be filled in which can be found at <https://www.atheportal.co.uk/replacement-certificate/> and must include proof of identification as noted in the replacement certificate guidance. Once learners and their

achievement have been verified, a replacement certificate can be generated for any qualifications the learner has been granted. Replacement certificates are clearly identifiable from originals on the LMS.

Note: A certificate replacement fee will apply.

Fraudulent or mistaken claims for certification

Only registered learners' results can be accepted, directly from ATHE recognised centres and only from authorised centre personnel. Learners' work must be clearly identifiable and is assessed as authentic by the EQA. All learner work must be accompanied by a full plagiarism report. Only when results are approved is the certification process initiated as detailed above.

Identifying errors in the LMS

All learners are registered electronically to reduce the likelihood of errors. We also ask that centres review the learners' details when they are first entered into ATHE registration portal. The spreadsheet containing the results can be stored locally on the centre's computer to give them time to review and change if necessary. If a centre identifies an error in learner registration details at any point before certification, they can contact ATHE to make amendments; the request must be made in writing by authorised centre staff.

All information requested from centres when dealing with external quality assurance and certification is checked against records held on the ATHE LMS.

Use of Unique Learner Numbers (ULNs) in registration

The LMS has an inbuilt system to check if the ULNs supplied are correct when first registered i.e. length, format etc. The LMS can also submit ULNs to the LRS (Learner Records Service) database (although this can take up to five weeks). Availability of the ULN allows ATHE to confirm previously achieved units and qualifications.

Please note ATHE expects centres to release results to students with 10 working days of ATHE providing the external quality assurance report; unless there are unforeseen circumstances at the centre which have been fully discussed with ATHE. ATHE reserves the right to release the results directly to learners if this is not adhered to, complying with current data protection laws in all cases.

The Personal Learning Record (PLR)

The Personal Learning Record (PLR) application offers access to verified participation and achievement records of individual learners from when they were at school, college or a recognised further education training provider from 14+ years. The academic and vocational records data is from 2009 but does not typically cover education completed at university.

The PLR is a free and important application. It allows individual learners access to their past and current achievement records. It can share records with the school, college, further education training provider, university or employer; where the individual is making an application to further their education, training and employment. It can also allow an individual learner to share their PLR with a Careers Advisor when taking advice on what to do in future.

Schools, colleges, further education training providers and universities staff can use the PLR to directly access records for individuals making applications or studying at their organisations. These organisations will inform individuals where they plan to access their records usually during an application process.

Any individual can opt-out of sharing their data with organisations by using the PLR, or by informing the relevant organisation(s) during the application process. Organisations typically use the PLR to quality assurance learners' qualifications because it is quicker and easier than reviewing and checking certificates, so speeds up the application process.

They can quickly build up a picture of an individual's achievement to give the best next-step education or careers advice and/or ensure the individual receives all the public funding to which they are entitled.

The PLR makes it easy to plan an individual's future vocational training within the structures of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). You can search different routes to achievement. You can identify the best combination of units and calculate the credit needed to achieve a qualification all in a few clicks. You can also monitor an individual's progress by unit or qualification against their chosen route to achievement.

Which Centres Are Required to Use the PLR and the Learning Records Service?

Centres within the UK who have learners eligible and wish to gain funding from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) are required to register with the Learning Records Service and request ULN (Unique Learner Numbers) for their learners.

The PLR is not required for international learners studying in the UK but may be beneficial if they are likely to further their study in the UK in the future.

More information on the PLR, the Learning Records Service and how to register can be found at [Using the learning records service \(LRS\) for learning providers and local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-the-learning-records-service-lrs-for-learning-providers-and-local-authorities)

Centre policies and processes

As part of the CRQA visit the ATHE EQA will ask for evidence that appropriate systems, policies and procedures are in place and working effectively.

	Suggested Evidence
<p>Institutional Context</p>	<p>Centre location, organisational chart with management of provision and stated individual roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Experience of the centre in terms of delivering learning, assessing work and managing quality</p> <p>Speed and quality of response to queries raised by the EQA</p>
<p>Staffing</p> <p>Appropriately qualified and experienced staff are in place to support the teaching/learning and administration of the programmes being delivered. There are sufficient staff in post to deliver the qualifications.</p> <p>Teachers/tutors have appropriate specialist qualifications (including teaching qualifications) which are at the right level</p> <p>Staffing structures are in place showing how programmes are managed and coordinated</p> <p>Systems exist to identify and provide staff development</p>	<p>Staff CVs showing relevant specialist, academic qualifications and sector experience</p> <p>Staff/student ratio</p> <p>Appraisal systems, lesson observation schemes, training applications and plans, staff development policy and plan</p>

<p>Assessment opportunities</p> <p>The centre has in place appropriate assessment strategies and methods for each unit giving the learner opportunity to demonstrate achievement of all the assessment criteria</p> <p>There is an assessment plan in place showing when each unit will be assessed</p> <p>There is a policy to deal with reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The centre has a policy and processes to deal with resubmissions of learner work.</p> <p>Where centre-devised assignment briefs are being used these have been through the approval process with ATHE and have a clear assessment framework</p>	<p>Assessment Policy/Strategy, assessment plan, assignment briefs</p> <p>Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and associated forms and records</p> <p>Policy for resubmissions of learner work</p>
<p>Assessment Feedback</p> <p>Assessors understand criterion referenced assessment and are trained and experienced in giving feedback to learners</p>	<p>Assessment Policy/Strategy, learner feedback forms</p> <p>Records of standardisation events</p> <p>Records of training events attended</p>
<p>Assessment Appeals</p> <p>An appeals procedure for internal assessment decisions exists for learners</p>	<p>Appeals Procedure and associated forms</p>
<p>Assessment Records</p> <p>Assessment records per learner/per unit/per criterion are accurate and kept securely</p> <p>There are appropriate administrative procedures for tracking progress of learners and notifying achievement including transfer of credits and where necessary the recording of exemptions</p> <p>Records show if a learner has been granted reasonable adjustments or special considerations in order to support access to assessment</p> <p>Records show if the learner work is a resubmission</p> <p>Records show if the learner has produced work in a language other than English</p>	<p>Assessment grids, records.</p> <p>Arrangements and evidence of secure storage of assessment outcomes/results</p> <p>Systems for tracking learner progress</p> <p>RPL Policy; Examination Boards/Assessment Boards</p>

<p>Internal Quality Assurance</p> <p>There is an internal quality assurance system in place with a clear sampling plan. There is evidence of IV feedback to the assessor</p> <p>Standardisation of assessment takes place between assessors and IQAs on a regular basis</p> <p>There is a member of staff leading on centre/qualification IQA</p> <p>There are systems in place to identify all conflicts of interest in assessment and IQA</p>	<p>Internal quality assurance system and IV forms, sampling plan</p> <p>Standardisation processes and procedures</p> <p>Appointed Internal Quality Assurer</p> <p>Assessment Policy; declaration forms and records</p>
<p>Delivery strategies</p> <p>There is a curriculum plan for the qualification and a clear scheme of work demonstrating appropriate coverage of all units being offered. There is evidence of session planning and/or how learning will take place</p>	<p>Curriculum plan; session plans identifying methods of delivery and linked to specifications and learning outcomes</p>
<p>Recruitment of learners</p> <p>Initial assessment of learners is in place to ensure academic skills are at an appropriate level for the units being studied</p> <p>Appropriate diagnostic tests e.g. English are in place</p> <p>Appropriate initial advice and guidance is included in the recruitment process</p> <p>Procedures for recognition of prior learning are in place.</p> <p>There are records showing learner registrations including photographic images of learners</p>	<p>Enrolment, guidance and induction procedures; processes for initial testing of learners</p> <p>Use of IELTS or equivalent (International Learners)</p> <p>Enrolment/Induction Procedure</p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and procedures</p> <p>Learner registration system</p>
<p>Availability of resources</p> <p>Appropriate teaching/learning accommodation is available</p> <p>A good range of teaching and learning resources are available (e.g. up-to-date text books, access to computers, ILT). For distance learning centres, materials are available for distribution to learners together with extensive lists of suggested resources. Infrastructure and systems are in place to manage, deliver and support learning</p>	<p>Spacious and appropriately equipped classrooms; social facilities and open learning centres</p> <p>Comprehensive library of resources including relevant textbooks; access to computers and ILT; equipment to support the delivery of teaching and learning</p>

<p>Administration</p> <p>There is an appointed person trained to deal with learner registrations through the ATHE Portal</p> <p>Learners are registered within 28 days of joining their programme</p> <p>There is an appointed person or clear procedure for supplying list of learners for quality assurance and liaising with ATHE and the appointed EQA</p> <p>Arrangements are in place for the secure storage of assessment outcomes/results including electronic and or hard copy back up procedures</p> <p>Arrangements are in place to obtain ULNs and learner records and authority to access student records</p>	<p>Suitable administrator appointed and trained</p> <p>Registration procedures; knowledge of ATHE policy</p> <p>Assessment Policy; secure storage facilities</p> <p>Evidence of access to the Learner Register</p>
<p>Policies</p> <p>There is a clear policy and procedures in place to prevent, detect and record all forms of malpractice and maladministration, including plagiarism.</p> <p>The centre has read and understands the key ATHE policies such Malpractice and Maladministration.</p> <p>A health & safety policy is in place and implemented.</p> <p>There is a policy for equality and diversity which complies with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>There is a complaints policy and procedure in place.</p> <p>There is a policy on data protection in place.</p>	<p>Centres provide detailed policies for all areas listed.</p> <p>Learners and tutors understand the policy and procedures.</p> <p>Active steps are taken to address any shortfalls and prevent reoccurrence.</p>

ATHE Policies

ATHE has a number of policies and procedures to ensure the organisation delivers its mission and in so doing –

- complies with the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition, Qualifications Wales and those set down by other regulators and external agencies
- meets the objectives set out in the ATHE strategic plan
- operates in a fair and transparent manner
- works openly with centres so they are informed and are able to act accordingly
- complies with current legislation
- upholds a high quality standard

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy

ATHE aims to facilitate open access to ATHE qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments. Reasonable adjustments and special considerations must not compromise the standards for the assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding being measured.

Complaints Procedure

The aim of this procedure is to ensure a consistent, open approach to addressing complaints, in a manner facilitating conciliation and a timely resolution.

Enquiries and Appeals Policy

The Enquiries and Appeals policy is intended to ensure that any enquiries or appeals received by ATHE are dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively.

Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy covers the principles of diversity and equality for anybody developing and using ATHE products and services including ATHE staff, centres and learners.

Data Protection Policy

This policy is to ensure ATHE complies with current data protection legislation in its dealings with centres, learners and other parties.

Fee Structures

The different Fee Structures outlines the registration and administration fees for all our qualifications as well as other services ATHE provides. The fee structures vary between two Zones dependent on which country the centre is based in.

Invoicing Policy

The Invoicing Policy sets out how ATHE will ensure invoices are issued in a timely manner and provides a breakdown of any fees charged.

Replacement Certificate Procedure

This procedure gives instruction to learners and centres on what steps to take in the event of a lost/damaged/misspelt certificate.

Qualification Withdrawal Policy

This policy specifies the process ATHE will undertake in the event of a qualification withdrawal to best protect the interest of learners and centres.

Maladministration and Malpractice Policy

This policy is aimed at students and centres who are involved with ATHE or use ATHE products and services. It outlines what constitutes maladministration and malpractice and how any reported cases will be handled.

Customer Service Statement

This document contains our commitment to achieve high standards of customer service. Full copies of all of our policies are available on our website.

Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy aims to draw attention to the possibility of conflicts, minimise or prevent the conflict occurring, and manage conflicts that have arisen.

Assessment of ATHE Qualifications in a Language Other Than English

This policy states the criteria and procedures to be followed when qualifications are assessed in a language other than English to ensure the qualifications remain valid and comparable across the different languages.

Sanctions Policy

ATHE provides its recognised centres with guidance and support to help mitigate the risk of noncompliance with centre agreements. This aims to ensure the appropriate quality of experience for learners, facilitating achievement and progression. Where breaches do occur ATHE takes these seriously and may apply sanctions commensurate with the nature and gravity of the breach.

Whistle-Blowing Policy

The aim of this policy is to inform whistle-blowers at ATHE recognised centres what to do if they encounter instances of malpractice or maladministration in the course of their engagement with ATHE and delivery of ATHE qualifications.

ATHE Subject Access Request

The aim of this policy is to inform stakeholders about the information ATHE holds on them and how it can be accessed.

Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Transfer and Exemptions Policy

The aim of this policy is to offer guidance with regards to learners that may have already attained the knowledge and expertise needed to meet the standards stated in the ATHE assessment criteria.

Lead Centre Policy

If you are a centre that wishes to take on satellite centres, you will need to read and understand our Lead Centre Policy, which outlines the criteria you need to meet in order to apply for a satellite.

Adaptations to Assessment Policy

If, as a centre you are affected in some way that prevents you from assessing your learners in the usual manner, you may apply to ATHE for an adaptation to that assessment. The policy outlines the circumstances which may apply when considering an adaptation request, the types of adaptations that can be considered and the process for applying to ATHE.

Guidance for Centres on Managing and Delivering Internal, Time Constrained Summative Assessments and Tests

This document contains the information ATHE centres need to manage and deliver internal, time constrained, summative assessments and tests (hereafter referred to as 'assessment(s)').

Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy

This document sets out the arrangements ATHE has in place to undertake Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny where evidence generated by a learner in an assessment for an ATHE qualification is marked by a centre.

Centre Devised Assessments Policy

ATHE's policy on 'Quality Assurance of Centre Devised Assessments' informs centres, staff and associates on the quality assurance procedures governing centre devised assessments, including assignments and time constrained task-based tests. The policy also references the use of ATHE sample assignments.

Guidance for Centres on Internal Malpractice Policies

The aim of this guidance is to assist managers in centres, with the development of comprehensive and effective policy documentation on malpractice, for use with learners and staff.

Policy for Engaging Contractors (Publishers), Product Endorsement and Packaging

This Policy governs ATHE's engagement with publishers in developing endorsed resources, and how learning can be undertaken together with or separately from these resources.

High Performing Status for ATHE Centres

This Policy provides the criteria centres must achieve to be considered for High Performing Status and the associated benefits.

Contact Details

Customer Service Enquiries

ATHE has a single contact point for all enquiries relating to ATHE products and services. Please email our Customer Service team at support@athe.co.uk for support with the following areas and any other general enquiries:

Marketing/business development

If you would like to discuss a business development opportunity or require some marketing material, please contact us.

Qualification development

All ATHE qualifications are developed with centres, learners and employers in mind. If you have views on the existing qualifications or ideas for a new qualification then please contact us.

Finance

If you would like to discuss an invoice you have received or the ATHE fee structure, then please contact us.

Delivery and assessment queries

If you have a query regarding qualification content, ATHE qualification assurance procedures or require support in the delivery and assessment of our qualifications, please contact us.

ATHE Portal queries

If you require guidance using the online Centre Portal or would like help using its features, please contact us.

Practitioners Guidance

Introduction

The purpose of this section of the Handbook is to provide information and guidance, which will support practitioners in delivering, assessing and quality assuring ATHE qualifications and improving the quality of their work. With regard to teaching and learning, the guidance in this section is aimed at helping learners to increase their knowledge, develop their skills, improve their understanding and be successful. This section is also designed to help practitioners further develop the planning of learning and make accurate assessment decisions. Finally, this section includes information on appropriate quality systems to ensure that all of these improvements are taking place and there are better outcomes for learners.

Recruitment and Induction

ATHE's policy on learner recruitment to qualifications is that:

- they should be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- they should be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- there should be equal opportunities for all those wishing to access the qualifications and associated assessments

This means that centres must recruit learners with integrity. Centres must also apply their reasonable adjustments policies to learners where appropriate, so that the needs of individual learners are identified and met from the outset. All applicants need full information about the programmes of study and advice and guidance to help them make decisions about the most appropriate qualification. This will ensure any queries are resolved.

The centre must make a judgment about the applicant's potential to benefit from and complete the selected qualification. ATHE has produced entry criteria for each qualification. These can be found in the specifications and are the norm for the level and type of qualification to which they apply. The criteria should be read in conjunction with any centre devised entry criteria. The entry criteria which are used by centres will be checked by EQAs at monitoring and moderation visits. Where entry criteria do not cover a specific applicant, the centre may consult ATHE if there is a learner with a particular entry profile.

In addition, agencies such as UK Visas and Immigration Department (UKVI) require adult students to have acceptable English language ability before they can apply to become an adult student under the Student Visa System. Centres must therefore ensure that the applicant is competent in the English language at a standard identified in the relevant qualification specification. Where centres have prospective learners where English is not their first language but a student visa is not required, centres should still assess whether the learners have an appropriate level of English language ability to succeed on the programme of learning. This should be done either through an external assessment, such as IELTS or equivalent or via an appropriate internal test. This testing should be done before enrolment at the centre takes place.

ATHE expects that all learners will participate in an induction programme, which will enable them to embark on their programme of study with confidence. The content and structure of induction programmes is the responsibility of centres. However, centres must ensure that the learners have a clear understanding of the structure of the programme of study, the standards that must be achieved, how they will obtain feedback on their progress and how they will be assessed. ATHE has provided support materials for learner induction programmes and centres should refer to and use these as appropriate. There is also a Learner Handbook which can be downloaded

from the ATHE portal. It is important for learners to understand the centre's key policies which have direct implications for learning and assessment. In particular, learners must understand the centre's policy on malpractice and how this will be enforced.

Learners Transferred from other ATHE Centres

In accordance with the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Transfer and Exemption Policy ATHE seeks to avoid duplication of learning and assessment. Learners who have been externally certificated for qualifications on the RQF can transfer the credits they have achieved. Learners who have transferred from another ATHE centre and hold certification for ATHE units do not need to repeat these units. The centre needs to ensure that the certification is valid and if the learner meets the other entry requirements, he/she may embark on their programme of study at the new centre and be registered with ATHE in the normal way.

Where the learner has completed or partially completed an assignment which has or has not been assessed and has or has not been internally quality assured, the work should be re-assessed at the receiving centre.

The centre should have processes in place to ensure the authenticity of this work. This will include signed learner declarations of authenticity, use of plagiarism software and where appropriate the centre may wish to use a viva or other processes to ensure the work being presented belongs to the learner. If the centre has any concerns, it should contact ATHE for additional guidance.

Curriculum Planning

In their initial visit to centres, the ATHE EQAs will check how the centre is planning the curriculum. This will cover the order of the delivery of specific units across the period of study, so that learning is consequential and facilitates understanding and achievement. EQAs will also wish to know about the mode of study. This may be through classroom-based activities, activities in the workplace, open or distance learning or a blend of learning routes. Whatever combination is chosen, centres must ensure that learners have access to the appropriate resources to help them achieve.

What resources are needed for delivery of ATHE qualifications?

ATHE provides sample assignments for units. There are also additional resources for centres to access if they wish to use them. Centres should check ATHE's Qualification Guidance page for all these materials. Sample assignments are updated periodically so centres need to check the status of the sample assignment and ensure that current assignments are issued to learners. Centres may wish to devise their own assignments in order to meet the specific needs of their learners. If so, ATHE **must check** that these centre devised assignments are fit for purpose. Learners who are studying by an open/ distance learning route will require particular levels of support and resources to ensure that appropriate learning and progress is taking place.

It is essential that staff delivering the programmes are appropriately qualified and/or suitably experienced to deliver specific units and qualifications. It is also essential that staff understand the nature of the qualifications they are delivering and the implications this has for delivery and assessment.

Management of the course provision is important and experience has shown that this is most effective when an individual member of staff has responsibility for the delivery of a particular programme of study. Where student numbers are small this person may have the responsibility for more than one programme. The specific job role for members of staff in this position will vary from one centre to another. However, typically they will have a planning and a quality assurance responsibility and may lead on internal quality assurance. Details about quality assurance, assessment and internal quality assurance are covered in detail in later sections of this guide.

There also needs to be physical resources in place to facilitate the teaching and learning and support assessment. The physical resources need to be proportionate to the number of learners following specific qualification routes.

What other things do I need to consider in planning the qualification?

In planning programmes of study, it is important for centres to consider carefully the overall aims of the qualification being delivered, as well as individual units. The specifications lead to the development of knowledge, understanding and skills. In some qualifications the skills developed are explicitly stated in the specification and the sample assignment. This is intended to support learner progression. ATHE is in the process of reviewing its qualification specifications to introduce synoptic teaching, learning and assessment, offering a more joined-up and holistic approach to provision and study – see the section 'a synoptic approach to the curriculum' below for further details.

It is important for centres to ensure that in the delivery of the learning a direct link is made between theory and practice, so that knowledge is applied. This in turn will further facilitate the development of skills and understanding. Learners' personal experiences must be utilised in the learning process.

Most ATHE qualifications consist of mandatory core units and optional or specialist units. The core units represent the fundamental areas of learning for the qualification, while the optional units offer choice of elective subjects to suit different learner needs and interests. Centres must ensure they adhere to the required rules of combination as defined in the specifications.

ATHE definition of Total Qualification Time (TQT), Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Credit

Values for Total Qualification Time, Guided Learning Hours and Credit, are calculated by considering the different activities that a learner would typically complete to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes of a qualification.

The needs of individual learners and the differing teaching styles used mean there will be variation in the actual time taken to complete a qualification.

Values for Total Qualification Time, Guided Learning Hours and Credit are estimates.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The term Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is an estimate of the amount of time, on average, that a tutor, trainer, workshop facilitator etc., will work with a learner, to enable the learner to complete the learning outcomes of a unit to the appropriate standard.

GLH are intended to provide guidance for centres on the amount of time required to deliver the programme and support learners. GLH are made up of activities completed by the learner under direct instruction or supervision of a tutor/teacher, lecturer, supervisor, trainer etc. whether through actual attendance or via electronic means, the activity must be in real time.

Some examples of activities that can contribute to Guided Learning Hours include:

- Supervised induction sessions
- Learner feedback with a teacher in real time
- Supervised independent learning
- Classroom-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Work-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a teacher in real time
- E-learning supervised by a teacher in real time
- All forms of assessment that take place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including where the assessment is competence-based and may be turned into a learning opportunity.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time (TQT) is a guide to the amount of time a learner would take, on average, to complete the different activities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes of a whole qualification.

TQT includes all the activities described under guided learning hours (GLH) plus all the additional learning.

Additional learning will take place away from the classroom and this will not be under direct supervision of a tutor/teacher, lecturer, supervisor, trainer etc. The activities will vary depending on the qualifications, their level and the nature of the learning.

Some examples of activities that can contribute to Total Qualification Time, include:

- Preparation for classes
- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised work on assignments
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e- assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning
- Any other form of learning, education or training, not under the direct supervision of a tutor/teacher, lecturer, supervisor, trainer

Credit

The credit value specifies the number of credits that will be awarded to a learner who has achieved the learning outcomes of a unit at the specified standard.

Each credit represents 10 hours of learning time and equates to 10 hours of total qualification time. Therefore, one 15 credit unit represents 150 hours of total qualification time. Learning time is a notional measure which indicates the amount of time a learner at the level of the unit is expected to take, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard determined by the assessment criteria.

Learning time includes all the activities described under guided learning hours and additional learning. The credit value of the unit will remain constant in all contexts regardless of the assessment method or the mode of delivery. Learners will only be awarded credits for the successful completion of whole units.

A synoptic approach to the curriculum

ATHE is committed to both providing and signposting opportunities for tutors and learners to more joined up and holistic approaches to delivery, study and assessment. For this reason, ATHE is reviewing its qualification specifications during 2022/2023 to ensure that:

Synoptic teaching and learning

- each specification will contain a section at the end of each unit which identifies opportunities for synoptic teaching and learning. This means that for each unit we identify the connections between ideas and themes across units of the qualification so that tutors can develop their programmes of study and learners can see the content of each unit much more holistically.

Synoptic assessment

- each specification will also contain a section at the end of each unit which identifies the way in which the unit contributes towards synoptic assessment. Synoptic assessment

identifies the ways in which assessment can be used to focus and reinforce joined up, holistic assessment practice. There may be synoptic assessment occurring quite naturally between assessment criteria in a unit or there may be opportunities for tutors to organise the delivery of units and assessments in such a way as to maximise synoptic assessment opportunities between units.

Study Skills & Employability Skills

- each ATHE specification will also contain sections at the end of each unit to identify the ways in which the unit signposts towards study and employability skill opportunities. ATHE has developed both Study Skills and Employability Skills frameworks (see later sections for these) and will reference these frameworks within each unit to indicate relevant opportunities to develop these skills.

Study Skills are learning-specific skills that enable an individual to find, record, interpret, understand and utilise information relevant to an area of study. ATHE identifies seven broad categories of Study Skills. These are: Self-organisation; Time management; Using sources of information; Reading skills; Writing skills; Thinking skills; and Digital skills.

Employability Skills are those core skills and behaviours needed in nearly every job. These are also often referred to as transferable skills. Employability Skills are distinct from Study Skills. Study Skills are needed by learners to best complete the requirements of their qualification and for progression to higher level study. Employability Skills are related to and overlap with Study Skills but have a different and distinct workplace focus. ATHE identifies ten broad categories of Employability Skills. These are: Working independently; Communication skills; Teamwork; Negotiation; Leadership; Problem-solving; and Digital skills.

ATHE will be keeping centres updated on progress with these developments in quarterly Centre Updates. For enquiries from centres in the interim please contact support@athe.co.uk.

The Regulated Qualifications Framework

All ATHE qualifications sit on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF is the national credit transfer system for qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Qualifications range in difficulty from Entry level to level 8.

The table below gives examples of the RQF level descriptors which show what level of knowledge and understanding, application and action and autonomy and accountability learners should be able to demonstrate relevant to the level of qualification they are studying. It is important to take these into account when teaching and assessing learners.

RQF Level	Ofqual Level Descriptors	Example ATHE Qualifications	Example general Qualifications
3	Apply knowledge and skills in a range of complex activities demonstrating comprehension of relevant theories; access and analyse information independently and make reasoned judgements, selecting from a considerable choice of procedures in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and direct own activities, with some responsibility for the output of others.	ATHE Level 3 Diploma in Law	A Levels, T levels
4	Develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base; employ a range of specialised skills; evaluate information, using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems; operate in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.	ATHE Level 4 Diploma in Business and Management	Higher National Certificate
5	Generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well defined and abstract problems; analyse and evaluate information; exercise judgement across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.	ATHE Level 5 Diploma in Management for Health and Social Care	Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degrees
6	Critically, review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised skills across an area of study; critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations; accept accountability for determining and achieving group and/or personal outcomes.	ATHE Level 6 Diploma in Healthcare Management	Bachelor's Degree
7	Display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical and professional activity; accepting accountability for all related decision making including use of supervision.	ATHE Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management	Master's Degree
8	Make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry, demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers and accepting full accountability of outcomes	N/A	Doctorate

A guide to comparing UK qualification frameworks with those in Ireland and the EU can be accessed via the following link: [Qualifications can cross boundaries: updated with apprenticeships \(qaac.ac.uk\)](http://qaac.ac.uk)

Qualification Level Descriptors

The Level Descriptors provide a general shared understanding of learning and achievement at each level and are concerned with the outcomes of learning, not the process of learning or the method of assessment.

Each level descriptor is divided into the following sections:

- Knowledge
- Skills

In the tables over the following pages, the level descriptors for each level of ATHE qualification are listed.

Level 3 Level Descriptors

Expectations for assessment at level 3

In each learning outcome for each unit the learner must demonstrate the following:

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.• Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.• Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work.• Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.• Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.• Review how effective methods and actions have been.

Level 4 Level Descriptors

Expectations for assessment at level 4

In each learning outcome for each unit the learner must demonstrate the following:

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.• Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.• Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.
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- Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.
-

Skills

- Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.
 - Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.
-

Level 5 Level Descriptors

Expectations for assessment at level 5

In each learning outcome for each unit the learner must demonstrate the following:

Knowledge

- Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts.
 - Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas.
 - Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work.
 - Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.
-

Skills

- Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems.
 - Use relevant research or development to inform actions.
 - Evaluate actions, methods and results.
-

Level 6 Level Descriptors

Expectations for assessment at level 6

In each learning outcome for each unit the learner must demonstrate the following:

Knowledge

- Has advanced practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.
 - Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.
 - Can critically analyse, interpret and evaluate complex information, concepts and ideas.
-

Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine, refine, adapt and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive and practical skills to address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors. • Use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions. • Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.
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Level 7 Level Descriptors

Expectations for assessment at level 7

In each learning outcome for each unit the learner must demonstrate the following:

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. • Critically analyses, interprets and evaluates complex information, concepts and theories to produce modified conceptions. • Understands the wider contexts in which the area of study or work is located. • Understands current developments in the area of study or work. • Understands different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the area of study or work.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use specialised skills to conceptualise and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. • Determine and use appropriate methodologies and approaches • Design and undertake research, development or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work or study. • Critically evaluate actions, methods and results and their short- and long-term implications.

Assessing Learners

Learning is a change in skill, attitude, knowledge and understanding and measuring these changes are the steps in the assessment process. Assessment is the judgement of evidence presented by the learner, which shows that learning has taken place. In other words, it is an act of measurement and it confirms that a learning outcome has been achieved and the standards determined by the assessment criteria have been met.

When should assessment take place?

Pre course/beginning of the course

Diagnostic assessment takes place either before the course begins or at the first session. This can serve a number of purposes:

- to help decide whether the unit/qualification at a particular level is suitable for the learners' needs
- to help decide if the learner should provide additional evidence to meet the standards for higher grades, where they are part of the qualification specification
- to encourage learners to identify their own needs and discover if the proposed learning is right for them
- to help tutors identify individual learning and thinking styles

During the course – formative assessment

Assessment can be used during learning to give feedback and support the learner's progress. It will also inform both the learner and tutor/lecturer of any action that needs to take place.

Formative assessment will allow:

- tutors to judge what knowledge/skills and understanding a learner has acquired
- tutors to plan the next steps, including working towards higher grades as appropriate
- tutors to give appropriate feedback to a learner
- tutors to encourage and motivate a learner
- a learner to identify what has been learnt, what they need to learn and what they need to do to improve

Summative assessment

Summative assessment normally takes place towards the end of the learning programme or section of a learning programme. This type of assessment measures the extent of learning that has taken place at the end of that phase of the learning experience. It enables a judgement to be made about whether the learner has achieved **all** the learning outcomes at the standards stated by the assessment criteria within a unit.

Where the moderation of learner work is focused on achievement of qualifications directly related to job roles, assessment decisions must be based on achievement of each AC. Learners should achieve the LO at the standards described by each AC.

Who can assess?

There are a number of categories of people who could be involved in assessing individuals' learning in a centre. These are likely to include assessors and internal quality assurers, but they

may also be supported by people from businesses who are experts in their particular field. ATHE requires evidence that staff carrying out formal assessment have qualifications and/or experience commensurate with the level of the qualification being assessed.

What is the key to making valid assessment decisions?

Tutors need to be very clear about how to assess learner work. All ATHE units are written in terms of learning outcomes which must be achieved for learners to succeed. The learning outcomes state what the learner will be expected to know, or do, or understand. Assessment criteria are the standards which a learner must meet in order for the learning outcomes to be achieved.

One task in an assignment may assess several learning outcomes at once and provide learners with opportunities to meet a range of assessment criteria. In addition, an assignment may cover more than one unit. When qualifications are graded there are normally additional tasks for learners to complete which extend the learning.

It is important that learners are clear about how they can meet the standards. This will include learners knowing what is required by the command verbs stated in each of the assessment criteria. It is essential that all this information is shared with learners verbally and visually (hand-outs, flipcharts etc.).

ATHE assignments for core qualifications reinforce this information, as they relate to the learning outcomes and the separate tasks in the assignment state the specific criteria they refer to. This is reinforced by the cover sheet for assignments, which assessors can use to record their judgements and provide feedback to learners. This document is available on the Qualification Guidance section of the ATHE portal and definitions of the command verbs can be found on page 53 of this document and also in the Learner Handbook.

Where units are graded the learners must demonstrate that they have achieved **all** the criteria set for the merit and distinction grades. Where work for the pass standard is marginal, assessors can take account of any extension work completed by the learners. If a learner resubmits work in order to meet any of the standards set, a pass, merit or distinction grade can be awarded. The judgements are based on the resubmitted work and where the assessor judges that the standards have been met, the appropriate grade should be given.

Assessment should be:

- open and transparent
- authentic
- reliable, consistent and rigorous
- relevant to the target group
- inclusive

Formal assessment is structured, usually takes place in clearly stated conditions, and is usually used for summative assessment. Forms of non-paper based formal assessment may include:

- practical activity
- structured discussion
- questions and answers
- presentation

Paper based formal assessment is normally in the form of assignments which may include:

- case studies
- projects
- dissertation
- reports
- reflective journal
- diaries or logs
- timed assignments under controlled conditions

Learners typically build up a portfolio of evidence. ATHE assignments are vocationally relevant and are normally set in a vocational context. It is entirely appropriate for learners to research and complete assignments in the workplace. Some centres may wish to include time constrained tests as part of the portfolio of evidence. ATHE has produced guidelines on the conduct of such tests and centres should refer to the policy document on Time Constrained Assessment, which is on the ATHE website.

Assessment of ATHE provision should involve:

- the application of assessment criteria at the appropriate level for the qualification to show that learning outcomes have been achieved and the award of any higher grades is valid.
- a documented process of standardisation to ensure consistency across learners, assessors, sites and units to meet standards
- feedback to learners which is specific, and directly linked to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. This allows the learner to understand where they have been successful and what they need to do to improve. This might lead to an action plan for improvement

Assessment practice must have processes in place to ensure that the evidence for assessment is the learners' own work. Staff involved in assessment should at all times be aware of the necessity of confirming the authenticity of learners' work. This has become more important with the advent, and increasing use, of information technology such as, word processing, the Internet, Intranets, and CDs, all of which have contributed to the risk of plagiarism and copying.

While it is almost impossible to eliminate all opportunities for plagiarism and other forms of malpractice such as copying, collusion, ghost writing etc., it is possible to take steps to reduce the risks of it occurring. Therefore:

- All centres should have a malpractice policy including a plagiarism statement. All learners should be made aware of this, and its meaning and consequences made clear. ATHE has produced some guidelines to help centres review their malpractice policies and these are available on the Qualifications Guidance webpage. The document is titled Guidance for Centres on Internal Malpractice Policies and it provides a range of advice, including how to interpret plagiarism reports. When moderating and/or verifying learner work, EQAs follow the guidance included in this document, so it is important for centres to take note of the information provided.
- A statement confirming authenticity of the work should be included with the learner's file or portfolio.
- Centres should use software to check for plagiarism in learner work and a copy of the plagiarism report must be attached to learner work at external quality assurance.
- Whenever possible draft copies of work should be retained. Apart from giving an indication of authenticity, the practice should be encouraged as it provides evidence of development and planning of a larger piece of work.

- A learner's work, or passages within a piece of work, that are substantially different in level, tone or vocabulary from previous samples of similar work should be queried.
- Learners should at an early stage be introduced to an acceptable standard system of referencing, so that external sources can be properly attributed.
- The learners name and ATHE Learner ID should be on every page of learner work produced.

Centres must comply with the ATHE policy on Malpractice and Maladministration and failure to do so may mean that certification will be blocked for all or some learners.

What does validity of evidence mean?

Assessment strategies must correlate with the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria. Valid assessment enables the results to be used with confidence.

What does sufficiency/fitness for purpose mean?

The assessment strategy must be appropriate and relevant to the target group of learners and the context in which the learning takes place. The assessment must be appropriate to the credit value and level and provide sufficient evidence so that an accurate assessment judgement can be made.

What does fairness mean?

Assessment must be free from gender, ethnic or other types of discrimination. There should be a balance of approaches to assessment.

Assessment should be manageable for:

- learners,
- lecturers, assessors
- administrators
- the centre/college
- the awarding bodies

This is in terms of time, cost, resources etc.

Assessment in a language other than English

ATHE qualifications are predominately assessed in the English language. However, where there is an evidenced need for an alternative language to be used, ATHE will consider this on a case-by-case basis. Centres should refer to the ATHE Policy on Assessment in a Language other than English and contact ATHE as detailed in the policy.

How do I document assessment decisions?

Evidence of achievement must be directly related to specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria including any criteria which relate to merit and distinction grades. Learners cannot be awarded credit for partial achievement of a unit. This evidence must be made available to the ATHE EQA to confirm the award of credit for the learner/group of learners.

The following are examples of acceptable forms of evidence that are straightforward to cross - reference to assessment criteria within units:

- portfolios
- assignments
- written examinations/tests
- time constrained internally assessed work
- reflective diary
- projects
- research
- dissertations

The following are examples of acceptable forms of evidence that will have to be accompanied by signed tutor observation or witness statements to ensure that adequate evidence exists to confirm that individual learners took part in the activity and achieved the learning outcomes at the standards provided by the assessment criteria:

- questions and answers
- viva
- talks and presentations
- role play
- group work

Learners taking part in these types of activity, as part of the assessment process, must keep any preparatory notes/plans etc. which will make the assessment decisions more reliable and transparent. Evidence should ALWAYS be clearly cross referenced to relevant learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria. Taped or videoed evidence must have an introduction identifying the unit and learning outcome/assessment criterion for which it is providing evidence. Both the tutor and individual learners should be identified by name. An example of a form which can be used by assessors who are assessing oral work is available on the ATHE website.

When dealing with oral evidence it is essential that tutors keep an on-going record of achievement of all learners in the group and where possible record the oral work. If individual assessment/achievement records are lost this will be the only proof of achievement. The internal verifier within a centre should sample this form of evidencing by attending the assessment and/or listening to the recordings as part of the internal sample.

It is important for tutors/course co-ordinators to remember that in certain circumstances assessments can be adjusted to take into account the needs of individual learners e.g. descriptions can be given orally where learners have difficulty with committing work to paper or extensions to deadlines may be given when a learner has an illness which is certificated by a doctor. (See: 'ATHE Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy').

Before submitting learners for certification, it is very important for centres to ensure that all information about assessment decisions is accurate and ready for scrutiny by an EQA. This will include information on whether the learner work is a resubmission and/or when the learner has been awarded a reasonable adjustment or special consideration. Further information about this will be found in this guide in the section on Quality Assurance Processes. An example of a tracking grid which records learners' achievements across the qualification is provided in the Documents / Resources / Sample Documents section of the Centre Portal.

How do I design an assignment brief?

An assignment brief is the document issued to learners at the start of the assessment process for any given unit(s). The creation of assignment briefs which are fit for purpose is essential if learners are to be given every opportunity to succeed.

There is no prescribed layout or format for the brief, but it is recommended that it contains the following information:

- title and level of the qualification
- title and number of unit(s) under assessment
- title/reference of the assignment
- date the assignment is set
- submission date

The brief should include the following sections:

- opportunity for the assessor to place the assignment within a context; perhaps referring to prior teaching and learning, where the project fits into the overall programme, etc.
- a statement on which learning outcomes and assessment criteria the activities and assessment address
- extension activities in order to provide learners with opportunities to achieve higher grades.

Tasks and preparation

- a description of specific activities the learners will undertake in order to produce assessment evidence to address the assessment criteria targeted by the assignment and ensure that learning outcomes can be achieved.
- tasks must be clear, relevant, current and realistic.
- wherever possible there should be variety in the tasks set
- the design of the brief should make reference to the criteria and learning outcomes which individual tasks address, including providing opportunities for any extension work needed for merit and distinction grades.

Forms of evidence

A clear statement of what the learner is expected to produce as evidence, and how that evidence will be assessed.

Other information may include:

- resources
- reference materials

Guidance for centres on work placements for full time learners studying ATHE Qualifications

Underpinning principles

ATHE regards work placements as a valuable aspect of learning. They enable learners on full time learning programmes to gain a greater understanding of how an organisation operates in practice and they provide opportunities for learners to observe how individual roles function and how groups of people operate in the workplace. Furthermore, placements enable learners to develop skills, gain confidence and apply theoretical learning from the classroom in a real environment.

In order to be effective and to be an integral part of learning, a work placement in ATHE qualifications must have the following characteristics:

- the learner must be appropriately prepared for the placement
- the centre has responsibility for the learner throughout the period of the work placement
- the placement provider must be clear about their responsibilities with regard to the learner and the centre's expectations of them
- each learner must have a tutor who supports them while he/she is on placement and develops and challenges their thinking and understanding
- the individual needs of the learner must be taken into account in organising the work placement
- the placement must be directly linked to a unit or parts of units and generate evidence which enables the learner to meet the learning outcomes at the standards set by the assessment criteria for that unit or units
- the placement must therefore provide information and evidence which is assessed
- the placement is a part of the learning on a course of study and should be managed accordingly. Centres should ensure that the balance of work placement and classroom based activity is appropriate. Centres must take into account any rules with regard to work placements set by their regulatory authorities and strictly adhere to them

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure the points listed above are characteristic of the work placements it provides. The information in this document and the attachments are designed to support centres with embedding work placements into teaching and learning and to enable evidence from the placements to be used in the assessment process. This document should be used as a guide only and it is expected that centres will wish to build on the information supplied here.

Sample assignments for use with work placements

ATHE has provided examples of sample assignments directly related to placements and to specific units and these are available for centres to use. They can be accessed from the list of sample assignments via the portal. The centre must ensure that the nature of the specific placements undertaken by learners enables them to complete the assignment, provide sufficient evidence and achieve the learning outcomes at the required standards.

Mapping assessment criteria to work placements

By way of example, ATHE has considered the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the units of the Healthcare Management qualifications and identified where evidence can be gathered from work placements to help meet the standards. This mapping exercise clearly shows

that evidence for some assessment criteria **cannot** be gathered in the workplace, whereas other assessment criteria are suited to this approach. Indeed, learners may find it very useful to gather evidence from their placement, particularly where the assessment criteria refer to an organisation as in unit 7.1 Organisational Behaviour. Here in order to help achieve LO2, learners must 'Analyse the culture and structure of one organisation and evaluate how they impact on its effectiveness'. Evidence for use in assignments may be gathered from a range of activities and the list below provides some examples but it is not exhaustive.

- **observing** how an organisation functions in general, the interaction between individuals, clients or other stakeholders, or individual(s) in work roles, or a team
- **reading** documents such as structure charts, reports, policies, agendas or minutes of meetings or the various types of communication used in the organisation
- **meeting** with individual staff or stakeholders to gather specific information or engage in discussion on topics which are relevant to set tasks or the assignment. Learners may wish to record these meetings electronically, on paper or by audio so information is not lost
- **distributing** questionnaires or surveys to relevant individuals in order to gather a range of views on specific questions
- **reviewing** work that you have personally carried out in the work placement

Success in gathering evidence for learning outcomes and assessment criteria will inevitably depend on the nature of the specific work placement the learner is undertaking.

Sample forms and documentation to support learners undertaking work placements

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

ILPs are a useful tool to support learning in general and particularly to help embed a work placement into the learners' overall learning experience. ILPs can be structured in different ways but in essence this is a record of existing levels of achievement, the student's learning needs and the action required to address these needs. Producing a personal skills audit before the work placement begins is a particularly good way for the learner to identify what he/she does well and where improvements are required. Development of particular skills can then be targeted through the work placement or from other parts of the learning experience on the programme of study as appropriate. The ILP can therefore accompany the learner throughout their period of study. A sample form for the skills audit and subsequent action plan are attached.

Frequently these documents are included in an ILP file which may also contain other information related to progression. This information may include a statement about the intended career goal, a CV, copies of certificates or qualifications obtained, a record of the initial interview before starting the current programme of study or copies of other meetings with the placement provider or tutor.

As the learner progresses through their course of study the ILP must be updated. The learner should audit their skill development at different stages in the learning and create further action plans to ensure continued progress.

Observation forms

When making assessment decisions on evidence the learner has gathered from the work placement, assessors may wish to use evidence obtained through observation. ATHE has prepared a sample observation form which is available on the ATHE website. You will note from

this example that the observer is the assessor so he/she is experienced in assessment and/or trained and is therefore able to take the assessment judgements. The observation form may be used to support assignment briefs submitted by the learner.

Witness Testimony

Assessors may also wish to use witness testimony to support their assessment decisions. In this case the assessor gathers evidence from a witness who has observed the learner undertaking certain tasks, has held meetings with the learner or has read documentation completed by them. The witness is **not** making assessment decisions but the information he/she provides may be invaluable in helping the assessor to confirm that standards have been achieved. The sample form attached must be completed in full, so that the assessor has sufficient information to support their assessment decisions. This additional information should be submitted with the assessment judgments for use in internal and external quality assurance.

Quality Assurance Processes

ATHE recognised centres must have quality assurance processes in place, which assure the quality of the learner experience. These processes are a requirement of inspection agencies. They will also assure the consistent and valid award of ATHE qualifications. This means that the centre will normally have:

- policies in place relating to quality assurance
- internal quality assurance of assessment decisions
- internal quality assurance of any centre devised assignments
- internal standardisation processes as appropriate
- review of evidence of unit and qualification achievement
- sampling processes including a sampling plan
- information gathered from learners regarding views on their experience at the centre
- annual centre review processes which are based on current, specific evidence and information and lead to action plans. These processes are integral to the operation of centres and provide accurate judgements about good practice and areas for development
- action plans are detailed and delivered to the standards required. Managers and staff respond quickly to corrective action

Information from all of these processes will be used in external quality assurance.

What is internal quality assurance?

- internal quality assurance is a system of quality checks which ensure that assessment decisions are accurate and that assessment procedures are inclusive and enable participation, consistency and fairness
- there must be a record of all internal quality assurance which is retained
- internal quality assurance is a check that the standards set by ATHE are being delivered

Who is responsible for quality assurance?

The role of the internal quality assurer is to:

- ensure that assessment is consistent, fair and transparent and does not unintentionally discriminate against any learner
- ensure that assessors are aware of the different ways unit achievement can be assessed, for example one assignment may cover more than one unit, to avoid over assessing learners
- ensure that tutors/assessors receive on-going advice and support, for example in designing assessment activities that cover the assessment criteria and constructive feedback on their assessment decisions
- prepare a sampling plan
- regularly sample assessment activities, methods and records to monitor consistency of assessment decisions as specified by qualification documentation
- monitor learners' achievement records and centre documentation to ensure that they are completed in accordance with requirements. This will include records of learner work which has been resubmitted and/or work where learners have been awarded reasonable adjustments or special considerations
- ensure that learners understand assessment requirements and are given opportunities to achieve against the assessment criteria
- ensure that learners' work is organised and presented in a manner that enables effective quality assurance to take place

- disseminate good practice in assessment across the centre
- ensure equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices are upheld in the assessment process
- ensure that evidence of learner achievement is mapped to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- ensure that recommendations for the award of credit are valid, reliable and consistent

Internal quality assurance arrangements must include as a minimum:

- an identified individual responsible who is the named internal quality assurer for a set of assessment decisions
- clear and documented roles and responsibilities for all those involved
- a forum for discussion of borderline cases at all grades and good practice in assessment
- sampling of assessed work
- standardisation of assessed work
- full and clear records and action plans
- regular evaluation of the process

Two or more of the roles carried out within centres can be undertaken by the same person. However, internal quality assurers who are also acting as assessors cannot internally quality assure their own assessments.

Internal quality assurance and all assessment records must be held in the centre for a minimum of 4 years following the date quality assurance.

What happens during the external moderation of learner work?

One of main tasks which an external quality assurer undertakes is to check that all assessors are assessing to the same standards. The internal assessment outcomes reached for all ATHE qualifications are therefore subject to an independent assessment review by an ATHE External Quality Assurer (EQA). The EQA will undertake external moderation of learner work when learners have completed their programme of study and are seeking certification. Some centres, such as those with High Performing Status, will be subject to verification of learner work and this will take place when learners have completed their programme of studies and also include those still on programme who have completed at least 50% of the assessed work.

In completing either the moderation or verification the EQA role is to:

- ensure that ATHE qualifications are delivered in accordance with regulatory requirements
- externally quality assure the standards of achievement of learners at unit level
- ensure that there is regional, national and international consistency in the way achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria are applied
- resolve issues relating to borderline achievement
- monitor the learners' experience of the programme
- provide an on-going source of objective and impartial advice to centres through discussions with tutors and via a report summarising the outcomes of the visit
- support the continuous improvement of the quality and fitness for purpose of ATHE accredited provision

This means that the EQA will want to:

- sample the assessed work of different learners. For moderation the sample will cover the assessment judgements of every assessor, across any graded judgements which have been made. The sample will also cover every unit which has been assessed and take into account the nature of the tasks which learners have been set. The exact sample will be determined by the EQA and he/she will normally start with a minimum sample size of 10 learners plus 10% of the remaining cohort. Where a centre is offering more than one qualification, this minimum size will apply to each qualification. The sample will also include internally quality assured learner work.

For verification of learner work the sample size may be less depending on the individual centre being visited but will typically be the work of 5 learners plus 10% and cover each assessor and grade awarded. The key principles listed above will still apply e.g., judging decisions made by every assessor, across the units studied and taking into account the nature of the tasks completed by learners.

Both the moderation and verification processes are designed to be rigorous but at the same time positive and supportive, and are intended to highlight areas of good practice, as well as identify any areas of concern.

- ensure that all supporting internal documentation is completed and up to date. This will include records relating to assessment for learners both formative and summative. These records should show the decisions made including any resubmissions of work and/or any cases where special considerations have taken place
- ensure records are complete for the internal quality assurance processes used at the centre including any standardisation activities
- see and take account of plagiarism reports for each piece of learner work sampled and for other work where appropriate, noting how they have been used in the assessment process
- check the authentication arrangements that have been made for any learners using alternative routes to certification for example RPL or credit transfer

In some circumstances, particularly in centres which provide distance learning and have different start and completion dates for learners, there may not be a sufficient number of learners to warrant a full external quality assurance. In these cases where there:

- is only one learner the EQA will sample a minimum of 50% of the units and all of the assessors. Only the learner work section of the EQA report will be completed
- are two learners the EQA will complete the normal sampling procedure. Only the learner work section of the EQA report will be completed

Where there are large numbers of learners taking more than one qualification and/or there have been concerns with assessment at earlier visits, the external quality assurance may take more than one day or be undertaken by more than one EQA.

The outcomes of the moderation or verification process will be to:

1. confirm that internal assessment meets UK national standards and allow certification
or
2. make recommendations to further strengthen the quality of assessment outcomes and IQA processes before full certification is released. Certification or unit certification may be awarded for some learners where work sampled has met the required standards
or
3. provide feedback and state the actions needed to improve the quality of assessment outcomes and IQA processes before full certification is released. Some unit certification may be awarded for learners, where actual work sampled has met the required standards
or

4. provide evidence and make recommendations about the centre's ability to continue to be approved to deliver the ATHE qualifications in question, without a significant change in practice. No learner certification can take place.

These outcomes are not necessarily independent of one another. A centre will receive initial feedback in a meeting (often online) at the end of the moderation or verification process along with a draft EQA report, detailing why EQA decisions have been taken and any action that is required by the centre to improve existing practice. Taking account of any adjustments arising from this meeting, the EQA report will be finalised, reviewed and signed off by the RSM or QAM, and issued to the centre prior to certification as appropriate.

ATHE reserves the right to withdraw either a qualification or centre approval when there is evidence to show that there is an irreversible breakdown in a centre's ability either to assure the quality of its programme delivery or its assessment standards. This will be done in accordance with the ATHE Sanctions Policy.

All ATHE EQAs will have gone through a rigorous selection and induction process. All their work is checked internally as part of the ATHE quality systems. They will have participated in regular training activities and will be proficient in ATHE systems and procedures. All will have had experience as practitioners in fields relevant to their responsibilities and as a result will have experienced many similar successes and problems that are possibly encountered within the provision they are now reviewing. ATHE EQAs come from a variety of professional backgrounds. However, what is common is their commitment to implementing ATHE's quality assurance strategy to a consistent standard and providing support, which meets the needs of individual centres. They will have no connection with the centre or the learners being reviewed.

It is **not** part of the EQA's responsibility to assess work but to confirm the decisions made by internal quality assurers and assessors at a centre.

Where provision has been reviewed previously, it is important that centres check that they have read the last EQA's report and are familiar with the contents, both positive and negative. Centres will also need to ensure that any action required as a result of the last external quality assurance visit has been acted upon.

Remote Completion of External Quality Assurance

On occasions EQAs may need to work remotely from the centre as a visit is not possible or unnecessary. For example, where there are Government restrictions on travel or visits to centres, where travel is not possible due to industrial action, where the quality assurance of learner work relates to a very small number of learners or where the work is a resubmission for one or two units. Remote work may also be required due to the location of the centre. **All remote quality assurance activities will be agreed by the office at ATHE and the decision will be based on strict criteria.**

In all these cases the standards and processes used for the quality assurance will be the same as those used for any other visit. If the normal information and documentation is not available and the standards are compromised the quality assurance will not proceed.

When working remotely the report will have already been checked by the Quality & Assessment Manager or a Regional Standards Manager and submitted in the normal way. The centre will have received initial feedback on the draft EQA report and can seek clarification on the decisions which have been made. This process will not allow the centre to amend the judgements. However, in some cases additional information may be provided which was available at the time of the quality assurance but due to circumstances was not presented. In this case the EQA might

decide to make amendments to the final report. Any changes to the report will be discussed and agreed with the Quality and Assessment Manager. The ATHE decisions are final.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Credit Transfer and Exemptions

ATHE seeks to enable learners to avoid duplication of learning and assessment. This can be achieved by offering learners the opportunity to transfer credit i.e. recognise previously accredited achievement from within the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) to count towards another qualification. Alternatively learning or achievement that has not been certificated or accredited from regulated qualifications could lead to achievement depending on the correlation to the LOs and standards provided in the ATHE units. This existing achievement will lead to exemption.

Learners may claim RPL, credit transfer or exemption against a whole unit or several units. It is not possible to award part units, but where the evidence presented does not fully meet the needs of a complete unit, the missing information may be provided via the same assessment processes that are undertaken by a taught group of learners.

Where centres wish to use RPL they are required to have a robust policy in place and to develop processes to support learners, assessors and internal quality assurance to use RPL effectively. The centre must retain evidence for successful claims, as it does for all other assessment decisions. This will be checked as part of the external quality assurance processes. There is an ATHE Policy on RPL, Credit Transfer and Exemptions which is available on the website. This policy describes the RPL process in detail and there are forms for centres to use.

Where a centre does not have a robust internal policy enabling valid RPL decisions to take place, ATHE will inform the centre that assessment judgements using RPL cannot be made. This decision may take place at the CRQA check process or at other EQA visits. Where a centre is graded in the lower half (weak amber or red) at EQA of learner work or at an M&D visit due to issues with assessment, the centre will also be informed that RPL cannot be used. This restriction will apply until such time that assessment and supporting QA processes meet the required standards.

Not all ATHE qualifications are suitable for RPL, for example where learners are new to the learning specified in the unit and/or where assessment includes a requirement for an observation of skill development.

Command verbs used in units and assignments

Some verbs are more commonly used in assessment criteria for units at particular levels. This document provides an illustrative list of verbs used in ATHE assessment criteria. The explanations for the verbs given in the tables over the following pages provide alternative words or phrases that help to clarify the verb used in the assessment criteria at each level.

Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers should use these explanations to consider whether learners have met the correct standards when assessing learners and internally quality assuring assessment decisions.

Verbs	Explanation
Agree	Have the same opinion about something; concur
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Apply	Explain how existing knowledge, practices, standards etc. can be linked to new or different situations Use information to determine outcomes/conclusions/recommendations
Appraise	Assess the value or quality
Assess	Use available information to make a reasoned judgement
Calculate	Determine or ascertain by mathematical methods
Carry out	Implement; do; execute
Close	Bring to an end
Collaborate	Work jointly with
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequence or logical order which is suitable for purpose
Communicate	Convey or exchange spoken or written information
Compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences
Compare and contrast	Examine the subjects in detail, identify similarities and differences, consider these from different perspectives
Conduct	Carry out
Consider	Ponder, contemplate or study in order to make a decision
Construct	Form by bringing together various elements
Convey	Communicate (information)
Create	Bring something into existence
Critically assess	Use available information to make a judgement; produce a convincing argument for a judgement
Critically evaluate	This is a development of evaluate. Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; consider the evidence and discuss the validity of evidence from opposing views; produce a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement.

Critically review	Look back over the topic or activity, analysing the positive and negative aspects
Define	State or show clearly and accurately
Demonstrate	Clearly show by giving proof or evidence; give a practical exhibition and explanation
Describe	Provide an extended range of detailed factual information about the topic or item in a logical way
Design	Decide on the look and function of something by making a detailed visual or written document of it
Determine	Ascertain or establish exactly by research or calculation
Develop	Identify, build and extend a topic, plan or idea
Devise	Plan or invent (a complex procedure, system or mechanism) by careful thought
Differentiate between	Discuss identified differences between more than one entity, item, product, object or activity
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Distinguish between	Discuss identified differences between more than one item, product, object or activity
Document	Record something in written, photographic or other form
Draw conclusions	Arrive at judgements or opinions by reasoning
Establish	Set up; show something to be true by determining the facts
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Examine	Inspect (something) thoroughly in order to determine its nature or condition
Explain	Make something clear to someone by describing or revealing relevant information in more detail
Explore	Investigate or examine a range of issues from different perspectives
Formulate	Draw together; put together in a logical way; express in systematic terms or concepts
Identify	Ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of
Illustrate	Explain or make something clear by using examples, charts, graphics etc.
Interpret	Explain the meaning of something
Investigate	Carry out a systematic or formal inquiry to discover and examine the facts
Justify	Give a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for actions and/or decisions

Lead	Be responsible for taking people, organisation or a piece of work in a direction
Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward; revisit and judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Manage	Be in charge of; control or direct people/resources
Match	Correspond or cause to correspond (something with something else)
Measure	Assess the importance, effect or value of something
Monitor	Maintain regular surveillance
Negotiate	Discuss with a view to finding an agreed settlement
Outline	Identify accurately and describe clearly – the main points
Plan	Decide on something and make arrangements for it in advance; design or make a plan of something
Prepare	Make something or someone ready for use
Present	Show for others to scrutinise or consider; formally deliver (e.g. in verbal, written or graphical format)
Produce	Make, create or form something
Propose	Put forward (a plan or suggestion) for consideration by others
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject
Recommend/ Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward; revisit and judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Record	Set down in writing or some other permanent form for later reference
Reflect	Consult with oneself or others, recognising implications of current practice with a view to changing future practice
Reflect critically	Learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of these in order to suggest significant developments for future action, learning or practice, producing a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement
Report (on)	Give a spoken or written account of something that has been observed, heard, done or investigated
Request	Politely or formally ask for
Research	Conduct a detailed study of a subject to discover new information or reach a new understanding
Review	Revisit and consider the merit of analysing the positive and negative aspects
Select	Make informed choices
Self-analyse	Examine methodically in detail to explain and interpret oneself and one's actions
Set up	Establish; place something in position
Specify	Identify clearly and definitely

Suggest	Put forward for consideration
Summarise	Give the main ideas or facts in a concise way
Synthesise	Combine into a coherent whole
Translate	Convert
Validate	Demonstrate or support the truth, accuracy or value of something

Appendix 1 – Study Skills Framework

Study Skills are important for success in all ATHE qualifications and they provide a basis for successful learning and achievement at higher level study, whether at university or a higher level apprenticeship. The development and application of these generic skills are also valued by employers.

Study skill	What the skill means ...	What the skill requires ...
1) Self-organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking through your approach to study is important if you are to fully benefit. • Being self-organised requires that you think about where you study, when you study, how you will study and with whom you will study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding a suitable place to study without distractions, which is clean, light and enables access to all relevant resources • Identifying when it is best for you to study, maintaining a balance between responsibilities and ensuring you are in the right frame of mind • Organising your study materials to ensure that they are clear to access and easy to use • Ensuring that your study is supported by others so that help is available should you need it
2) Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing time to maximise study and derive a good work-life balance is important. • Good time management can ensure that larger study activities are broken down into more manageable bite-size tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning helps to organise time around regular activities and other commitments, and helps avoid distraction • Developing a study timetable to ensure that your work is structured, priorities are addressed and that there is a healthy work-life balance • Identifying and sticking with the objective or instruction at hand so that you can set yourself regular and realistic goals
3) Using sources of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using research, materials and information is an important aspect of effective study. • You need to know where to look for information and how to access it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying available sources of information, eg online, radio, television, library, people • Accessing information, ie choosing current, sufficient, relevant and reliable sources; noting key info - page nos, URLs, key dates; recording sources clearly and logically
4) Reading skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiently broad and deep reading must take place to both effectively understand the subject of study and use information to achieve your objectives. • There are different reading materials, different purposes to reading and different reading styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying different reading materials, e.g. course notes/texts, books, journals, articles, reviews, guides, statistics, online materials, VLEs • Reading with a purpose, e.g. to understand an idea/concept, to retain information for revision, to research, to make notes, for pleasure • Understanding reading styles, e.g. skimming, scanning, extensive reading of longer texts for overall meaning (e.g. understanding the development of an

		argument), intensive reading of shorter texts for detailed meaning (e.g. learning a language)
5) Writing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the study activity will determine the way in which something is written. There are a variety of writing styles and forms of writing that you need to understand and practise to study and learn effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the purpose of writing, e.g. note-taking, revision, essay writing, report writing, organising one's thoughts – mind maps Understanding writing styles (and forms), e.g. Personal (e.g. a blog), Narrative (a short story), Explanatory (a 'How-To'), Persuasive (marketing copy), a Response to Literature (book review), Research (research paper), Creative (poem) and Business (email)
6) Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without a number of key thinking skills, we will not be able to find, read, understand and express our ideas. We use analytical skills to collect and analyse information relevant to the problem. We use critical thinking skills to help us think in an organised and rational way to understand connections between ideas/and/or facts. We apply reflective thinking at the conclusion of a task to ensure we understand our own performance and our feelings towards it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using analytical skills, e.g. research skills, handling information, consulting multiple sources, categorising information Using critical thinking skills, e.g. listening to/reading all information, identifying and interpreting others' positions, arguments and conclusions, weighing up opposing arguments (avoiding jumping to conclusions, spotting fake ideas/news), drawing conclusions Ensuring we allow time and space to listen and read feedback; to review and learn from our study, so that we become more self-aware, constantly improve, and are empowered in our learning
7) Digital skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills are the skills needed to use digital devices, communications applications, and networks to access, create and manage information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using appropriate digital devices (computer, laptops, tablets etc) and relevant applications, software, systems and getting online Creating online information Handling and judging the reliability of information Problem-solving (e.g. online research, presenting data) Applying relevant numeracy skills to explore and organise data appropriately

Appendix 2 – Employability Skills Framework

Employability Skills are those core skills and behaviours needed in nearly every job. The development and application of these skills are valued by employers in terms of work readiness:

Employability skill	What the skill means ...	What the skill requires ...
1) Working independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working independently is the ability to work self-sufficiently on assigned tasks. • You might receive direction on your work from a supervisor or a manager, but you can be trusted to accomplish tasks with little or no supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using your own initiative • Time management, e.g. planning, setting targets, meeting deadlines, working under pressure • Self-organisation • Maintaining motivation/focus • Managing tasks/people • Prioritising • Delegating • ‘Seeing a job through’ to its completion • Resilience • Self-reflection, review & self-improvement • Adapting to change • Willingness to learn
2) Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You use communication skills when giving and receiving different kinds of information. • This can be spoken, typed, written, and body language. • These skills are important whether you are speaking face-to-face, on the phone, or through social media and emails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active listening • Observing • Empathising • Building rapport • Understanding body language • Adapting language to your audience • Offering and taking feedback • Drawing logical conclusions • Taking the right action with the information gathered • Spoken communication, e.g. knowing your purpose, being prepared, knowing your audience, understanding the importance of non-verbal behaviours • Written communication, eg appropriate formats, style and tone, spelling, punctuation & grammar (SPAG)
3) Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork is the combined action of a group, working to achieve an aim or objective. • Teamwork enables work activities to be achieved effectively and helps create good working relationships between individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning teamwork with colleagues • Team members having specific roles • Working and respecting differences between people (based on sex/gender, race, disability, age etc) • Allocating tasks based on individual capabilities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for timekeeping and outcomes • Maximising feedback and participation for team members • Dealing with differences of opinion and conflict • Meeting deadlines and ensuring quality
4) Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation is the process of discussing something with someone to reach an agreement. • In a negotiation, each party tries to persuade the other to agree with their point of view. • By negotiating, all involved parties try to avoid arguing but agree to reach some form of compromise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning your approach • Justifying your position • Actively listening • Using emotional intelligence • Building rapport and trust • Questioning and clarifying • Managing expectations • Being patient with the process • Knowing when to stop • Adapting positions and arguments when things change • Persuading others to your point of view
5) Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is the skill of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. • In organisations, this means directing workers and colleagues with a strategy to meet the organisation's needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Planning • Having vision & being creative • Sharing your vision • Taking charge & being decisive • Inspiring motivation (by example) • Having an open and welcoming communication style • Positivity • Resilience • Delegating appropriately • Acting responsibly and with integrity • Humility • Effectively managing timelines and schedules
6) Problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving is the process of finding solutions to difficult or complex issues. • To solve problems, we use both analytical and critical thinking skills. • We use analytical skills to collect and analyse information relevant to the problem. • We use critical thinking skills to help us think in an organised and rational way to understand connections between ideas/and/or facts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of data • Defining challenges and issues • Determining and assessing solutions • Planning and implementing solutions • Developing contingency plans • Assessing effectiveness • Using analytical skills, eg research skills, handling information, consulting multiple sources, categorising information • Using critical thinking skills, e.g. listening to/reading all information, identifying others' positions, arguments and

		conclusions, weighing up opposing arguments (avoiding jumping to conclusions, spotting fake ideas/news), drawing conclusions
7) Digital Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills are the skills needed to use digital devices, communications applications, and networks to access and manage information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using appropriate digital devices (computer, laptops, tablets etc) and relevant applications, software, systems and getting online Communicating and collaborating effectively with people online/remotely Handling and judging the reliability of information Conducting online transactions Problem-solving (eg online research, presenting data) Applying relevant numeracy skills to explore, organise and share data appropriately Keeping users safe and legal in the digital world

Glossary of Terms

Assessment

The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the learning outcomes at the standards set by the assessment criteria for a qualification or unit, or part of a unit.

Assessment Board

The purpose of an Assessment Board is to examine in detail the assessment judgements that have been made for a particular qualification and to agree recommendations for the awards to be made to students.

Assessment Criteria

The specific standards that learners need to meet in order to achieve success in a qualification or unit, or part of a unit.

Assignment

A task or number of tasks that must be completed by a learner to evidence that he/she has achieved the learning outcomes and met the assessment criteria of a unit.

Awarding Organisation

An organisation that is regulated to design, deliver and award qualifications.

Centre Recognition

When a centre (usually a college) is recognised to deliver qualifications to the awarding organisations standards.

Conflicts of Interest

When an individual or organisation has personal, professional or financial interested which may cause them to deviate them from their professional obligations.

Credit Value

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 complete a unit or qualification. One credit will usually take you 10 hours of learning.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The time that a lecturer, tutor or facilitator spends with a learner(s) providing lectures or guidance in order to deliver the aims of the unit specification.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

TQT is an estimate of the length of time it would take a learner to complete a qualification. This includes guided learning hours.

Indicative Content

An indication of the content which should be included when teaching a unit or qualification.

Internal Quality Assurance

A process by which assessment practices and decisions are sampled and evaluated and findings are acted upon to ensure standardisation, consistency and fairness in assessment.

Learning Outcome

A statement of what a learner can be expected to know, understand or do as a result of a process of learning.

Maladministration

This is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre of a learner not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications and as set out in the relevant legislation.

Malpractice

This refers to any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates.

Moderation

Moderation is a particular form of Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny through which the marking of assessments by centres is monitored to make sure it meets required standards and through which adjustments to a centre's marking are made. This will ensure that results are based on the required standards. Moderation is based on an agreed sample of learner work and associated documentation and takes place before final results are issued under Ofqual's Condition H6.1.

Portfolio of Evidence

A collection of learner work from sample assignments, tasks, tests or examinations, which is compiled to provide evidence to show that the learner has met the standards for a qualification.

Qualification

This is a record of achievement that is awarded to a learner after they have undertaken a course of study and have been assessed against learning outcomes and a specified set of criteria.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is the process undertaken by an individual or group to ensure quality standards are met in the planning, delivery and assessment of qualifications.

Reasonable Adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Recognition of Prior Learning

A method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they 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.

RQF Level

This is an indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of a qualification on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF has equivalencies to other international frameworks such as the National Framework of Qualifications in Ireland.

Rules of Combination

This is a description of the credit accumulation requirements for the achievement of a named qualification.

Sampling Procedures

Procedure in which a sample of assessed learner work is chosen to quality assure the assessment decisions made. Sampling will be undertaken by an External Quality Assurer of assessed and internally verified work or by an internal verifier on assessed work.

Special Considerations

Special Consideration is an adjustment to the outcome of an assessment for a learner who was prepared for assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary injury, illness, or adverse circumstances that have arisen at or near to the time of an assessment. A special consideration does **not** mean that the assessment is easier and standards are reduced.

Standardisation

Standardisation is a process which aims to achieve accuracy and consistency in making decisions about assessment, so a learner would receive the same assessment decision, regardless of centre, assessor, Internal Quality Assurer (IQA), type of evidence produced, type of programme delivery, location or date.

Synoptic

Synoptic teaching, learning and assessment refers to the opportunities presented in each qualification to tutors and learners to enable experiences to be presented and understood in a more integrated and holistic manner.

Unit

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

Verification

Verification is a check of assessment decisions that ATHE conducts in conjunction with a set of learner results which have been submitted. Verification is only completed for centres that are performing at the highest levels and meet criteria determined by ATHE. The sample size will be lower than that used for moderation and may include learners who are part way through the learning programme.

All information provided in this handbook is correct at the time of production.
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