T Level Technical Qualification in Management and Administration

Additional guidance/FAQ (March 2023)

Employer-Set Project

There has been a number of centre queries in relation to the sample assessment materials for the Employer-Set Project (ESP), particularly in relation to guidance and expectations with regards to some of the evidence outputs. The additional information below is provided to support and clarify some of the thinking behind this assessment and provide additional guidance and clarity on requirements. This document should be used alongside the provider guidance for each ESP and the TQ Employer-Set Project Assessment process guide.

Background of the employer-set project

The Employer-Set Project is a classroom-based assessment that has been designed to best reflect a realistic workplace scenario. Each Employer-Set Project brief is validated by employers to confirm its realistic nature, and agreement of the assessment structure, e.g. task durations.

Overall presentation of work

Within each task, the evidence requirements that must be submitted for marking have been provided. Where no explicit guidance on these requirements has been provided, e.g. the research outcomes summary table in Task 1.1 or the spreadsheet used for the Project Plan-on-a-Page in Task 1.3, this has been intended to support learners to provide an unconstrained response in relation to this task – without any unintentional scaffolding.

It is understood that learners could produce these pieces of evidence in a number of different ways. This is perfectly valid and learners should be advised that the key to each task is how they are synthesising information and showing their thinking, as shown in the indicative content for each task, as opposed to exactly how this is presented.

Evidence submitted for each task will be marked against the marking bands within the marking grids. These will not be published for live assessments but have been shared for the sample for further transparency around expectations. For the sample assessment, the indicative content for each task provides detail of the specific elements that markers will be looking for in relation to each task against the marking grid. This can be further used to support providers to gain an understanding of the expectations of each task.

Use of the Internet for this assessment

A full breakdown of use of the Internet for each task can be found on page 10 of the sample centre guidance document.

Use of the Internet for this assessment has been restricted to Task 1.1. This reflects that all research and background information should be undertaken within this task. This is to support the authenticity of evidence. Internet access is permitted for all parts of the task 1.1 (i), 1.1 (ii) & 1.1 (iii). Whilst Internet access is permitted for all parts of the task, learners should be advised that the key activities in relation to 1.1 (ii) and 1.1 (iii) are in relation to the learner using their research from task 1.1 (i) to respond to the brief and determine solutions, so any actual requirement to use the Internet in these parts of the task should be minimal.

For subsequent tasks i.e. 1.2, 1.3 etc, the Internet should **not** be used. Learners should have reviewed the requirements of the brief in relation to their research in order to derive a solution in Task 1.1(iii), so for example the budget requirements from the business case should have been considered in Task 1.

Can learners use chat GPT or other artificial intelligence tools as part of Task 1.1?

No. Learners should be reminded about the purpose of this assessment is to reflect their own abilities at responding to the tasks. Use of artificial intelligence such as Chat GPT would be seen as an unacceptable form of plagiarism.

Further information on the non-permitted use of such adaptive technology will be included in Centre/provider Guidance for live assessments.

We have found the ESP assessment pack with Observation form, Authenticity Declaration and Checklist but they are PDF and have Sample across them. Please can you send us Word copies of these documents so we can complete them electronically?

All forms that require centres/providers to input/complete will be shared via the T Level Service Portal in a format that allows input. These will be shared with the live assessment materials. Further information around how to access information linked to the live assessments can be found in the TQ Employer-Set Project Assessment process guide.

Task 1.1 – Investigating the project brief

What does the research outcomes summary table look like?

See also the Overall presentation of work section above.

A table format has been proposed for collation of this evidence to support learners to structure their research and ideas in a coherent way that will support them in subsequent tasks.

As a benchmark, the table should clearly articulate the different areas that the learner has researched against the brief; evidence of how these areas have been considered through different organisations, and links to PESTLE factors.

What volume of research is required?
There is no set expectation on the volume of research that learners are required to undertake. The key expectation is that learners cover all areas outlined within the task to ensure they have a sufficient basis for determining a solution to the issue outlined in the project brief. The importance in relation to research here is the quality and relevance to the task of the research undertaken, as opposed to the overall quantity of research.

Two hours feels like insufficient time for the learner to undertake research?
Within Task 1.1, 2 hours is linked to sub-task (i) which focuses on the initial part of sourcing and collating reference material. Task 1.1, sub-task (ii) is also linked to research, it has been provided with the greatest duration (4 hours) to reflect the importance of learners using this time to consolidate their findings and apply these against the project brief.

The ESP was developed with close consideration of timings that were both realistic and achievable for learners. Task 1.1 has been provided a total duration of 8 hours, a significant proportion of the overall assessment. Employers and providers were invited to comment on the timings in the development process, and confirmed the timings set within the assessment.

How do students find and establish costings in order to successfully undertake a Cost Benefit Analysis?

The intention of this task is to ensure that the learner has considered and weighted the range of potential advantages and disadvantages in relation to their proposed solutions and their viability in relation to financial information provided in the brief.

Within the sample some financial information and financial considerations have been included in the brief, learners may also source additional information from research that may influence their considerations around costings.

It should be noted that the intention of the cost benefit analysis is broader than just financial considerations in relation to the potential solutions. See the indicative content within the marking grid:

Cost-benefit analysis - advantages and disadvantages of each proposed digital technology solution, consideration of potential risks or 'red flags' that are weighted and how these are mitigated for each technology solution – indication of potential future issues or tangible and intangible benefits of each digital technology inclusion into the charity organisation.

It should also be noted that within the live versions of the assessment, that the approach learners will be asked to use to weigh up the potential advantages and disadvantages of their proposed solutions may differ, as it will depend on the focus of each brief.

The focus in mark banding is around the use of the correct methodology, and accuracy of calculation based on their findings. Rather than specific accuracy of the figures sourced.

Task 1.2 – Project Initiation Document

What if learners work in an area where PIDs are not commonly used?

The Project Initiation Document (PID) has been explicitly referenced within the management and administration core of the qualification specification (6.5), as well as within the guidance for the assessment (p31), so understanding of and ability to use a PID is an expectation of the delivery of the content of this qualification.

A standardised template has been provided for the PID to support learners to complete this with consideration of all key aspects. As shown in the Indicative content for this task – the importance of the PID evidence is the detail that the candidate provides within this and within each of the areas, and how the learner takes a concept/solution and articulates this into the initial stages of a project.

An indicative example of a PID template that will be used for live assessments has been provided as part of the exemplar materials for this qualification. This should be used by centres to support understanding of and how to use and complete such a document.

Note, for the live assessments, the PID template may show some minor variation depending on how the information is best aligned to support a response to the live assessment brief.

In industry terms, 3.5 hours seems limited time for completion of a PID?

The expectation as this is a classroom-based task, is that the learner is providing a relatively high-level overview of how their project will be conducted, in terms of its scope, aims, resources and risk mitigations. The PID is assessing that a learner can use project scoping and planning skills to develop a concept or idea.

The task was provided with a duration of 3.5 hours through validation with providers and employers. The duration set also takes into account that a degree of the 'thinking' in relation to the PID will start to be developed during Task 1(iii), and this thinking should flow into the development of the PID itself.

Is there further guidance in relation to spacing in the PID and expectations on learner responses?

Learners should note that the template is a baseline for completion of the PID, with free text fields. Learners are permitted to provide as much detail as they feel is appropriate, which is why, the template has been provided in Word, and no set fields have been provided. Where sections include tables, learners are permitted to add additional space and/or rows to these as they sit fit to support their solution. Guidance will be provided in the centre and candidate guidance to this effect.

Can learners hand write the PID?

Learners can hand write, providing the centre can scan in so that all writing is fully legible to be reviewed by City & Guilds for marking, and is in a suitable file format, as outlined in the TQ Employer-Set Project Assessment process guide. If responses are handwritten, the length of the boxes may be an issue, as they will not expand as they would with an electronic copy. Centres may need to increase the size before printing or say they can use extra paper if they need extra space. If extra paper is used this must be clearly referenced to link to the PID when uploading evidence. How much boxes are increased by may also depend on the size of candidates handwriting.

Task 1.3 Project Planning

What does the plan-on-a-page look like? Is there a Gantt chart requirement?
For the sample assessment, this was determined to be in a spreadsheet format as a cohesive way of demonstrating the overall project plan. A 'plan-on-a-page' methodology has been used to reflect that it is looking to be a concise overview, with clear and overarching detail of the areas outlined in the task instruction. A learner may use a Gantt chart if they choose to do so, depending on the information they want to present. It is however not a requirement of the task as outlined by the indicative content for this task in the marking scheme.

There are variances between digital learning resources and the sample assessment with regards the plan-on-a-page.
The DLR resources depict 8 key steps in relation to the development of a project on a page, whereas the brief highlights 7 key areas. The resources have been developed to try and exemplify how a learner may develop a plan on a page and expand their response, this may

not always align word-by-word with the task instructions with an assessment. The key is that the learner covers the areas outlined in the instructions of the task - how they do this and structure their response may differ.

Why is the plan-on-a-page to be completed on a spreadsheet? Does this relate to building/using a Gantt Chart?

See above. The use of a spreadsheet format in the sample has been required to support learners to tabulate or align information in a clear and concise format. It also provides a standardised approach. The additional requirement of the summary statement has been included to ensure that the learner has clearly outlined the thinking behind the decisions that they have come to as part of their planning.

Are learners permitted to use MS Project to create information (for example a Gantt chart) that can be included in their Task 1.3 plan-on-a-page spreadsheet?

It is permitted that learners can use MS Project. In the sample 1.3 specifies the evidence should be submitted in spreadsheet format, so in this situation learners could paste extracts from MS project into their spreadsheet, if that is how the learner thinks it would be captured the best.

Where a task does not specify a specific format, MS project outputs can be PDF'd to uploaded. Any separate PDF files should be clearly referenced, as outlined in the TQ Employer-Set Project Assessment process guide.

For task 1.4 What do learners do, if they wish to use some pictures / images available online / internet for their presentation, when under assessment conditions it states the internet is not permitted?

Internet access is not permitted for task 1.4, therefore learners are not able to access the internet for images and so would have to rely on stock images for this.

The focus of the marking bands for this task are more around the content; how it is presented, the use of technology and communication so there is scope to achieve the full range of marks without the need for access to the Internet for images.

Discrepancies in sample ESP

Note the consistency errors in relation to task timings,

Task 1.4 – this should indicate 30 minutes for the task, with 20 minutes allocated for the presentation and 10 minutes for questioning

Task 2.1 – this should indicate that the initial 30 minutes of the 1 hour for the group discussion is for learners to prepare individually.

These consistency errors will be correct in the live assessment material.