A photograph of three people sitting at a table in a library or study area. A woman with long dark hair and bangs, wearing a pink top, is in the foreground, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Behind her, two men are looking down at papers on the table. The background shows bookshelves filled with books.

**A GUIDE TO ASSESSING CITY &
GUILDS QUALIFICATIONS IN HEALTH,
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE AND THE
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S
WORKFORCE**

1 Introduction

The aim of this guide is to provide clarity, support and guidance for anyone who has a responsibility for contributing to the delivery or assessment of City & Guilds QCF qualifications in **Health, Health and Social Care (HSC) and the Children and Young People's Workforce (CYPW)**

It should be used in conjunction with the qualification specifications/handbooks and is designed to promote best practice in the assessment of skills, knowledge and competence where assessment takes place in a range of environments and work based learning settings.

2 About the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF)

The QCF is a vocational qualification framework in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for recognising competence and knowledge achievement through the award of credit for units within qualifications or for qualifications as a whole.

2.1 Qualification Structure

Qualifications on the QCF are made up of **'units of assessment'**. These units can be:

- Knowledge based (cover knowledge and understanding required for carrying out a particular function or activity)
- Skills based (cover skills required for carrying out a particular function or activity)
- Competence based (cover both the knowledge and skills required for carrying out a particular function or activity)

Qualifications on the QCF can be made up of one of the above types of units, or a combination of types. They can be delivered or assessed as standalone qualifications or they may form part of an Apprenticeship framework.

2.2 Unit Structure

Units of assessment in the QCF are broken down into learning outcomes and assessment criteria all of which will have to be assessed with the learner.

Learning outcomes covering skills and performance generally begin with 'be able to'. The associated assessment criteria for these will begin with an active verb such as 'demonstrate', 'provide' or 'support'.

Learning outcomes covering knowledge and understanding on the other hand tend to begin with 'understand' or 'know'; consistent with this, assessment criteria associated with this type of outcome begin with verbs requiring the demonstration of knowledge, such as: 'list, explain or describe'.

The example unit shown in figure 1 below shows learning outcomes relating to knowledge and understanding (learning outcome 1) and performance / skill (learning outcome 2)

Figure 1: Example of a competence-based QCF unit in the Health and Social Care Diploma (4222)

Unit 4222 – 262 (SS OP 2.4)	
Title	Contribute to supporting individuals in the use of assistive technology
Unit Accreditation Ref	H/601/3451
Level	2
Credit Value	3
Learning Outcomes <i>The Learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>
1 Understand the range and purpose of assistive technology available to support individuals	1.1 Define the term assistive technology 1.2 List a sample of assistive technology aids 1.3 Explain the functions of the sample of assistive technology aids selected 1.4 Describe how the sample of assistive technology aids selected can be utilised to promote participation access and inclusion
2 Be able to contribute to the use of selected assistive technology	2.1 Support an individual to access information about assistive technology 2.2 Support an individual to use assistive technology following instructions and / or agreed ways of working 2.3 Provide feedback on the effectiveness of assistive technology.

2.3 QCF Level Descriptors

QCF Level Descriptors (Entry Level to Level 8) were introduced by Ofqual in 2008 (Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework/August 2008). These outline the required expectations/learning outcomes and achievement in respect of; knowledge and understanding, application and action and autonomy and accountability as applied to each level of the QCF. These provide a helpful backdrop to understanding the generic requirements and expectations of learning outcomes at all levels of learning.

They do not however concern themselves with the processes of learning or the methods of assessment allowed within the specific qualifications themselves. The latter is well documented within the specific qualification handbooks and should be referred to at all times when qualifications are being delivered and assessed with learners.

The QCF Level Descriptors are available either via your Qualification Consultant, National Portfolio Adviser or from Ofqual.

2.4 Qualification Purpose

Qualifications in the QCF must be designed to meet a specific purpose. There are five main purposes and these are defined by the Regulatory Bodies. The purposes are:

- a) Qualifications to recognise personal growth and engagement in learning.
- b) Qualifications to prepare for further learning or training
- c) Qualifications to prepare for employment
- d) Qualifications to confirm occupational competence and / or license to practice
- e) Qualifications for updating and continuing professional development

2.5 How does this apply to Health, HSC and CYPW qualifications?

A range of vocational qualifications exist in the QCF for Health, HSC and the CYPW. These qualifications may be made up of units which are: knowledge based, skills based or competence based, as described in Section 2.1.

An individual qualification will also have a level as described in Section 2.3 and will have a specific qualification purpose as outlined in Section 2.4. At the current time, there are some cases where a unit exists in qualifications with more than one purpose. This is significant

because assessment methods will vary according to the purpose of the qualification. Selected assessment methods must be fit for purpose and ensure that learners can do what the qualification certifies they can do.

This is one of the reasons why it is essential to follow the Qualification Handbook for the specific qualification that is being delivered/assessed. The Qualification Handbook will provide guidance to make sure that the right type of assessment is used with learners and that these assessments are conducted in conditions which are appropriate to the qualification.

3 The Assessment of Competence-Based Qualifications

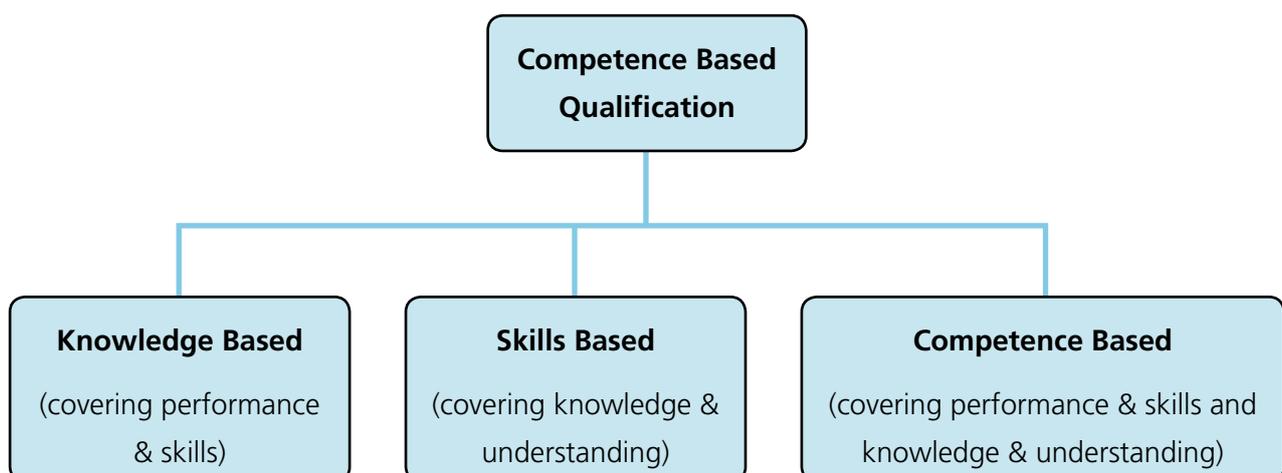
Competence based qualifications have been designed to attest to competence in the workplace. Consequently, they are best assessed in the workplace / working environment under real work conditions as the learner undertakes their normal work role.

Evidence collected and assessed must reflect current practice, policies and procedures of the workplace as informed by current legislation, and relevant service standards and codes of practice for the respective employment sector.



3.1 Knowledge based qualifications and knowledge only units in competence based qualifications

As explained in section 2, competence based qualifications require the assessment of skills and knowledge, with the knowledge component forming part of competence based units, and / or existing as knowledge based units in their own right.



Learners may choose to complete knowledge only qualifications, free standing knowledge only units, or knowledge units which exist as part of a competence based qualification.

Depending on a centre's delivery and assessment approach, knowledge based components can be assessed either in or away from the working environment e.g. in a work based training centre or classroom based college environment.

Where units are designed purely to assess a learner's knowledge and understanding, training providers have a range of methods available to them to assess their learners. These may include:

- City & Guilds externally set and internally verified assessments/assignments,
- professional discussion,
- centre devised or externally produced workbooks,
- or recorded oral questioning and answers.

These assessment methods are outlined later in this guide. A robust initial assessment with a learner at the start should determine the most appropriate assessment method or combination of assessment methods for them and their chosen qualification.

4 Assessment Methods and the Generation of Evidence

4.1 Direct Observation of Performance

This is where the assessor will observe the learner carrying out their everyday work activities in a working environment and should be the main source of evidence for competence based learning outcomes.

Performance observed is formally recorded by the assessor and used as part of the overall assessment for the competency based unit and/or qualification. The observation of performance could relate to a specific activity or provide a more holistic view of the learner's performance as it covers a range of work responsibilities.

It should be noted that performance observation may contribute to collecting evidence to demonstrate knowledge as well. In all cases evidence collected should be recorded against specific learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria within the qualification units.

Assessors should plan the observation processes carefully and ensure those involved fully understand their purpose and requirements and how this contributes to the overall assessment of a learner's performance in their working practice.

Additional evidence sources:

In order to ensure that an accurate assessment of a learner's ability is obtained, there is often a need to support work-based observation with one or more of the other types of assessment outlined below.

This may be required to:

- ensure full coverage of the work / functions (described by the assessment criteria)
- and/or to meet the assessment needs of individual learners

Direct Observation of Performance



This should be the main source of evidence for competence based learning outcomes. In certain circumstances evidence which contributes to the assessment of knowledge can also be obtained.

- and/ or to meet the requirements of different units within the same qualification (e.g. knowledge vs. skills-based units, or units where simulation is permitted)

4.2 Learners Work Products

Work products can be any relevant products of a learners own work, or products to which they have made a significant contribution. These products may provide evidence to cover or count towards the assessment of skill, knowledge or competence. For example, in the HSC sector a learner's contribution towards care reports or the development of work place policies or procedures could provide evidence of their competence.

Work Products

Products of work can be anything which is produced as a result of a work activity. Products of work are most useful for providing evidence of performance but as for observation, in certain circumstances they may make some contribution to the assessment of knowledge.



Where products are produced as a result of group effort, particular care must be taken to ensure that assessment ensures focus on the contribution of the learner being assessed and not on the outcome of the group as a whole.

Of course work products and related content must relate to the assessment criteria being assessed in a qualification/unit and would normally be discussed with the learner's to check the authenticity of the product being used and their application and relevance to the learners practice.

4.3 Professional Discussion / Discussion with the Learner

Professional discussion **(also now more generically known as 'discussion with the learner')** should be in the form of a planned and structured review of the learners practice. The focus should be on collecting evidence and the outcomes must be captured by means of audio/visual or written records. Recorded outcomes

Discussion with the learner

This type of discussion can be used to probe learners and is particularly useful where assessors want to investigate underpinning knowledge and understanding.



are particularly useful as evidence that learners can evaluate their knowledge and practice, both across a qualification or in relation to the content of specific units within a qualification, according to requirements.

The content of professional discussion should be planned in advance in order that the learner has time to prepare and is fully aware of the areas to be covered. They can refer to relevant notes, work products etc to support their discussions with the assessor. The assessor's role is to check a learner's knowledge and understanding in respect of specific aspects of practice or related knowledge that will need to be assessed.

The language and terminology used in the professional discussion should be appropriate to the level of the learner and their assessment and answers should be referenced against assessment criteria within the qualification.

4.4 Expert Witnesses (EW) Testimony

An EW testimony is a written account of the learner's performance based on the qualification/unit requirements.

For qualifications in Health, HSC and the CYPW, the EW could also be asked to observe a learner's practice. This provision is made to cover circumstances where it is not possible for the assessor to undertake an observation or due to confidentiality, privacy, or access issues with the learner's service user group.

In such situations the final assessment decision will still however rest with the learner's assessor who will evaluate observations recorded by an EW alongside any other evidence relevant to the assessment.

EWs must meet the requirements to fulfil this role as stipulated by the relevant Sector Skills Council - (Skills for Care & Development, Skills for Health). Confirmed/verified by the training provider, an EW **must** meet the following criteria:

- Have a working knowledge of the QCF units on which their expertise is based.
- Be occupationally competent in their area of expertise.
- **EITHER** hold any qualification in assessment of workplace performance **OR** have a professional work role which involves evaluating the everyday practice of staff.

Expert Witness Testimony

This assessment method is most appropriate for the assessment of performance, although may contribute to providing evidence of underpinning knowledge.

It is a form of observation, but differs from direct observation in that performance is observed by an appropriately qualified expert rather than the assessor responsible for the final assessment decision.



4.5 Reflective Accounts (RA)

A RA can be used to help contribute to the assessment of competence and can help in the collection of evidence for knowledge and understanding.

The term is used to describe an individual's description and analysis of their thoughts and actions when carrying out particular tasks or handling specific situations.

An effective RA may also describe the reasons for carrying out work in a particular way and also provide evidence that learners can evaluate their knowledge and practice across the activities embedded in their qualification.

Any reflection should meet the relevant assessment criteria within the qualification.

Reflective Accounts

Reflective accounts can support the assessment of competence and contribute to knowledge and understanding by providing an insight to a learner's thoughts and considerations associated to behaviour.

They are particularly useful for demonstrating a constructive approach to learning. Factors such as authenticity mean that this assessment method will usually be insufficient when used on its own.



4.6 Questioning

Questions can be asked by assessors and answered by learners to supplement evidence generated through observations of practice and/or any other evidence type used in the assessment process.

Assessors may also be able to infer some knowledge and understanding from observing a learner's work practice and

may ask questions to confirm understanding and/or cover any outstanding areas that need to be assessed as part of a unit or qualification.

Questions may be asked orally or in writing but, in both cases, a record must be kept of the questions and responses. Questions do not need to be pre-planned and can be helpfully used to elicit additional information from the learner in order to more fully meet evidence requirements or to gain clarification and/or more in-depth evidence of their knowledge or practice.

Questions are useful for confirming competence and can play an effective role in investigating knowledge and understanding



4.7 Witness Testimonies (WT)

These should be from people who are in a position to provide written or technically recorded evidence of a learner's competence.

Where testimony is sought from individuals who are service users or their relatives/friends, care should be taken to ensure the purpose of the testimony is understood by them if asked to provide.

Witness Testimonies can be used to contribute to performance evidence. They must however be carefully obtained to be of value to the assessment process.



WT are not the same as 'letters of support' or 'letters of appreciation' and can provide complimentary evidence in relation to a learner's practice. To be of value to the assessment process they need to relate directly to the assessment criteria being assessed.

4.8 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a form of assessment which makes use of evidence of learner's previous non certificated achievements to demonstrate competence or achievement within a unit or qualification. Through the RPL process, evidence of a learner's achievement (learning) is assessed against the learning outcomes of a unit. The RPL process is relevant where a learner has evidence of having previously learnt something but has never received formal recognition for it through a qualification or other form of certification. Evidence can draw on any aspect of their prior experience including: domestic/family life, education and training, work, community or voluntary activities.

RPL is one of many assessment methods appropriate to assessing work based learning. Evidence obtained through RPL must therefore meet the same rigorous quality criteria that other assessment methods must conform to.

Further information and policy guidance on RPL is available directly from your Qualification Consultant, National Portfolio Adviser or via the City & Guilds main website.

4.9 Projects

Learners can be given work-related projects to help provide evidence of their skills, knowledge and competence. In some instances, learners may have already completed a relevant project in their workplace or training environment which can be mapped to the relevant qualification/unit standards and therefore provide evidence of competence and/or knowledge. This could form part of a learner's assessed RPL evidence.

The projects relevance is determined by the assessor in discussion with the learner. In some cases it may require another assessment method, for example further professional discussion, to be sure of a learner's understanding and application to practice.

Projects are appropriate assessment methods for generating evidence in



support of competence and / or knowledge. Like other assessment methods the relevance of the project activity and the evidence generated must be carefully examined against assessment criteria.

4.10 City & Guilds Summative Assessment/Assignment Materials

City & Guilds has produced a range of summative assessment /assignments to support the assessment of knowledge units within competence based or knowledge only Health, HSC and CYPW qualifications. These assessments must be taken according to the specifications stated in the qualification handbook. Over the course of time other summative materials may also be developed.

In some instances use of existing summative assignments may be mandatory for a specific qualification, but in the majority of cases they are 'suggested' as an additional method of assessment for consideration with learners. Qualification handbooks should be checked carefully to see whether C&G mandatory assessments / assignments are required.

Assignments are for knowledge only units and allow a learners knowledge to be assessed through a written piece of work carrying various tasks mapped against assessment criteria.

City & Guilds has produced overarching 'Assessor Guidance' for training providers which should be referred to when these assessments/ assignments are selected as a chosen assessment method. This guidance can be found on the relevant qualification webpage.

City & Guilds 'Assessor Guidance' also applies to the use and administration of summative assessments / assignments produced independently by training providers.

City & Guilds summative assessment material provide a valid, standardised and cost-effective method



for assessing work-based knowledge and understanding. Saving time and resources and promoting consistency, this is an excellent option for those who want to be sure that their assessments are hitting the mark.

4.11 Case Studies

Case studies must be based on real work practice i.e. genuine work experience. They also need to be authenticated by an assessor or expert witness to be eligible for use as evidence of competent performance.

For the purposes of work-based assessment, theoretical or simulated case studies do not provide evidence

of skills, or competence, although they may be admissible as evidence of knowledge and understanding. This is because they are unlikely to have been carried out under real work pressure or under genuine working conditions and therefore do not provide evidence of performance in the work context.

For some qualifications/units (e.g. Emergency First Aid Skills), simulated case study/activities provide the most valid form of evidence available as it can be difficult for assessors to be available to make an assessment during a genuine incident. In these types of cases simulation will be confirmed in the qualification assessment strategy.

NB – Confidential records must not be included in learner's portfolios but must be referred to in the assessment records.

Case studies are mostly useful for supporting the assessment of knowledge



4.12 Workbooks

Training providers can produce their own workbooks internally or purchase them externally where they are available. Workbooks are designed to support the assessment of knowledge for a specific qualification.

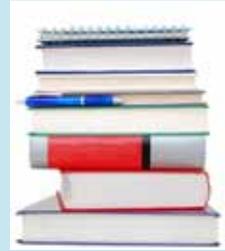
Questions, case studies or scenarios therein should directly relate to the units learning outcomes and assessment criteria.



Where workbooks are used the authenticity of the learner's work and related understanding should be robustly checked by assessors/trainers.

The relevance of workbooks as evidence of knowledge and understanding must also be firmly ascertained. In many instances, depending on the qualification or assessment criteria the assessment of knowledge may only be effectively carried out in controlled conditions. In these instances workbooks may be useful for formative assessment, but not so as summative evidence. Care should therefore be taken to ensure workbooks are used appropriately.

Workbooks are useful for formative assessment / learning and may provide evidence that contributes to the assessment of knowledge and understanding.



Wherever workbooks are used to contribute to summative assessment care should be taken to ensure this method of assessment is appropriate for the assessment criteria and relates to the type and quality of evidence required.

4.13 Examinations / Tests

Some qualifications require learner's to take an exam or test in order to ascertain the level of knowledge and understanding they have achieved. This may be either on-line or paper based, although in certain circumstances other relevant adaptations can be made to meet the needs of learners with specific needs / disabilities.

Training providers must ensure they are familiar with all examinations as they apply to specific qualifications and their related completion and administration requirements.

Tests can take a variety of forms and will differ in the rigour and degree to which they cover the assessment area. For example tests can be closed book or open book.

Exams and tests are appropriate to assessing knowledge. A variety of exam and test types exist to suite a wide range of circumstances.



5 Methods of Recording Learner Evidence

Evidence can be recorded either via a paper or electronic portfolio. All evidence will have been recorded either by the learner or the assessor or both. Clear evidence of the assessment and verification judgements made by the assessor and internal quality assurer must be recorded.

6 Summary

- a) The primary form of assessment in competence based Health, Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Workforce qualifications is the assessment of work practice in a learner's real work environment by an occupationally competent/knowledgeable assessor.
- b) In some cases the same unit which exists in a competence based qualification may also exist in a different type of qualification which has another purpose. In these cases, in order to assure quality, City & Guilds may have chosen to specify the assessment method which should be used. In order to ensure appropriate assessment methods are used and to be certain that assessments are aligned to qualification purpose, Centres should take care to adhere to the guidance in the qualification handbook.
- c) Competence based assessment must include direct observation as the main source of evidence. This is consistent with long established principles of assessment which identify observation as the most valid method of assessing work based competence.
- d) For qualifications in Health, HSC and the CYPW, simulation may only be used as an assessment method for competence based assessment criteria where this is specified in the assessment requirements of the unit or in the wider qualification strategy.
- e) For assessment of knowledge there are a range of methods available for training providers to consider with regards to meeting individual assessment needs. This is to ensure that:
 - assessment arrangements are flexible enough to meet the needs of learners and a the variety of work circumstances that exist in the industry
 - sufficient evidence can be collected to cover all assessment criteria
- f) It is acknowledged that learner's learn in a variety of different ways and have different learning styles. It is important then that the most appropriate assessment methods are agreed with learners and that this agreement forms the basis of their assessment plan for the progression of their learning and achievement of their qualification.