A photograph of three people sitting at a table in a library or study area. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair and bangs, wearing a pink top, looks 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, Early
Years and 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 qualifications in Health, Health and Social Care (HSC), Early Years (EY) 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 skills where assessment takes place in a range of environments including work-based learning settings.

2 The Assessment of Competence-Based Qualifications

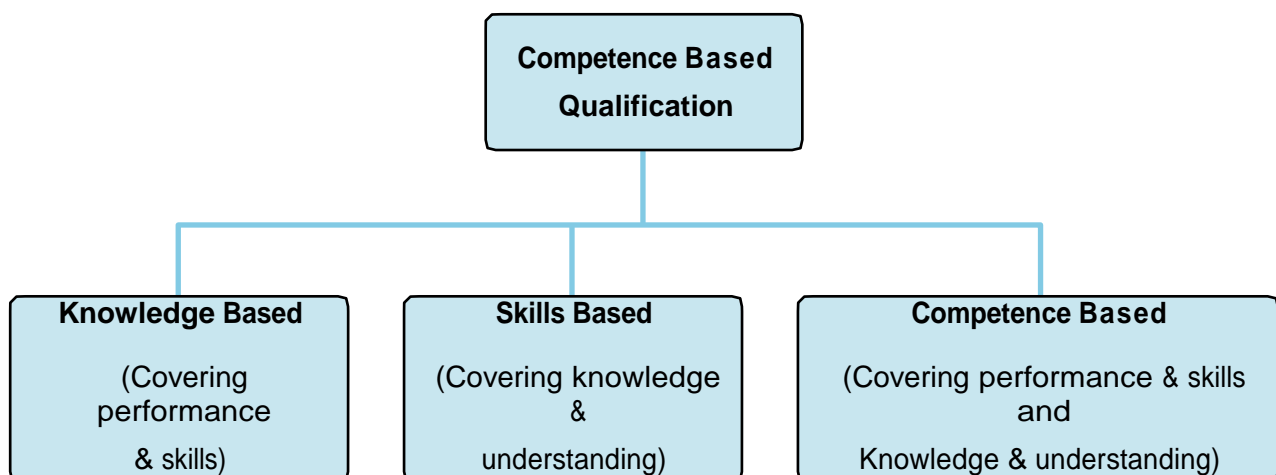
Competence based qualifications have been designed to attest to competence in the workplace. Consequently, they are best assessed in the workplace / working environment under real work conditions as the learner undertakes their normal work role.

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.



2.1 Knowledge based qualifications and knowledge only units in competence-based qualifications

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 also 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 in line with their chosen qualification.

3 Assessment Methods and the Generation of Evidence

3.1 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
- 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 might be permitted)

3.2 Learners Work Products

Work products can be any relevant products of a learner's 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 qualification/ unit being assessed and would normally be discussed with the learners to check the authenticity of the product being used and their application and relevance to the learner's practice.

3.3 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 learner's practice. The focus should be on collecting evidence and the outcomes must be captured by means of audio/visual or written records.

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.



Recorded outcomes 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 their 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 the learning outcomes/assessment criteria within the qualification.

3.4 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 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.

3.5 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.



3.6 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



3.7 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.

3.8 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 External Qualification Consultant, National Technical Advisor or via the City & Guild main website.

3.9 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.

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.

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.

3.10 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 Early Years/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 learner's 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.

3.11 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.

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



3.12 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.

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 and relates to the type and quality of evidence required.



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

The relevance of workbooks as evidence of knowledge and understanding must also be firmly ascertained. In many instances, depending on the qualification 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.

3.13 Examinations / Tests

Some qualifications require learners 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.

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



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 rigor and degree to which they cover the assessment area. For example, tests can be closed book or open book.

4 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.

5 Summary

- a) The primary form of assessment in competence-based Health, Health and Social Care, Early Years 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 and make sure they are working from the handbook that is most current.
- 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, EY 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 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 learners 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.