Change lives through learning

Open Awards Level 3 Certificate and Diploma in

Youth Work Practice (England)(RQF)

Certificate: 603/6034/3
Diploma: 603/6035/5

Qualification Guide

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Version Control	
Jan 2022	Updated version with information added to pages 4 and 5 regarding Open Awards' End-point Assessment for the Level 3 Youth Support Worker (ST0906). A new feature image has also been included on the front page.
Nov 2025	Branding update only.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Level 3 Certificate in Youth Work Practice (England) (RQF) Open Awards Level 3 Diploma in Youth Work Practice (England) (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	Certificate - 603/6034/3 Diploma - 603/6035/5
Sector	13.1 Teaching and Lecturing
Level	Three
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2028

Purpose	C – Prepare for employment
Sub-Purpose	C2 – Prepare for employment in a specific occupational area

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Certificate	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	270
Guided Learning (hours)	139
Diploma	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	370
Guided Learning (hours)	173

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre -16	x
16 – 18	✓
18+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	None

Any Specified Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for these qualifications.

Providers should undertake initial assessment activities with learners to ensure this is an appropriate level of qualification to undertake.

This qualification is available to learners aged 16 years or over.

Recommended Assessment Method Summary

Learners will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence set and marked by the education Provider and externally quality assured by Open Awards.

Candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the assessment criteria and that it is their own work.

Types of evidence could include:

- Observation of Performance
- Questioning (written or oral)
- Practical Activities
- Photographs or Videos
- Personal Statements
- Project Work
- Witness Testimonies
- Group Discussion
- Recognition of Prior Learning

Assessment practices must reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Open Awards.

For those studying the Level 3 Certificate, there is a requirement that across the programme, learners will undertake a minimum of 60 hours of fieldwork placement in a youth work environment (paid or unpaid) throughout their learning journey.

For the Level 3 Diploma, this increases to 80 hours of fieldwork placement in a youth work environment (paid or unpaid) throughout their learning journey.

Apprenticeship – Level 3 Youth Support Worker (ST0906)

The Level 3 Diploma in Youth Work Practice, designed in partnership with the NYA and endorsed by the Joint National Council, is a mandatory qualification within the Level 3 Youth Support Worker Apprenticeship Standard. The achievement of this qualification forms part of the evidence required for an apprentice at gateway and before they commence their end-point assessment.

Other gateway requirements are:

- Confirmation from the employer, training provider and apprentice that the apprentice is working at or above the occupational standard
- Achievement of English and Mathematics at Level 2
- Completed portfolio of evidence to underpin the professional discussion

More information about the apprenticeship standard, including the assessment plan, can be found on the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website here.

Open Awards is an End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) for this apprenticeship standard. It is not a requirement to use the same awarding body and EPAO for both the qualification and end-point assessment.

Employers can choose which EPAO they want to use from those listed on the Register of EPAOs here.

If you choose to use Open Awards for both the mandatory qualification and the end-point assessment for this apprenticeship standard, apprentices must be registered for both. Please note, there are separate registration fees for both the qualification and end-point assessment.

More information about the end-point assessment for the Level 3 Youth Support Worker (ST0906) offered by Open Awards can be found here.

If you would like to talk to a member of the team about either the delivery of the qualification or the end-point assessment, please contact us on 0151 494 2072 or enquiries@openawards.org.uk

Qualification Structure

Rules of Combination

Certificate	
Credit Value of the Qualification:	27
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	16
Mandatory Units A:	25
Optional Units B:	A minimum of 2 credits

Diploma	
Credit Value of the Qualification:	37
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	26
Mandatory Units A:	25
Optional Units B:	A minimum of 12 credits

Qualification Units

Mandatory Units A (all units must be achieved to be awarded the qualification)

Unit Reference Number	Unit Name	Credits	Level
Y/618/1605	Engaging and Communicating with Young People	2	Level Two
H/618/1865	Group Work within a Youth Work Setting	4	Level Three
M/618/1870	Reflective Practice in a Youth Work Setting	2	Level Three
M/618/1609	Safeguarding in a Youth Work Setting	3	Level Two
T/618/1613	Theory of Youth Work	4	Level Two
F/618/1887	Work-based Practice in Youth Work	6	Level Three

L/618/1889	Working with Behaviour that Challenges in a Youth Work Setting	2	Level Three
H/618/1624	Young People's Development	2	Level Two

Optional Units B

Unit Reference Number	Unit Name	Credits	Level
T/618/1854	Anti-Discriminatory Practice in Youth Work	3	Level Three
A/618/1855	Detached and Outreach Youth Work	6	Level Three
J/618/1857	Effective Outcomes-Based Youth Work	3	Level Three
J/618/1860	Exploring Values, Beliefs and Spiritual Development within a Youth Work Setting	3	Level Three
L/618/1861	Facilitate the Learning and Development of Young People through Mentoring	3	Level Three
R/618/1862	Facilitating Youth Trips and Residentials	4	Level Three
D/618/6403	Loneliness and Isolation for Young People – Advanced Youth Work Approaches	4	Level Three
K/618/1866	Managing a Budget within a Youth Setting	2	Level Three
M/618/1867	Managing Performance in a Youth Work Setting	3	Level Three
T/618/1868	Principles of Supporting Young People with Regard to Relationships and Sexual Health	2	Level Three
A/618/1869	Referrals and Signposting in Youth Work Settings	2	Level Three
A/618/1872	Social Action	3	Level Three
F/618/1873	Supervision in the Youth Work Context	3	Level Three
J/618/1874	Support Young People to Achieve their Learning Potential	3	Level Three
L/618/1875	Support Young People who are Looked After or Leaving Care	3	Level Three
R/618/1876	Support Young People who are not in Employment, Education or Training or that have been Excluded from School	2	Level Three
Y/618/1877	Support Young People who are Refugees or Seeking Asylum	3	Level Three

Unit Reference Number	Unit Name	Credits	Level
D/618/1878	Support Young People's Transition to Independence	2	Level Three
H/618/1879	Supporting Young People with Disabilities and/or Diverse Learning Needs within a Youth Work Setting	3	Level Three
D/618/1881	Trauma Informed Approaches to Youth Work	4	Level Three
H/618/1882	Understand how to Manage Staff in a Youth Work Setting	3	Level Three
K/618/1883	Understand how Youth Work can Support Young People who are Experiencing Poverty	3	Level Three
M/618/1884	Understand how Youth Work can Support Young People who Misuse Substances	3	Level Three
T/618/1885	Understand how Youth Work can Support Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing	2	Level Three
A/618/1886	Understand how Youth Work Supports Young People who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (LGBTQ+)	2	Level Three
J/618/1888	Work with Young People Involved in or Impacted by Youth Violence, Criminal Activities and Exploitation	3	Level Three
J/618/1891	Young People's Participation in Youth Work	2	Level Three
K/618/1625	Youth Work in Digital Spaces and Places	2	Level Two

For further support when delivering this qualification please see the Guidance Document.

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

To deliver this qualification you must be a recognised Open Awards Provider. For more information, head to our website or contact the team on 0151 494 2072.

How to Deliver

To request to deliver this qualification, please login to the Portal and then click on 'Tracking' and 'Initiate a Workflow'. You will then need to select 'Apply to Deliver Regulated Qualification(s)'.

For support with this process, please see the following document in the Portal 'Provider Portal Guidance – Qualification Approval' or contact the team on customerservices@openawards.org.uk or 0151 494 2072.

Registering Learners

Once you are ready to deliver this qualification, you will need to register your learners in line with the timescales below:

Short courses (15 weeks or less) within 25 working days of the course start date.
Long courses (over 15 weeks) within 60 working days of the course start date.

You will need to register your learners via the Portal.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must be done so in accordance with Ofqual regulatory guidelines, in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes and in line with the National Youth Agency Assessment Strategy for Awards, Certificates and Diplomas in Youth Work Practice and Youth Work Practice (England).

Template forms and guidance documents are available via the Open Awards portal.

Provider Staff Requirements

It is expected that Providers will have occupationally competent staff with relevant subject knowledge and/or sector experience for their role in the delivery of the units/qualifications being offered.

Due to the specialist nature of this qualification, there are specific requirements for staff involved in the delivery, assessment and verification of learning.

Trainers must:

- for the delivery of Theory of Youth Work and Work Based Practice units, be a JNC Professionally Qualified Youth Work practitioner, having undertaken a recognised professional qualification in youth work as identified by NYA[1]
- for the delivery of Youth Work Theory and Work Based Practice units, have a minimum of three years' practice experience;
- for the delivery of other mandatory units, as a minimum hold a Level 3 Youth Support Worker (JNC) qualification with a minimum of three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of youth work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector and/or have broader relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years;
- the remaining units should be delivered by experienced practitioners with expertise in the subject area;
- have a sound understanding of National Occupational Standards for Youth Work; • have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual;
- be able to evidence continued professional development, including fieldwork [2]activities, within the last 3 years.

Assessors must:

- for the assessment of Theory of Youth Work and Work Based Practice units, hold a recognised Youth Work (JNC) professional qualification with a minimum of three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of youth work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector, and have relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years[3]
- for qualification assessment excluding assessment of Theory of Youth Work and Work Based Practice units, hold a Level 3 Youth Support Worker (JNC) qualification with a minimum of three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of youth work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector and/or have broader relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years;
- have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work;
- have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual;
- hold or be working towards a recognised assessor qualification ** ^^ (i.e. D32/33, A1);

[1] A current list of all recognised JNC qualifications in England is on the NYA website www.nya.org.uk
[2] This could include, for example, youth work practice, supervision of practitioners or training delivery.
[3] This could include, for example, youth work practice, supervision of practitioners or training delivery.

- be committed to, and able to evidence, further training and development.

*** Individuals that do not hold a recognised qualification will be expected to obtain one within 24 months of approval.*

^^ *Individuals that do not hold a recognised qualification must have their assessment/moderation decisions countersigned by a qualified member of staff*

Assessment

Open Awards units and qualifications have been designed around the principle that the learner will build evidence towards the achievement of the assessment criteria over a period of time. Each learner is required to build a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that all the assessment criteria associated with each unit has been met.

Tutors and assessors need to ensure that all evidence presented in a portfolio is:

Valid: it should clearly demonstrate the knowledge or skills that are set out in the assessment criteria. It should also clearly be the work of the learner.

Reliable: it will in general, produce the same range of responses from learners, as long as they are used in similar circumstances and with similar groups of learners.

Inclusive: so that no individual learner is excluded from the opportunity to show their achievement because of their individual background or experience.

Assessors are required to review and assess all learner evidence and must be satisfied that learners have achieved all learning outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the unit being assessed prior to deciding the learner has completed the unit. Assessors will also ensure that the evidence produced by the learner is their own work.

Assessors retain records (e.g. Feedback Sheets, Individual Progress Record, Group Progress Record) on behalf of the Provider which are made available and used by the Provider's Internal Quality Assurer and Open Awards' Quality Assurance Team.

Training and support

Open Awards offers a variety of training and support to Providers. Our online training and support is free of charge and can be accessed on the following link ehttps://oalearn.org.uk/shop. An everlasting coupon (PLUC code) will be issued to each Provider to gain free access to these resources.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

All Providers delivering Open Awards provision must operate rigorous internal quality assurance systems. A Provider must identify how they will internally quality assure and standardise their delivery and assessment before delivering a course.

Providers must:

- hold a JNC Professional Youth Work qualification and three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of youth work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector, and/or have broader relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years;
- have recent experience (within the last three years) of internal quality assurance preferably within an occupational area with relevance to youth work;
- have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work;
- have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual;
- hold or be working towards an Internal Quality Assurance qualification (i.e. D.34, V1);
- be committed to, and able to evidence, further training and development.

External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Provider approval compliance monitoring and external quality assurance is carried out by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team / External Quality Assurers who will confirm that the Provider is assessing to standard and ensure that there are robust quality assurance systems embedded.

Please note, as this is a higher-level Open Awards qualification that requires specialist external quality assurance, AIV status does not apply to this qualification. Our EQA team will:

- hold a JNC professional youth work qualification or an aligned professional qualification (one that is related to children, young people and families, teaching or social work).
- have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for youth work.
- have recent experience of external quality assurance.
- hold or be working towards an external quality assurance qualification.

- have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual.

Please refer to the NYA/ETA Assessment Strategy document for further guidance and refer to Internal and External Quality Assurance within the Provider Handbook.

Standardisation

Providers are required to contribute to national standardisation as requested by Open Awards. Open Awards offers standardisation events that are held throughout the year. Such events will also provide an opportunity to identify and share best practice. Up to date details of training and standardisation events can be found on our website.

For further guidance on Quality Assurance and Standardisation, please refer to the Provider Handbook.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

RPL is 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 may already possess. Evidence of learning must be sufficient, reliable and valid.

It is the responsibility of the Provider to inform Open Awards at registration of any exemptions and/or equivalences for which a claim may be made. These claims will be subject to external quality assurance by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team.

For more information, please see our Recognition of Prior Learning Policy found on the Portal.

Health and Safety

Due to the practical requirements of some of the units within this qualification, Providers must ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for both the activities and individual learners to ensure learner and staff safety throughout the course. As part of this, Providers must ensure that learners and staff have access to suitable clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate.

Appendices and Links

The following documents can be viewed on the Open Awards website:

1. Provider Handbook
2. Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy
3. Equality and Diversity Policy
4. Invoicing Policy
5. Privacy Policy

Further supporting information can be found on the Open Awards Portal.

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