

Regulated Qualifications and Unit Courses

2026/2027

Provider Handbook

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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Open Awards Provider Handbook. This handbook applies to:

- Ofqual-regulated qualifications
- Qualifications Wales-regulated qualifications
- Unit courses (qualification and quality endorsed)
- Non-regulated courses

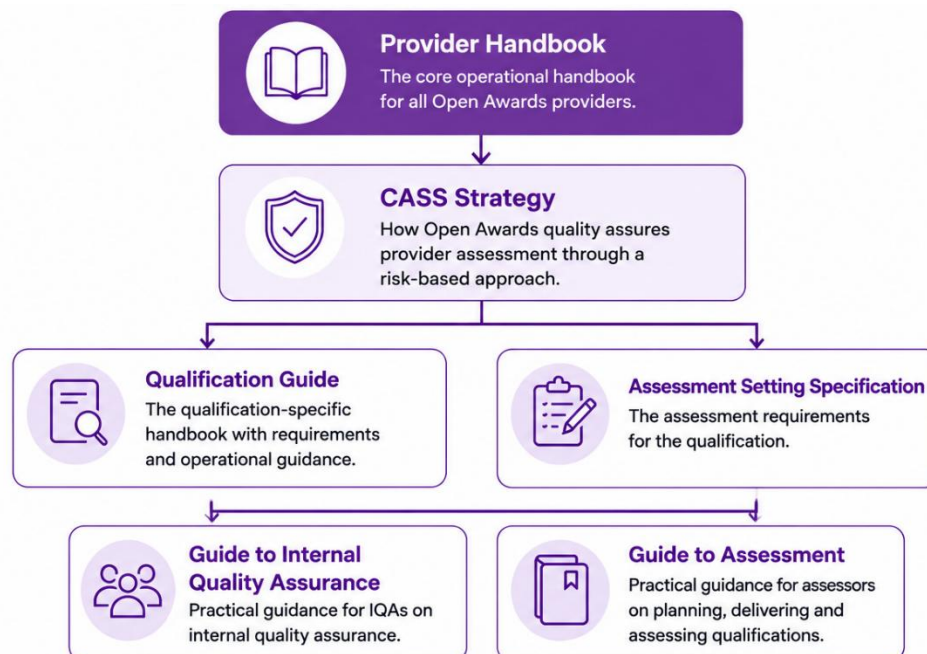
It is intended for anyone responsible for managing, delivering, assessing or quality assuring Open Awards provision, including:

- Administration and Exams Officers
- Coordinators
- Managers (including quality and curriculum managers)
- Internal Verifiers
- Tutors/Assessors

Please note that there is separate guidance relating to the delivery of Open Awards Access to Higher Education Diplomas and End-point Assessment. These can be viewed on our website [here](#).

Using this handbook

This handbook sets out the requirements and operational processes that apply to providers delivering Open Awards qualifications and units. It should be read alongside the relevant qualification-specific guidance and supporting documentation.



Working with Open Awards



Open Awards is an educational charity and awarding organisation regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.

Our purpose is to help change lives through learning by providing high-quality qualifications and responsive support for providers, learners and employers.

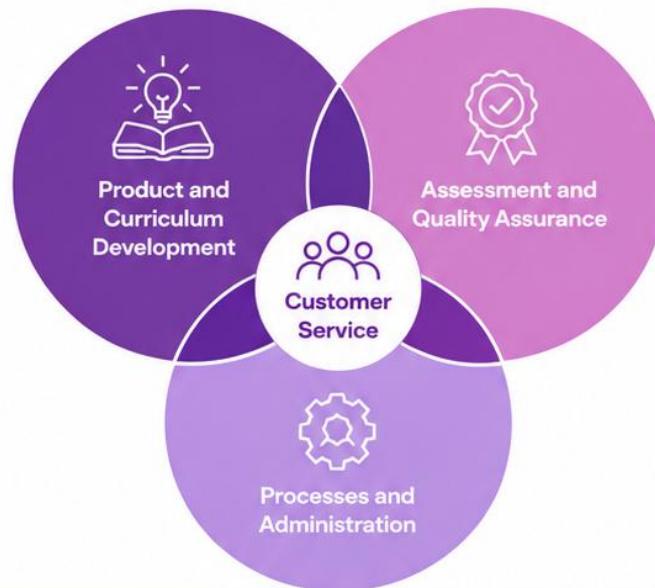
As a not-for-profit organisation, we work in partnership with providers to develop qualifications and services that are flexible, accessible and responsive to sector needs.

When you work with us, you can expect:

- Responsive support
- Practical guidance and resources
- Flexible qualification solutions
- A collaborative approach to qualification development and delivery
- A commitment to quality and continuous improvement

Your Dedicated Team

Our specialist teams work together to support you at every stage of your journey with Open Awards.



Customer Services – Here to Help

Our Customer Services team is your first point of contact and will direct your enquiry to the appropriate specialist team where required.

Telephone
0151 494 2072

Email
customerservices@openawards.org.uk

Opening Hours
Mon – Thurs: 08:00 – 18:00
Fri: 08:00 – 17:00
Sat: 09:00 – 12:30
Sun: Closed

Being an Open Awards Provider

Before you can deliver Open Awards qualifications, units or courses, your organisation must be approved as an Open Awards provider. The approval process includes an application, review of your quality assurance arrangements and completion of a Provider Agreement.

If your organisation has not yet been approved, please refer to the Becoming an Approved Provider guidance, available on our [website](#), which explains the approval process and the requirements for new providers.

Once approved, you are responsible for maintaining the standards and arrangements that formed part of your approval. This section outlines the ongoing requirements for approved providers. Detailed information about assessment, internal quality assurance and external quality assurance is provided in the Guide to Assessment, Guide to Internal Quality Assurance and the Open Awards CASS Strategy.

Pricing

Open Awards publishes pricing information annually from 1st August. This can be found on our [website](#). A hard copy of all pricing information is also available on request from Open Awards.

Please refer to our [Invoicing Policy](#) for details of how and when you will be invoiced.

Maintaining Your Provider Approval

To maintain your approved provider status, you must:

- maintain appropriate staffing, resources and facilities to support the delivery and quality assurance of your approved provision
- keep your named provider contacts accurate and notify Open Awards promptly of any changes
- maintain appropriate policies and procedures that reflect your current operations and meet Open Awards requirements
- identify, manage and record any actual or potential conflicts of interest
- obtain approval before introducing new delivery sites, third-party delivery arrangements or subcontracting arrangements where required
- comply with the requirements of your Provider Agreement and all relevant Open Awards policies and guidance
- cooperate with Open Awards quality assurance and monitoring activities.

Provider Staff & Site Requirements

You must maintain named contacts for the key functions that support your Open Awards provision.

You must inform Open Awards of any changes to your delivery sites or arrangements and Open Awards must be provided with up to date site details. This can be done via the Provider Changes Event: Major via the Secure Portal. Please note these changes may need separate approval and due diligence checks.

One individual may undertake more than one role where appropriate, provided responsibilities remain clear and any conflicts of interest are effectively managed.

Head of Organisation	This person is the ultimate point of accountability for the delivery of Open Awards qualifications.
Provider Contact	This person is the primary contact for Open Awards, authorised to act on behalf of the provider. They will be authorised to: • sign the provider Agreement • commit resources on behalf of the provider.
Administration Contact	This person is responsible for all aspects of administering registrations, certification, results and compliance with operational procedures and timescales. This ensures ensuring that complete and accurate records are retained in accordance with the provider.
Assessment Administrator	This person is responsible for the administration of external assessments e.g., Functional Skills, General Foundation qualifications, apprenticeship assessment, Experienced Worker assessments. This includes scheduling assessments, accessing results, and accessing mark schemes, sample assessments and guidance.

Curriculum Development Contact	The person with overall responsibility for curriculum planning and development within your provider. This person will: • Ensure that qualifications submitted to Open Awards for approval have been through an internal approval process. Liaise with the designated Business Development Consultant to develop the curriculum at the provider.
Quality Assurance Contact	This person has oversight of assessment and internal quality assurance arrangements. This includes: • maintaining assessment and internal quality assurance and internal standardisation processes • liaising with Quality and Standards Advisers and External Quality Assurers as required • ensuring the training and updating of staff involved with internal quality systems • ensuring the regulations for qualifications are met • ensuring that the provider abides by the Open Awards provider Agreement and associated aspects of regulatory compliance • ensuring the provider engages in external standardisation.
Finance Contact	The person responsible for financial arrangements with Open Awards, including arranging purchase orders and payment of invoices.
Safeguarding Contact	The person responsible for ensuring that the provider safeguards the interests of learners and staff.

Providers are responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes. This can be done through the “Contact Manager” section of the Portal as soon as a change is known, by the Administration Contact. Changes can also be made via the “Provider Change” event request on the Actions and Tracking Screen of the Open Awards Secure Portal.

Please check your “Contact Manager” regularly to ensure your contacts are up to date.

Staff, Resources and Facilities

Providers must maintain sufficient staff, facilities, equipment and systems to deliver and quality assure your approved provision.

This includes ensuring that:

- all resources (including buildings, equipment, systems, and materials) enable it to undertake the delivery of the qualification effectively and efficiently in line with Open Awards' requirements
- staff have appropriate subject expertise and assessment competence for their roles
- staff receive appropriate induction, training and continuing professional development
- any qualification-specific staffing requirements are met
- suitable teaching, assessment and quality assurance facilities are available
- sufficient managerial and other resources are available to enable it effectively and efficiently to undertake the delivery of the qualifications and units as required by Open Awards
- effective quality assurance and management processes are in place which it regularly monitors and keeps under review
- secure systems are in place to manage learner, assessment and certification records.

Open Awards does not always specify the experience or qualifications individuals need to deliver its units/qualifications but expect to have appropriate occupationally competent staff with relevant sector and teaching/ assessment/ internal quality assurance experience for their role in delivery.

Good practice is for:

- assessors to hold the relevant D32/ D33/ A1/ TAQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training and appropriate occupational competence
- Internal Quality Assurers to hold the relevant D34/ V1/ IQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training.

Specific staffing or resource requirements for individual qualifications are set out in the relevant Qualification Guide(s).

Working with Third Parties, Partnerships, and Satellite Sites

Providers may use alternative locations and/or subcontractors for the delivery and assessment of Open Awards qualifications. This may be due to several factors, depending on the type of provider and qualification(s) being offered. Unless a dispensation is agreed by Open Awards, a provider must provide us with details of all sites and locations they will be delivering Open Awards products and services from.

Open Awards do permit providers to work with other organisations in delivering high-quality provision. However, you must seek prior approval from us before allowing a third party to deliver any part of Open Awards' qualifications, including assessments and internal quality assurance. This can be requested via the *"Provider Change: Major"* event via the Actions and Tracking Screen of the Open Awards Secure Portal.

In all instances where alternative locations and/ or subcontractors are used, providers must comply with Open Awards external quality assurance requirements.

You must take responsibility for the management of alternative locations and third parties and keep their capacity, capability, and quality assurance practices under review. We will monitor this through external quality assurance activities. Failure to effectively manage the quality assurance of delivery, assessment and record keeping at alternative locations and/or third parties will affect your provider's risk rating and may result in sanctions being placed on the provider.

Data Privacy

All information we hold about your provider key contacts, and your learners is held securely on our database and only used for the purposes provided. Please ensure that you have parental/guardian consent to share your learners' data with us if the learner is under the age of 13. If you share this data, we are entitled to assume that you have this consent. You will find full details on how we use and protect your information at Open Awards in our [Privacy Notice](#). The Privacy Notice gives you details on:

- Your rights in relation to the information we hold
- How we keep it secure
- The type of information we collect and how we use it
- Who we share information with
- How long we hold information for

Conflicts of Interest

It is a condition of approval that providers must have a process to identify, monitor, and manage any conflicts of interest in assessment outcomes.

All conflicts must be documented in the provider's conflicts of interest register, which must be maintained and monitored on an ongoing basis. This register must be made available to Open Awards upon request.

Providers must take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment and verification of a learner's work being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. This includes internal marking, assessment, and quality assurance activities.

The roles of assessor and internal quality assurer must be allocated separately for each assessment decision.

An internal quality assurer must not quality assure assessment decisions they have made themselves as this presents a conflict of interest. Where a provider has multiple assessors and internal quality assurers, individuals may undertake both roles, provided they do not internally quality assure their own assessment practice or decisions and any potential conflicts of interest are appropriately managed.

Once a potential or actual conflict of interest has been identified, Open Awards must be informed immediately by completing a **Conflict of Interest Declaration Form**, available on the website, and emailing to quality@openawards.org.uk

Where the provider works in partnership with another awarding organisation, or sub-contracts any part of the delivery of Open Awards qualifications, they must manage all potential or actual conflicts.

Helpful Documents

Conflicts of Interest Policy	This document outlines our policy for identifying and managing conflicts of interest both at Open Awards and at our providers.
Conflict of Interest Declaration Form	This document is used to advise Open Awards of any potential or actual conflicts of interest identified.

Provider Policies and Procedures

You must maintain policies and procedures that are appropriate to your organisation, your learners and the qualifications you deliver. These must:

- reflect your current working practices
- be communicated to relevant staff and learners
- be reviewed regularly and kept up to date
- be implemented consistently across your organisation
- align with Open Awards policies and procedures where applicable
- be made available to Open Awards upon request.

When policies are created or amended, you should how the policy will be implemented, reviewed, and updated.

They should be working on documents that can be accessed by staff and learners alike. Open Awards reserves the right to review these documents at any time and check if they are being followed.

Documents must cover the following areas. Additional policies may be required depending on the qualifications or assessment methods you deliver.

Business Policies	Quality Policies
• Complaints • Data Protection • Risk Assessments for specific risk posed by your organisation, e.g., violence at work, service users with challenging behaviours, visitors etc. • Employers Liability Insurance • Equal Opportunities and Diversity • Fire Evacuation • Health and Safety • Checking Criminal Records • Public Liability Certificate (minimum cover £1million) • Safeguarding • Conflicts of Interest • Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery	• Reasonable Adjustments • Special Considerations • Assessment Invigilation • Learner enquiries and appeals • Internal quality assurance • Standardisation • Malpractice and Maladministration • Distribution of certificates for learners • Recognition of Prior Learning • Quality assurance review of the course (monitoring learner progress, review & feedback) • Learner support (including advice and guidance, initial assessment and induction, protecting interest of learners in the event of withdrawal) • Plagiarism • Acceptable use of generative AI

Understanding Open Awards Qualifications and Accreditation

Open Awards offers a range of regulated and non-regulated products to meet the needs of learners, employers and education providers.

 Regulated Qualifications  Purpose Nationally recognised qualifications regulated by Ofqual and/or Qualifications Wales. Learners must achieve the Rules of Combination to be awarded the qualification.  Suitable for Schools, colleges, training providers and employers delivering nationally recognised qualifications.  Regulated ☒ Yes	 Qualification Unit Courses  Purpose Individual units taken from a regulated qualification. Units may contribute towards a full qualification or, where permitted, be delivered individually.  Suitable for Providers delivering flexible learning programmes or recognising achievement of specific knowledge or skills.  Regulated ☒ Yes (as part of a regulated qualification)
 Quality Endorsed Unit Courses  Purpose Bespoke courses made up of quality endorsed units. Quality assured and certificated by Open Awards but not regulated by Ofqual or Qualifications Wales.  Suitable for Providers requiring flexible programmes that meet local, employer or organisational needs.  Regulated ☒ No	 Micro-credentials  Purpose Small, focused credentials that recognise specific skills, knowledge or achievement. Designed to support flexible learning and workforce development.  Suitable for Learners who want to build skills quickly or demonstrate competence in a specific area. Ideal for employers and CPD.  Regulated ☒ No

 Experienced Worker Assessment (EWA)	 Badge of Excellence
 Purpose Assessment of occupational competence for experienced workers against nationally recognised standards.	 Purpose A quality mark recognising high-quality education or training that meets the Open Awards Standards of Excellence.
 Suitable for Experienced workers looking to gain formal recognition for their skills and experience.	 Suitable for Organisations wishing to demonstrate the quality of their education or training provision.
 Regulated  No	 Regulated  No

Please note, there is separate guidance for the delivery of Access to HE Diplomas, End-point Assessment and Badge of Excellence available on the Open Awards website.

Regulated Qualifications in England and Wales

Open Awards is recognised to offer regulated qualifications in both England and Wales.

England

Ofqual regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

Open Awards qualifications regulated by Ofqual are listed on the [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#).

Wales

Qualifications Wales is the independent regulator for non-degree level qualifications in Wales offered by recognised awarding bodies.

Open Awards qualifications that are approved or designated for delivery in Wales are listed on the [QiW database](#).

You can search all Open Awards regulated qualifications on our [website](#).

Qualification Size and Level

 **QUALIFICATION SIZE**

Size is measured in Total Qualification Time (TQT).
This includes guided learning, assessment, examinations
(where applicable) and independent study.

	AWARD	Total Qualification Time (TQT) 1–129 hours
	CERTIFICATE	Total Qualification Time (TQT) 130–369 hours
	DIPLOMA	Total Qualification Time (TQT) 370 hours or more



Some qualification titles include the word **'Extended'**.
The Qualification Guide confirms the TQT and GLH
for each qualification.

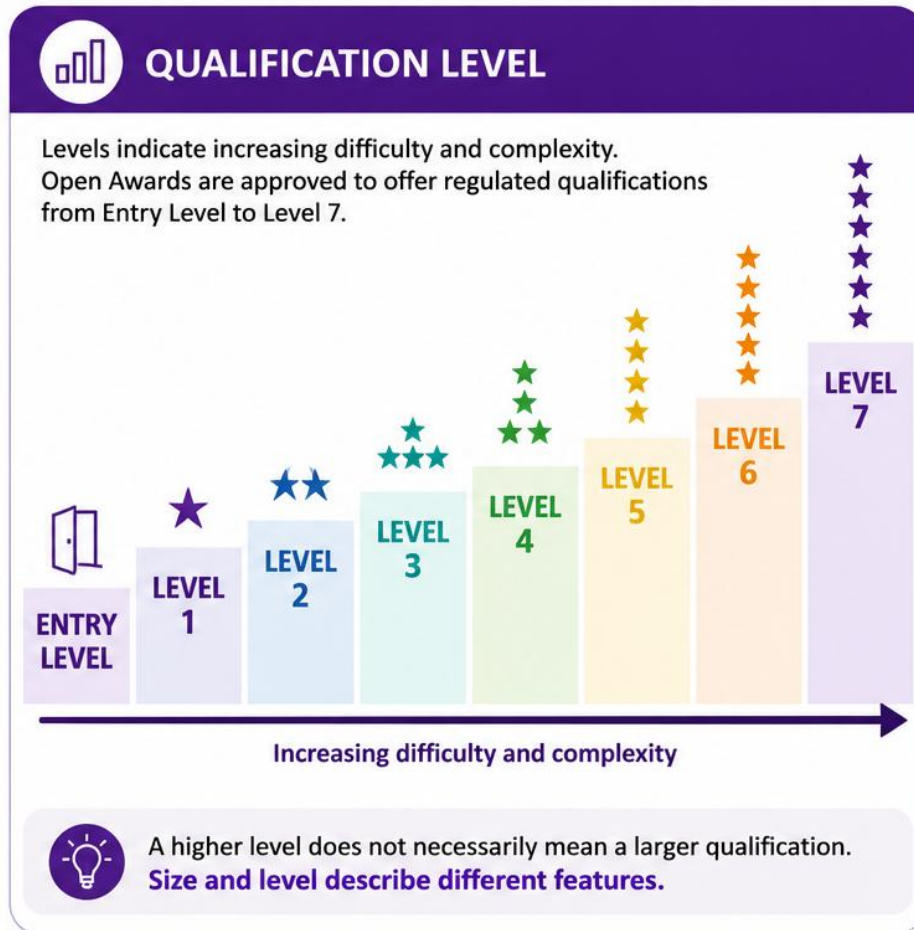
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)
are the hours when a learner is taught,
supervised or assessed by a tutor,
assessor or invigilator.

Qualification size indicates the approximate amount of time a learner is expected to spend achieving a qualification. This is measured using Total Qualification Time (TQT).

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) indicate the amount of time a learner is normally taught, supervised or assessed by a tutor, assessor or invigilator.

Some qualification titles include the word "Extended". This forms part of the qualification title and does not change how qualification size is measured. Refer to the Qualification Guide for the confirmed TQT and GLH.

The Qualification Guide confirms the TQT and GLH for each qualification.



Qualification level indicates the difficulty and complexity of the knowledge and skills required to achieve a qualification.

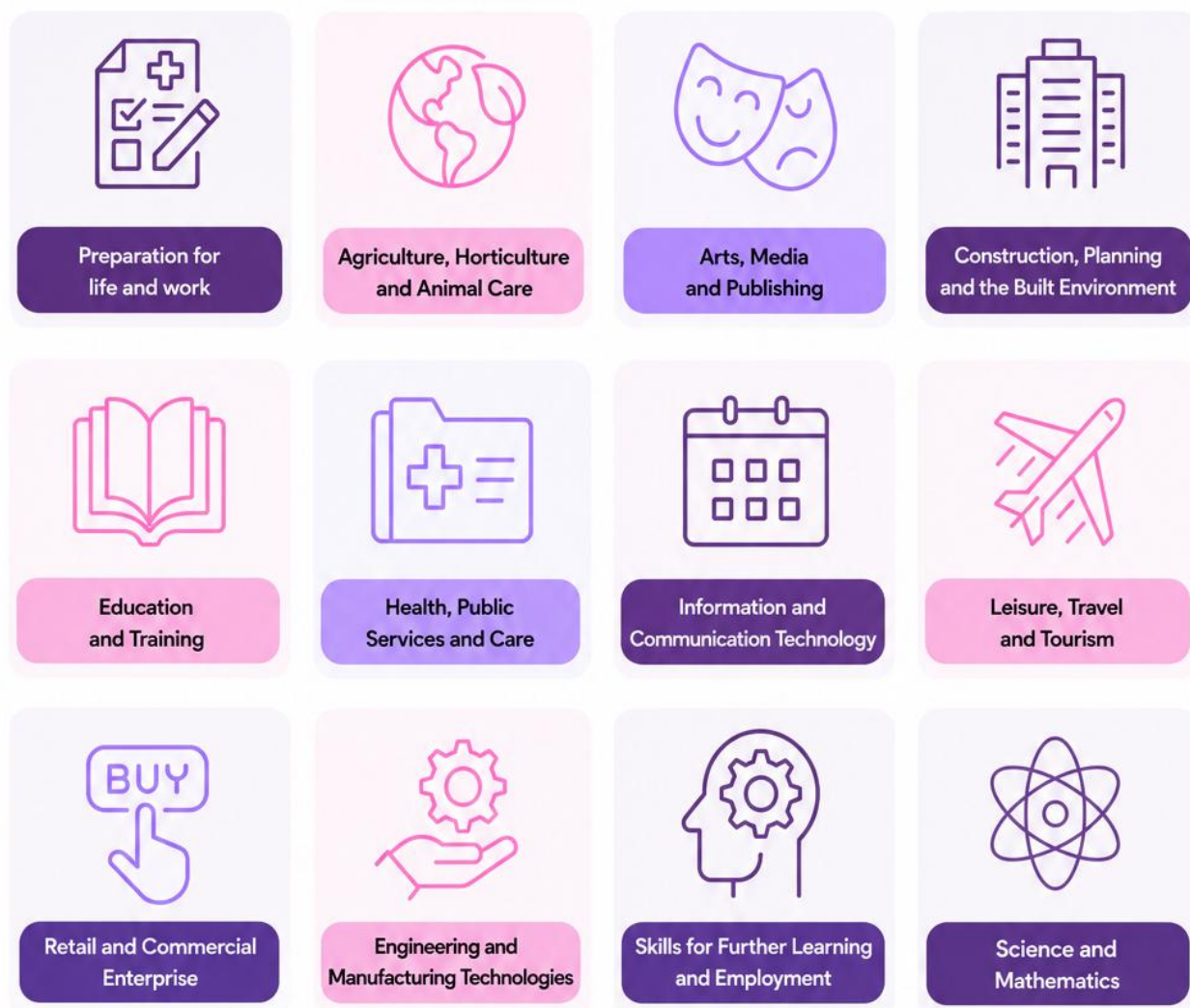
Open Awards offers regulated qualifications from Entry Level to Level 7.

A qualification's size and level describe different features. A higher-level qualification is not necessarily a larger qualification.

The Qualification Guide confirms the level of each qualification.

Choosing a Qualification

Open Awards offers qualifications and courses for a wide range of learners and purposes, including occupational competence, vocational learning, technical education and life skills. Our qualifications are available across the sectors shown below.



To find a qualification to meet the needs of your learners, you can search our website [here](#).

When delivering Open Awards regulated qualifications, providers must ensure that the rules of combination (ROC) are fully adhered to, including the use of mandatory and optional units. Full details are outlined in the individual Qualification Guide(s).

To check whether a qualification is eligible for funding, you can use the Department for Education's (DfE) '[Find a Learning Aim](#)' tool.

Designing Individual Unit Courses

Open Awards offers both **regulated qualification units** and **quality endorsed units**, which can be delivered individually where permitted.

Qualification Units	Units that are part of a regulated qualification. They may be delivered individually or contribute towards achievement of a full qualification, where permitted.
Quality Endorsed Units	Units that are not part of a regulated qualification. They are normally developed as bespoke units for individual providers.

Qualification units and Quality Endorsed Units cannot be combined within the same course.

You can search for and view all units available to be used in individual unit courses via our Unit Bank on our [website](#). The unit content template includes the unit type.

When designing an individual unit course, you must:

- select units that meet the needs of your learners and employers
- ensure all selected units are from the same product type (regulated or quality endorsed)

To check whether a qualification unit is eligible for funding, you can use DfE's '[Find a Learning Aim](#)' tool.

Some regulated units, including Functional Skills, Access to HE and apprenticeship assessment components, can only be delivered as part of their parent qualification.

If you cannot find suitable units, contact Open Awards to discuss alternative options or the development of a bespoke quality endorsed unit course.

Qualification Review and Continuous Improvement

Open Awards regularly reviews its qualifications and courses to ensure they remain current, fit for purpose and aligned with the needs of learners, employers and the education sector.

Reviews consider feedback from providers, learners, employers, regulators and quality assurance activities to identify opportunities for improvement throughout the lifecycle of a qualification.

Qualifications are reviewed at least every 5 years. The scheduled review date is published on the qualification page of the website and in the Qualification Guide. We will normally start the review of a qualification at least 12 months in advance of the published review date.

Your feedback

We welcome feedback at any time, not just as part of a scheduled review.

You can share suggestions, identify issues or propose improvements by:

- contacting your Quality and Standards Advisor (QASA)
- speaking to the Product Development Team directly on enquiries@openawards.org.uk
- responding to provider surveys and consultation activities.

Feedback is reviewed throughout the lifecycle of a qualification and may inform future updates, qualification reviews or the development of new products.

Qualification reviews

Providers may be invited to contribute to qualification reviews through:

- provider surveys
- stakeholder consultation events
- qualification review groups
- external quality assurance activities.

Your feedback helps us ensure qualifications remain relevant, effective and responsive to the needs of learners, employers and the wider education sector.

Changes to qualifications

Where changes are made to an approved qualification, Open Awards will communicate these to approved providers as early as possible.

Where practical, we aim to provide at least six months' notice before significant changes take effect, allowing providers sufficient time to plan delivery, update resources and support learners. In some circumstances, such as changes required by regulators or legislation, shorter implementation timescales may be necessary.

Operational end dates

Where a qualification is due to be withdrawn or replaced, Open Awards will publish an operational end date and a certification end date.

Operational end date	The is the last date new learners can be registered.
Certification end date	This is the final date by which learners must complete the qualification (including assessment, IQA and EQA) and certificates can be issued.

This information can be found on the qualification page of the website and in the Qualification Guide



Important: This infographic illustrates the typical delivery process. Assessment, IQA and EQA requirements may differ between qualifications and courses. Always refer to the relevant Qualification Guide, Assessment Setting Specification and supporting guidance for the specific requirements that apply to your qualification or course.

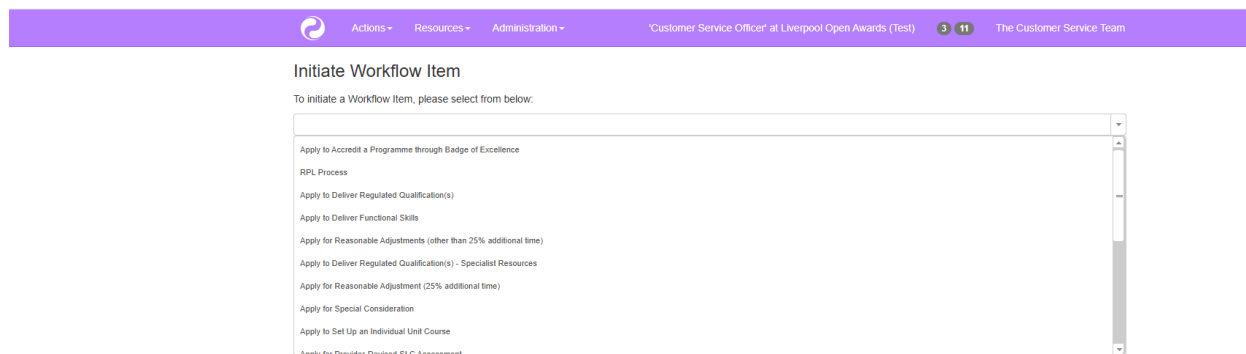
Setting up your Courses

Before delivering a qualification or course, you must submit an approval request through the Open Awards Secure Portal. Applications are submitted by your Administration Contact.

To begin an application, select Actions and Tracking from the Portal menu.



Then select **Initiate Workflow Item** and choose the appropriate application type.



Apply to Deliver Regulated Qualifications	Used to apply for most Ofqual and Qualifications Wales regulated qualifications, including the Skills for Further Learning and Employment Suite.
Apply to Deliver Functional Skills Qualifications	Used to apply to deliver Functional Skills mathematics or English qualifications (Entry 1 – Level 2).
Apply to Deliver a Regulated Qualification Specialist Resources	Used to apply to deliver medium or high risk qualifications where we require further information to be submitted at the time of application. These applications are reviewed by the Quality Assurance team prior to approval. A qualification's risk rating can be found on the qualification page of the website and the Qualification Guide(s).
Apply to Deliver an Individual Unit Course	Used to apply to create a course using units from our unit bank.
Apply to Deliver Essential Digital Skills	This option will allow you to apply to deliver Essential Digital Skills (EDS) qualifications (Entry 3 - Level 1).

Apply to add an Apprenticeship Standard	Used to apply to add an apprenticeship standard to the account.
Apply to deliver an Experienced Worker Assessment (EWA)	Used to apply to deliver an Experienced Worker Assessment (EWA) qualifications.

Full guidance is available in the **Qualification and Course Approval Guidance** within the Provider Guidance section of the Portal.

What happens when I have submitted a qualification approval request?

Open Awards will acknowledge your application within **five working days**.

Some applications can be approved immediately, while others require additional review before approval is granted. Where further information is needed, you will be alerted via email to log into the Portal to view further details of what is needed.

Please note for Specialist Resources Qualifications, Functional Skills and Essential Digital Skills approval may take up to 10 working days due to the review required by the Quality Team.

You can monitor the progress of your application at any time using the **Tracking** screen in the Portal.

What Will Learners Receive?

A full qualification	A qualification certificate and a unit transcript (where applicable).
Partial achievement of a qualification	A unit transcript (issued as an e-certificate).
A unit course (either qualification units or Quality Endorsed)	A course certificate listing the course name and units achieved (issued as an e-certificate).

Where a learner registered for a larger qualification achieves the Rules of Combination for a smaller qualification, certification may be awarded for the smaller qualification in accordance with the Open Awards Awarding Policy.

Qualification certificates are normally issued in both paper and electronic formats. Unit transcripts and course certificates are issued electronically unless a paper copy is requested.

Rules of Combination

The **Rules of Combination (RoC)** specify the units a learner must achieve to be awarded a regulated qualification.

They identify:

- mandatory units
- optional units
- any restrictions on unit combinations
- the total credits or units required, where applicable.

The Rules of Combination are included within the relevant Qualification Guide. Providers are responsible for ensuring learners complete the required combination of units before certification is claimed.

If a learner does not meet the Rules of Combination for the qualification they are registered on, any certification awarded will be determined in accordance with the Open Awards Awarding Policy.

Promoting Your Open Awards Courses

Open Awards is committed to helping providers promote their courses and celebrate learner achievement.

Our Provider Marketing Guidance includes practical advice, branding guidance, downloadable marketing assets and examples of good practice to help you market your Open Awards provision.

When promoting your courses, you must ensure all information is accurate and clearly identifies the qualification, course or accreditation being offered.



Social Media

Follow and tag Open Awards on social media so we can celebrate your learners, providers and success stories.



Case Studies

Share examples of learner success, innovative practice or employer partnerships for possible publication on our website, newsletters and social media.



Events

Let us know about award ceremonies, open events and celebrations. Where possible, we may be able to provide promotional support or attend.



Feedback

Share feedback and testimonials to help us improve our products and services and showcase effective practice across our provider network.



Provider Marketing Guidance

Visit the Provider Guidance section of the Portal to access:



Open Awards logos and branding guidance



Marketing templates



Downloadable assets



Examples of good practice



Promotional guidance

Everything you need to promote your Open Awards provision with confidence.

Registering Learners

How do I Register my Learners?

There are different timescales for registrations depending on the duration of the course:

Short courses (less than 15 weeks)	Register learners within 25 working days of the start date of the course, but before the end date of the course.
Long courses (more than 15 weeks)	Register learners within 60 working days of the start date of the course, but before the end date of the course

If providers register learners after these times, a late registration fee may be charged, and providers will be required to take action to prevent further late registrations.

All learner registrations submitted to Open Awards will be charged in accordance with our published charges. Please refer to the 'Pricing Information' section of our [website](#).

Online Registration

To register learners, the Administration Contact should create a new Course Run via the Portal. Learners must be registered to the units they are undertaking on the course run. For full guidance on this process refer to the Secure Portal Guidance and instructional videos provided on the relevant pages of the Portal.

What is a Unique Learner Number (ULN)?

The ULN is a unique 10-digit number used in England, Northern Ireland and Wales to identify an individual learner. Most learners aged 14+ have a ULN and it is designed to work with a learner's Personal Learning Record (PLR) to provide proof of their learning and achievements.

The Personal Learning Record (PLR) is a learner's permanent record of their qualifications and achievements.

The Department for Education (DfE), creates and holds the Unique Learner Number to enable effective management of information to fulfil the functions of the DfE. The Learning Records Service (LRS) is operated by the ESFA and collects information about learners registering for qualifications and qualification units.

ULNs are mandatory for learners funded by the Department of Education. ULNs must also be provided for learners registered for Functional Skills, Apprenticeship Assessment (AA) and Pharmacy qualifications.

We request ULNs at the point of registration to enable us to upload achievement data to the learner's Personal Learning Record (PLR) for qualifications and qualification units achieved.

All ULNs provided are automatically checked against the LRS and must match the learner's details provided.

To be able to obtain ULNs for learners, your provider must be registered as a Learner Registration Body (LRB). To register as a Learner Registration Body, further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learner-registration-bodies-user-guide>

Once you are registered, you will be able to obtain ULNs for your learners.

Fair Processing and Extended Privacy Notices

As an awarding organisation we have responsibility under the Data Protection Act to ensure that learners are informed of how their information is processed and shared. Please ensure you make learners aware that their information will be passed to Open Awards for registration purposes. For any learners under the age of 13 you must ensure that you have parent/guardian consent for the sharing of their personal information, including details submitted at registration. You should also provide a copy of the [Privacy Notice – Learner Information](#) to your learners so that they understand what data we hold about them, why we hold it, and how their data is used.

We strongly recommend that you give learners or encourage learners to read the LRS Privacy Notice on the [Learning Record Service website](#) to understand how their data is used and may be shared.

Providers must also make learners aware that upon achievement of qualifications and/or qualification units - achievement details will be passed by Open Awards to the Learning Records Service for the purpose of updating their Personal Learning Record.

How do I Amend a Course Run/ Registration?

After registrations have been submitted, the Administration Contact should contact the Open Awards team to discuss any requests for changes to your course/run on customerservices@openawards.org.uk or 0151 494 2072.

Once the course run has been submitted, you may register additional learners within the registration timescales. Any registrations made outside of these timescales will be liable for late registrations charges (for guidance please refer to the Secure Portal Guidance available on the Portal). Should you identify learners that have been missed following the end date of the course; you will need to contact the Open Awards team.

An administration charge may be applied for amendments made following the initial registration of learners on a course.

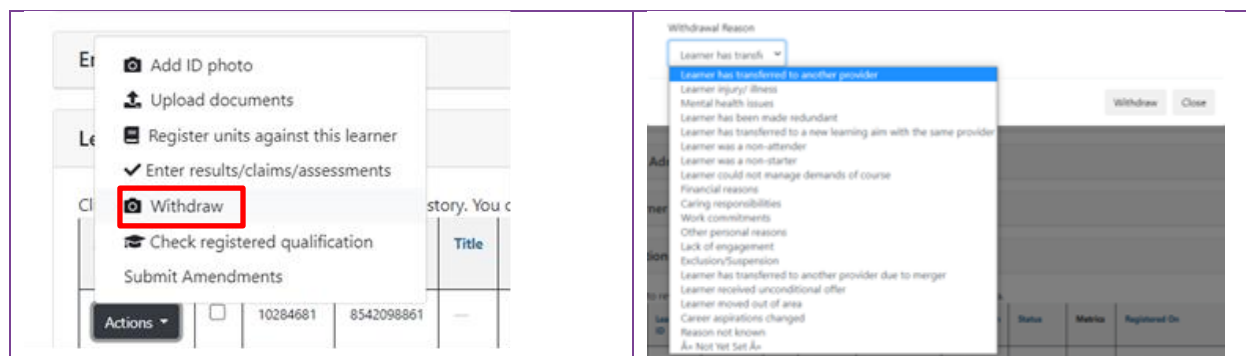
Withdrawing and Accounting for Learners

At the end of a course run, all learners must be accounted for within 12 weeks of the course run end date. This is via either entering achievement or withdrawing the learner. Where a learner who has been registered is no longer continuing, should you wish to withdraw a learner, Open Awards must be informed of this via the Portal. Please refer to our Secure Portal Guidance for this.

Learners who choose to leave their course of study prior to completion are known as 'withdrawn learners'. Learners should be withdrawn via the Portal. Learners should be 'withdrawn' as soon as this becomes known, and a reason given for that withdrawal.

Withdrawing learners can be completed under the learner record on the **'Your Course Runs'** Screen.

Click the **'Actions'** tab beside the relevant learner. Click 'withdraw' and then select the relevant reason.



Learners will automatically be marked as withdrawn and the course run closed if results have not been submitted within 12 weeks of the course end date. Learners may be re-instated following quality assurance approval, upon which [a charge will be applied](#).

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process by which learners are recognised for knowledge, understanding, or skills they have already achieved.

It is used to recognise a learner's achievement outside the rules of combination for a qualification where this achievement is deemed to be equivalent to the demands of the unit(s) against which it is being considered.

Open Awards' approach to RPL (as outlined in our Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures) encompasses learning that is either supported by formal certificated achievement or informal, non-certificated learning or experience.

To be considered eligible for RPL, the learner will need to show that the knowledge, understanding or skills they already have means that they do not need to repeat units or complete additional assessment activity. The learner may also need the support of their employer or other organisation (e.g. if they have worked as an unpaid volunteer) to be able to confirm the achievement of assessment criteria for practical tasks where there may be no tangible evidence available.

RPL can normally be claimed for up to a maximum of 50% of the outcomes for a qualification.

For "nested" qualifications (qualifications of different sizes within the same suite) a maximum of 70% of the qualification outcomes can be subject to RPL. At least 30% should be obtained through new learning at the same level of the qualification.

The provider must ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria being claimed are met by mapping prior to learning evidence to ensure it is valid and current, reliable, authentic and sufficient to meet the requirements of the unit(s).

RPL Requests (supported by mapping evidence) must be submitted within 6 weeks of the learner's start date. Providers must apply through the portal. Please refer to the Provider Guidance – Recognition of Prior Learning which is available from the documents and forms section of the portal under Open Awards Guidance Documents. A decision will be made within five working days of receipt of a completed application supported by mapping evidence.

Where learner evidence is not sufficient to cover all learning outcomes for which RPL is being requested, additional assessment methods should be employed to generate the sufficient evidence required to make a safe assessment decision.

Helpful Documents

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures	This policy states why and how Open Awards consider RPL requests.
Provider Guidance – Recognition of Prior Learning	Provider guidance document outlining the process for submitting applications.
RPL Request Form	This document needs to be completed for each learner for whom RPL is being considered. The form can be used to cover multiple units for one learner.

Delivery, Assessment and Quality Assurance

Once your qualification has been approved and learners have been registered, you are responsible for delivering, assessing and quality assuring your provision in accordance with Open Awards requirements.

The exact assessment and quality assurance arrangements vary between qualifications and assessment models. Before delivery begins, ensure you have read the qualification-specific documentation listed below.

Assessment and Quality Assurance Documents

Document	Purpose
CASS Strategy	Open Awards' external quality assurance approach, provider monitoring and sampling methodology.
Qualification Guide	Qualification structure, assessment approach, Rules of Combination and qualification-specific requirements.
Assessment Setting Specification	Requirements for delivering and assessing each assessment component or assessment method.
Guide to Provider Assessment	Good practice for planning, conducting and recording assessment decisions.
Guide to Internal Quality Assurance	Planning, sampling, standardisation and internal quality assurance requirements.

Your Responsibilities

Before delivering any qualification, providers must ensure they:

- understand the assessment requirements
- plan delivery and assessment
- maintain accurate assessment records
- implement effective internal quality assurance
- retain learner evidence
- cooperate with external quality assurance activities
- submit learner results within published timescales.

Assessment Models

Open Awards qualifications use a variety of assessment models.



Portfolio Assessment

Evidence collected throughout delivery against assessment criteria.

See:

- Qualification Guide
- Guide to Provider Assessment



Controlled Assessment

Assessment completed under specified conditions.

See:

- Qualification Guide
- Assessment Setting Specification



External Assessment

Open Awards-set assessments completed in accordance with published requirements.

See:

- Qualification Guide
- Assessment Setting Specification



Mixed Assessment Models

Some qualifications combine more than one assessment method.

Always refer to the **Qualification Guide** for the assessment model applicable to your qualification.

Within different assessment models, there will be different approach to marking or assessing, and IQA and EQA.



Marking and assessment models

- Internal marking
- External marking
- Internal assessing
- External assessing

External quality assurance (EQA) models

- External verification
- Moderation
- Direct Entry of Results



Always refer to the Qualification Guide(s) and associated Assessment Setting Specification(s) for the assessment and quality assurance model applicable to your qualification.

Finding the Right Guidance

I want to...	Read...
Understand the qualification	Qualification Guide
Plan internal assessment	Guide to Provider Assessment
Understand assessment requirements for a specific qualification or component	Assessment Setting Specification
Carry out Internal Quality Assurance	Guide to Internal Quality Assurance
Understand External Quality Assurance arrangements	CASS Strategy

Retention of Learner Evidence



Retain until external quality assurance is complete

Retain all learner evidence until the course run or qualification has been externally quality assured. For providers with Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV) Status, retain evidence until Open Awards has sampled the relevant course run and/or qualification.



Comply with funding requirements

Keep records in a way that complies with the relevant funding rules for publicly funded learners.



Return originals to learners

Following an external quality assurance review, original evidence must be returned to learners.



Keep copies if records cannot be separated

If assessment evidence cannot be separated from the wider learner portfolio, retain a copy of the relevant assessment evidence.



Open Awards retention

Open Awards will retain copies of learner evidence for up to one year after certification and may use fully redacted examples for standardisation and training purposes.



Consistency over time

Where the provider repeats the delivery of the same course or qualification, retain evidence to ensure standards of assessment and internal quality assurance are comparable over time.



This applies to all types of evidence

This includes all forms of assessment evidence, records and documentation.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Open Awards is committed to ensuring that all learners have fair access to assessment while maintaining the validity, reliability and integrity of qualifications.

Providers are responsible for identifying when reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be appropriate and for following the relevant Open Awards policy and guidance.

Reasonable Adjustments	Special Considerations
Applied before an assessment takes place.	Considered after an assessment has taken place.
Supports learners with a disability, learning difficulty or other recognised need to access the assessment.	Considers unexpected circumstances that affected a learner's performance during the assessment.
Must not compromise the validity of the assessment.	Does not guarantee an adjustment to the learner's result.

Providers must:

- identify learners who may require support
- implement approved reasonable adjustments where permitted
- apply for Open Awards approval where required
- maintain appropriate records
- submit requests for special consideration within published timescales.

Always refer to the **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy** before implementing any adjustment or submitting a request. Some adjustments can be approved by providers, while others require prior approval from Open Awards.

Helpful Documents

Open Awards Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy	This document sets out the principles which should be followed when making decisions about adjustments to assessment. It outlines Open Awards' reasonable steps to ensure it avoids disadvantage (directly or indirectly) in line with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010.
Applying for reasonable adjustment guidance (25% additional time)	This guidance can be used by providers to help with the requirements open awards have put into place when applying for a reasonable adjustment for an additional 25% extra time on controlled assessments.
Applying for reasonable adjustment guidance (Other than 25% additional time)	This guidance can be used by providers to help with the requirements open awards have put into place when applying for a reasonable adjustment for anything other than 25% additional time. This breaks down all the adjustments we can offer and what assessments these can be applied too.
Applying for Special Consideration guidance	This guidance can be used by providers to understand how to request that Open Awards consider allowing a special consideration.

Award and Certification

Recommending Learners for Certification

To safeguard the interest of learners and to ensure prompt certification, results must be processed and released within 12 weeks of the end date of the course.

Providers must follow the guidance for the relevant qualification or programme to ensure that evidence is made available to support results being claimed and that results are submitted accurately. This includes requests made by Open Awards via email or other means to provide evidence and/or uploads marks/grades/evidence

For courses with an Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV), the results must also be verified within 5 working days of submission. Where results are not received within this timescale, a late fee may be charged, and preventative actions will be agreed with the provider. This may result in the suspension or removal of AIV status.

Please refer to the 'Pricing Information' section of our [website](#).

Results must be entered for every learner on a course run, including full or partial achievement being claimed. If a learner has withdrawn from the course run, they must be marked as withdrawn and a reason for withdrawal entered.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that results are accurately claimed for each learner. Achievement **must only** be recommended when a learner has achieved all the requirements for each unit/ component. If a learner has previously been awarded credit for the unit(s), the unit cannot be re-awarded, unless forming part of an award for a higher-level qualification in the same suite.

Any learners not claimed within 12 weeks of the course run end date will automatically be marked as withdrawn. Open Awards will advise providers in advance to allow for course run dates to be extended where necessary.

Amending the Award of Credit

Before claiming an award of credit, please check all information is accurate, including the spelling of learners' names. The Administration Contact should contact the appropriate Open Awards team member to discuss any requests for changes. A charge will be applied for amendments made following the award of credit.

Issuing Certificates

Open Awards issue qualification certificates in e-certificate and paper form. You can request amendments to your certification preferences, to only receive e-certificates by contacting the Customer Service Team. All unit transcripts and course certificates will be issued in e-certificate format only.

Open Awards will issue certificates for learners registered with Open Awards who have successfully completed unit(s), within 10 working days of receipt of verified results. Paper certificates will be dispatched to your registered address with Open Awards for the attention of the Administration Contact.

E-certificates will also be available to view and download and distribute via electronic means only from the Portal for all providers. Administration Contacts will receive an email when certificates are available to download, including instructions on how to access them.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that all paper certificates are promptly distributed to learners and should ensure they are keeping accurate learner records to enable this. Where providers are not able to distribute certificates to learners, the Open Awards Customer Service Team must be informed.

All endorsed qualification certificates (e-certificates and hard copies) have unique Authentiqua (QR) codes embedded, scanning the QR code provides secure authentication of the certificate.

Certificates for the completion of Apprenticeship Assessment (AA) will be sent to the apprentice's employer directly by the Department for Education following an application from Open Awards.

Certificates include:

Ofqual Regulated Qualification	Qualification certificate Open Awards and Ofqual Logo
Qualifications Wales Regulated Qualification	Qualification certificate Open Awards and Qualifications Wales Logo
Qualification Unit Course	Course certificate with unit transcript Open Awards and Ofqual or Qualifications Wales Logo
Quality Endorsed Course	Course certificate with unit transcript Open Awards Logo

All paper certificates will be sent via recorded delivery, or courier, for the attention of the Administration Contact. Please notify us within five working days if you identify any problems with the certificates that you receive.

Re-issue and Replacement Certificates

Learners can request a copy of their certificate directly through [Open Awards website](#) or via their place of study. There is a certificate reissue details of which can be found in our pricing information. Universities and overseas validation agencies usually request an original certificate. A replacement certificate will be issued within 10 working days of receipt of all authenticated claims and payment. A charge will be made for each replacement certificate. Where possible, the original certificate(s) must be returned to Open Awards before replacement can be issued.

Providers can request reissues via the Actions and Tracking screen of the Open Awards Secure Portal, selecting the “Request a Replacement Certificate” event.

Training and Consultancy

Open Awards knows that supporting our providers will allow for continued growth and success and support our mission to support educational achievement for all learners.

We deliver open, in-house and e-learning training opportunities and consultancy services that draw upon both our long history and practical experience in business planning, delivery, assessment and quality assurance. Training required to deliver Open Awards qualifications and courses effectively is included in the provider's annual fee.

Additional training courses (not directly relevant to the delivery of Open Awards' qualifications and courses) can be purchased at an additional charge.

Our training and consultancy services are supported by quality assurance systems and delivered by highly experienced practitioners.

We offer a variety of training and development opportunities, including:

- Administration
- Authorised Internal Verifier
- Delivery and Assessment
- Quality Assurance
- Standardisation.

Further information on training courses is available on the Open Awards [website](#).

Online courses can be accessed via our [E-learning site](#).

Our Quality and Curriculum Development teams are also able to provide bespoke training and consultation to provider staff in specific areas on which you need additional support. A fee may be incurred for bespoke training.

Bespoke provider training and national/ international training are available upon request.

What are the benefits of our training and consultancy services?

- Our courses are interactive and engaging
- An opportunity to acquire new, modified or refreshed knowledge, behaviours, values and skills
- We offer comprehensive, up-to-date training packs
- All our courses can be tailored and booked to take place at your venue
- Opportunities to share best practice

Please contact enquiries@openawards.org.uk or 0151 494 2072 to speak to a member of the Business Development Team about your training needs.

Issues or Non-compliance at Providers

Open Awards acknowledges that our providers generally act in the best interests of the learners, although there are some instances where we may need to intervene.

Where we become aware of an incident that has arisen, or we have caused to believe that an incident may arise, we need to investigate.

Incident reports

Open Awards reviews and monitors any incidents that may affect the secure administration and award of learners on our units, courses and qualifications and offer any guidance and training that would help to improve practice at providers.

Providers are sent an incident report to complete within 10 working days (sooner for more urgent issues) to outline the incident, summarise how the situation occurred and describe the measures they have taken to ensure similar incidents do not occur in the future. The report is reviewed by Open Awards and a decision made as to whether to undertake further investigations.

Where the provider is found to be non-compliant with areas of the Provider Agreement, Open Awards may consider the incident to be maladministration or malpractice and place sanctions against the provider. This will affect the provider's risk rating and could result in the provider's recognition being withdrawn.

Maladministration and Malpractice

Maladministration is defined as any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in a provider not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the guidance.

Malpractice is any act, default or practice which is in breach of the Regulations which:

- Compromises, attempts to compromise, or may compromise, the process of assessment/examinations, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of an examination result or certificate, including maladministration
- Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of the awarding organisation or provider or any officer or employee
- Involves a failure by a provider to investigate allegations of suspected malpractice in accordance with the requirements set out in this document also constitutes malpractice awarding organisation or provider.

A provider must report any allegation of suspected malpractice/maladministration to Open Awards. Failure to report allegations of malpractice/maladministration can lead to awards not being conferred and certificates not being issued, and future registrations not being accepted.

Where a provider is found to have not reported allegations of suspected malpractice/maladministration, Open Awards may apply sanctions as set out in our Sanctions Policy.

We review a provider's compliance with the Open Awards maladministration and malpractice policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration periodically through our provider monitoring arrangements.

Helpful Documents

Maladministration and malpractice policy and procedures	This document defines maladministration and malpractice, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of providers, learners and Open Awards, and outlines the procedures to be followed when there are issues of <u>suspected maladministration or malpractice at</u>
Report of Suspected Malpractice (Form M1)	This form is to be used by providers to report instances of suspected malpractice on Open Awards Units or Qualifications.

Sanctions

Open Awards reserves the right to place sanctions on its providers to safeguard the award of qualifications and units and protect its interests and those of its learners. Sanctions may be applied to individual staff within providers, and/or the provider as a whole. Sanctions may also be applied to learners.

Open Awards can impose a range of sanctions on a provider depending on the seriousness of the situation, the level and track-record of the provider's non-compliance and the risk to the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications and units and the effect on public confidence in Open Awards.

The level of sanction imposed will depend on the nature of the provider's non-compliance. If a previously imposed sanction is not acted upon within agreed timeframes, or if actions requiring sanctions have been made repeatedly, a higher level of sanction may be applied.

Providers must comply with all the sanctions imposed upon them, within the time limits stated. Sanctions will remain in place until the issues identified have been fully resolved. Where sanctions involve any extra visits to the provider, this will be at the provider's expense. The fees are non-refundable.

In cases of serious non-compliance, for example, in relation to the security of its assessments, Open Awards may withdraw a provider's approval to deliver its qualifications and units.

To meet our regulatory responsibilities, Open Awards is required to share certain information relating to the imposition of sanctions with other Awarding Organisations and Regulators. This may impact your ability to deliver qualifications with other Awarding Organisations.

Helpful Documents

Sanctions Policy	This document outlines issues of non-compliance that could result in a sanction and the actions we can take to enforce the terms of the Provider Agreement.
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Provider Withdrawal/ Closure

If you wish to withdraw from Open Awards recognised provider status or have ceased trading, Open Awards must be notified. This must be done via the Open Awards Secure Portal, and the “Actions” and “Tracking screen selecting the “Withdraw as an Open Awards provider” event

Initiate Workflow Item

To initiate a Workflow Item, please select from below:

Withdraw as an Open Awards Provider

We are sorry to hear that you are considering surrendering your recognition as an approved Open Awards Provider.

Before you begin this process you should ensure that all your registered learners are accounted for, by either

- Submitting outstanding results and subsequent certification by Open Awards
- Withdrawing them as a learner from the relevant programme(s) and/or qualification(s).

You should also ensure that any outstanding invoices are paid.

Should you wish to discuss/confirm this with us before proceeding, or discuss how we may be able to support you to remain with us please contact the team on 0151-494-2072 or email customerservices@openawards.org.uk

Full guide on how to complete this can be found under the “Documents and Forms” section of the Open Awards Secure Portal in “Provider Guidance - Withdrawing as an Open Awards provider”

You may be required to participate in a closing visit to ensure that quality assurance requirements have been met.

You will be asked to ensure that:

- Any outstanding claims for learners with unit/qualification achievement are submitted and externally quality assured by your Quality and Standards Adviser/External Quality Assurer
- Your provider’s recognition certificate is returned to Open Awards
- Any Open Awards certificates you have been unable to issue to learners are destroyed or returned to Open Awards
- All outstanding invoices are paid
- Our logos and/or references to being an Open Awards provider are removed from your website, social media platforms and all resources.

Open Awards reserves the right to withdraw a provider’s recognition if:

- A provider fails to pay monies owing to Open Awards within the standard payment period outlined in our Invoicing Policy
- The provider does not adhere to clauses in the provider Agreement and/or associated guidance.

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