open awards

Changing lives through learning

Access to HE Diploma

Public Services and Allied Professions

AIM: *40011690*

Qualification Guide

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Version Control	
v1.0	New document April 2022
v2.0	Document rebranded. 6 graded credits added to align with revised QAA Diploma specification following minor change process.
v3.0	Update to qualification guide to note barred unit combinations. – December 2025.
v4.0	Update to qualification guide to add in new optional module of Sports and Exercise – approved via minor change.
v4.1	Updated to include new units – August 2026

About the Qualification

Title	Access to HE Diploma (Public Services and Allied Professions)
Qualification Accreditation Number	AIM 40011690
Sector	1.4 Public Services
Level	Level Three
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2027

Purpose	To provide higher education progression opportunities for adults who, because of social, educational or individual circumstances, may have achieved few, if any, prior qualifications.

Available Delivery Modes	Classroom-based Learning Blended Learning

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	600
Guided Learning (hours)	600

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

Any Specified Entry Requirements

This qualification is suitable for learners aged 16+.

There are no specific entry requirements with regards to prior qualifications. However, providers must liaise with Higher Education Institutions when developing their Access to HE programme to identify any additional requirements for progression.
In most cases, we expect learners to have or being working towards GCSE English and maths at grade C/4 or above or equivalents

Recommended Assessment Method Summary

Assessments for Access to HE Diplomas are internally set, internally marked and externally moderated portfolio of evidence

Providers will be required to develop an assessment strategy before they begin delivery of this Diploma. This will ensure that a range of appropriate assessment methods are selected. Consideration must be given to the needs of all learners whilst also making sure that they can develop and evidence the skills, knowledge and confidence that will prepare them for the rigorous assessment regimes in higher education.

Types of evidence could include:

a) Written assignments
b) Essays
c) Reports
d) Presentations
e) Practical assessment
f) Examinations
g) Project work

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

Please see the Access to HE Provider Handbook for more information.

Qualification Structure

Rules of Combination

Credit Value of the Qualification:	60
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	45
Graded Credits	45
Ungraded Credits	15

Graded Units	
Mandatory Academic Unit Group A – Criminology	A minimum of 15 graded credits required.
Optional Academic Unit Group B – Law	Remaining 30 graded credits may be selected from Mandatory Group A or Optional Groups B-E
Optional Academic Unit Group C – Psychology	
Optional Academic Unit Group D – Sociology	
Optional Academic Unit Group E – Sports and Exercise	
Ungraded Units	
Optional Ungraded Unit Group A – Criminology	15 ungraded credits to be selected from Optional Ungraded groups A-E or Ungraded group F (Developmental).
Optional Ungraded Unit Group B – Law	
Optional Ungraded Unit Group C – Psychology	
Optional Ungraded Unit Group D – Sociology	
Optional Ungraded Unit Group E – Sports and Exercise	
Optional Ungraded Unit Group F – Developmental	

In addition, you must ensure that at least one six (6) credit (academic graded, academic ungraded, or ungraded developmental) to be compliant with the requirements of the QAA Access to HE Diploma specification.

You can select up to a maximum of 30 credits made up of six (6) credit (academic graded, ungraded, or ungraded developmental) units.

Please note, units with the same title (ungraded and graded) are barred.

Barred Combinations of Units

Where content between units overlaps, and where units have the same title (ungraded and graded), this would represent a barred unit combination.

Information on units that are barred within this qualification can be found in the table below (these units are also denoted with an asterisk * on the full qualification unit listing).

* The following units reflect barred unit combinations within this Diploma and must **not** be delivered together on the same course.
Developmental
Academic Reading and Note Making Skills – barred against **Communication: Reading Strategies**; **Personal Development: Study Skills**
Communication: Critical Thinking in Academic Writing – barred against **Study Skills: Critical Analysis**; **Communication: Academic Essay Writing**
ICT: Using ICT and Word Processing – barred against **ICT: Using ICT**; **ICT Word Processing**
Study Skills: Research Skills and Using Information – barred against **Study Skills: Developing Research Skills; Study Skills: Using Research Skills**

Qualification Units

Graded

Mandatory Academic Unit Group A – Criminology

(A minimum of 15 graded credits required).

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
GA36REA01	Academic Research Project	6	Level Three
GA33CRI01	Criminal Justice and Social Policy	3	Level Three
GA33CRI11	Criminological Practice	3	Level Three
GA33CRI08	Criminological Statistics	3	Level Three
GA33CRI05	Forensic Evidence	3	Level Three
GA33CRI14	Offender Profiling	3	Level Three
GA33CRI09	Perspectives on Policing	3	Level Three
GA33CRI02	Social Control, Discipline and Regulation	3	Level Three
GA33CRI12	Socio-biological Explanations of Crime	3	Level Three
GA33CRI07	Sociological Explanations of Crime	3	Level Three
GA33CRI04	The Criminology of Prisons	3	Level Three
GA33CRI10	The Origins of Criminology	3	Level Three
GA33CRI06	The Reliability of Evidence	3	Level Three
GA33CRI03	Theories of Crime Causation	3	Level Three
GA33CRI13	Terrorism, the State and Civil Liberties	3	Level Three

Optional Graded Group B – Law

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
GA33LAW31	Contract Law	3	Level Three
GA33LAW30	Employment Law	3	Level Three
GA33LAW12	Homicide	3	Level Three
GA33LAW10	Law and Morality	3	Level Three
GA33LAW07	Law of Tort	3	Level Three
GA33LAW04	Legal Institutions in England and Wales	3	Level Three
GA33LAW19	Negligence	3	Level Three
GA33LAW01	Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person	3	Level Three
GA33LAW15	Police Powers in England and Wales	3	Level Three
GA33LAW11	Precedent, Statute and Statutory Interpretation	3	Level Three

GA33LAW13	Property Offences	3	Level Three
GA33LAW06	The Criminal Process	3	Level Three
GA36LAW40	The Elements of a Crime in Criminal Law	6	Level Three
GA33LAW03	The Jury System	3	Level Three
GA33LAW14	The Legal Profession	3	Level Three
GA33LAW08	Vitiating Factors of a Contract	3	Level Three

Optional Graded Group C – Psychology

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
GA33PSY02	Aggression	3	Level Three
GA33PSY10	Attention	3	Level Three
GA33PSY18	Biopsychology of Stress	3	Level Three
GA33PSY19	Cognitive Development	3	Level Three
GA33PSY15	Concepts of Normality and Mental Health	3	Level Three
GA33PSY04	Early Social Development	3	Level Three
GA33PSY16	Non-Verbal Communication	3	Level Three
GA33PSY12	Perception	3	Level Three
GA33PSY03	Personality Theory	3	Level Three
GA36PSY27	Psychological Approaches and Applications	6	Level Three
GA33PSY09	Psychological Perspectives	3	Level Three
GA33PSY21	Psychological Trauma	3	Level Three
GA33PSY05	Social Influence and Independence	3	Level Three
GA33PSY23	Social Perspectives in Mental Health	3	Level Three
GA33PSY14	Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination	3	Level Three
GA33PSY08	The Nature-Nurture Debate	3	Level Three
GA33PSY07	Transition Psychology	3	Level Three

Optional Graded Group D – Sociology

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
GA33SOC06	Changing Beliefs in British Society	3	Level Three
GA33PSY22	Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing	3	Level Three
GA33SOC29	Community Change and the Environment	3	Level Three
GA33SOC14	Education and Social Inequality	3	Level Three
GA33SOC02	Exploring Social Policy	3	Level Three

GA33SOC01	Feminism and the Household	3	Level Three
GA33SOC09	History of Social Policies	3	Level Three
GA33SOC16	Introduction to Women's Studies	3	Level Three
GA33POL11	Key Traditions in Political Philosophy	3	Level Three
GA33SOC10	Learning and Gender	3	Level Three
GA33SOC05	Poverty in Contemporary Britain	3	Level Three
GA33SOC08	Race in British Society	3	Level Three
GA33SOC28	Regeneration and the City	3	Level Three
GA33PSY23	Social Perspectives in Mental Health	3	Level Three
GA33SOC03	Social Stratification and Inequality	3	Level Three
GA33SOC15	Sociological Theory	3	Level Three
GA33SOC04	Sociology of the Family in Modern Britain	3	Level Three

Optional Graded Group E – Sports and Exercise

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
GA33SPO17	Practical Sport	3	Level Three
GA33SPO14	Training and Fitness	3	Level Three

Ungraded

Optional Ungraded Group A – Criminology

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UA33CRI01	Criminal Justice and Social Policy	3	Level Three
UA33CRI11	Criminological Practice	3	Level Three
UA33CRI08	Criminological Statistics	3	Level Three
UA33CRI05	Forensic Evidence	3	Level Three
UA33CRI14	Offender Profiling	3	Level Three
UA33CRI09	Perspectives on Policing	3	Level Three
UA33CRI02	Social Control, Discipline and Regulation	3	Level Three
UA33CRI12	Socio-biological Explanations of Crime	3	Level Three
UA33CRI07	Sociological Explanations of Crime	3	Level Three
UA33CRI04	The Criminology of Prisons	3	Level Three
UA33CRI10	The Origins of Criminology	3	Level Three
UA33CRI06	The Reliability of Evidence	3	Level Three
UA33CRI03	Theories of Crime Causation	3	Level Three

UA33CRI13	Terrorism, the State and Civil Liberties	3	Level Three

Optional Ungraded Group B – Law

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UA33LAW31	Contract Law	3	Level Three
UA33LAW30	Employment Law	3	Level Three
UA33LAW12	Homicide	3	Level Three
UA33LAW10	Law and Morality	3	Level Three
UA33LAW07	Law of Tort	3	Level Three
UA33LAW04	Legal Institutions in England and Wales	3	Level Three
UA33LAW19	Negligence	3	Level Three
UA33LAW01	Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person	3	Level Three
UA33LAW15	Police Powers in England and Wales	3	Level Three
UA33LAW11	Precedent, Statute and Statutory Interpretation	3	Level Three
UA33LAW13	Property Offences	3	Level Three
UA33LAW06	The Criminal Process	3	Level Three
UA36LAW40	The Elements of a Crime in Criminal Law	6	Level Three
UA33LAW03	The Jury System	3	Level Three
UA33LAW14	The Legal Profession	3	Level Three
UA33LAW08	Vitiating Factors of a Contract	3	Level Three

Optional Ungraded Group C – Psychology

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UA33PSY02	Aggression	3	Level Three
UA33PSY10	Attention	3	Level Three
UA33PSY18	Biopsychology of Stress	3	Level Three
UA33PSY19	Cognitive Development	3	Level Three
UA33PSY15	Concepts of Normality and Mental Health	3	Level Three
UA33PSY04	Early Social Development	3	Level Three
UA33PSY16	Non-Verbal Communication	3	Level Three
UA33PSY12	Perception	3	Level Three
UA33PSY03	Personality Theory	3	Level Three
UA36PSY27	Psychological Approaches and Applications	6	Level Three
UA33PSY09	Psychological Perspectives	3	Level Three

UA33PSY21	Psychological Trauma	3	Level Three
UA33PSY05	Social Influence and Independence	3	Level Three
UA33PSY23	Social Perspectives in Mental Health	3	Level Three
UA33PSY14	Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination	3	Level Three
UA33PSY08	The Nature-Nurture Debate	3	Level Three
UA33PSY07	Transition Psychology	3	Level Three

Optional Ungraded Group D – Sociology

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UA33SOC06	Changing Beliefs in British Society	3	Level Three
UA33PSY22	Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing	3	Level Three
UA33SOC29	Community Change and the Environment	3	Level Three
UA33SOC14	Education and Social Inequality	3	Level Three
UA33SOC02	Exploring Social Policy	3	Level Three
UA33SOC01	Feminism and the Household	3	Level Three
UA33SOC09	History of Social Policies	3	Level Three
UA33SOC16	Introduction to Women's Studies	3	Level Three
UA33POL11	Key Traditions in Political Philosophy	3	Level Three
UA33SOC10	Learning and Gender	3	Level Three
UA33SOC05	Poverty in Contemporary Britain	3	Level Three
UA33SOC08	Race in British Society	3	Level Three
UA33SOC28	Regeneration and the City	3	Level Three
UA33PSY23	Social Perspectives in Mental Health	3	Level Three
UA33SOC03	Social Stratification and Inequality	3	Level Three
UA33SOC15	Sociological Theory	3	Level Three
UA33SOC04	Sociology of the Family in Modern Britain	3	Level Three

Optional Ungraded Group E – Sports and Exercise

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UA33SPO17	Practical Sport	3	Level Three
UA33SPO14	Training and Fitness	3	Level Three

Optional Ungraded Group F – Developmental

Unit Code	Unit Name	Credits	Level
UD33DEV39	Academic Reading and Note-Making Skills*	3	Level Three
UD33DEV23	Communication: Academic Essay Writing*	3	Level Three
UD36DEV35	Communication: Critical Thinking in Academic Writing*	6	Level Three
UD33DEV29	Communication: Portfolio of Writing Exercises	3	Level Three
UD33DEV25	Communication: Presentation Skills	3	Level Three
UD23DEV21	Communication: Punctuation and Grammar Skills	3	Level Two
UD23DEV20	Communication: Reading Strategies*	3	Level Two
UD33DEV24	Communication: Report Writing	3	Level Three
UD23DEV19	Communication: Speaking and Listening Skills	3	Level Two
UD23DEV22	Communication: Writing for Meaning	3	Level Two
UD33DEV10	ICT: Advance Use of ICT	3	Level Three
UD33DEV15	ICT: Advanced Word Processing	3	Level Three
UD23DEV09	ICT: Using ICT*	3	Level Two
UD26DEV24	ICT: Using ICT and Word Processing*	6	Level Two
UD23DEV11	ICT: Using Presentation Software	3	Level Two
UD23DEV13	ICT: Using Spreadsheets	3	Level Two
UD23DEV14	ICT: Word Processing*	3	Level Two
UD33DEV27	Personal Development: Applying for HE	3	Level Three
UD33DEV28	Personal Development: Setting Targets and Reflective Practice	3	Level Three
UD33DEV26	Personal Development: Study Skills*	3	Level Three
UD33DEV32	Professional Behaviours	3	Level Three
UD33DEV30	Research: Practical Research for Psychology	3	Level Three
UD33DEV34	Safeguarding	3	Level Two
UD33DEV31	Science: Biological Practical Skills	3	Level Three
UD23DEV06	Science: Introduction to Biology	3	Level Two
UD23DEV08	Science: Introduction to Chemistry	3	Level Two
UD23DEV07	Science: Introduction to Physics	3	Level Two
UD36DEV37	Study Skills: Academic Skills for Access to HE	6	Level Three

UD36DEV38	Study Skills: Access Research Project	6	Level Three
UD33DEV18	Study Skills: Critical Analysis*	3	Level Three
UD33DEV16	Study Skills: Developing Research Skills*	3	Level Three
UD36DEV36	Study Skills: Research Skills and Using Information*	6	Level Three
UD33DEV17	Study Skills: Using Research Skills*	3	Level Three
UA33DEV35	The Prevent Duty	3	Level Two
UD23DEV02	Use of Number: Data Handling and Probability	3	Level Two
UD23DEV03	Use of Number: Maths Project	3	Level Two
UD23DEV04	Use of Number: Measure and Shape	3	Level Two
UD23DEV01	Use of Number: Numbers and Algebra	3	Level Two

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

If you are approved to deliver Access to HE Diplomas with Open Awards, you can apply deliver this Diploma by completing a Programme Approval Form and submitting via the Programme Approval workflow event on the Open Awards portal. For more information, see the Programme Approval Guidance document, Provider Handbook, or contact the team on 0151 494 2072 or customerservices@openawards.org.uk.

If you are not already an approved Access to HE provider, please contact the team on enquiries@openawards.org.uk to discuss the approval process.

Registering Learners

Access to HE learners should be registered within 6 weeks of the learner's individual start date or before the learner's official (usually UCAS) application deadline via the Open Awards Secure Portal. Please make sure that learners are registered with the correct details and on the correct Diploma. If learners are registered incorrectly, there will be an administration charge to rectify errors. Learners can be added onto existing course runs but are subject to the 6-week registration deadline.

Amendments or late registrations may be requested up to 26 weeks from the learner's start date but are only considered in extenuating circumstances and on an individual basis. These requests may result in further investigations by Open Awards and control measures may be applied.

Learner registration data can be submitted using the provided 'LRF (Access to HE) template or via a report generated from your own MIS system. The data provided must be in accordance with the Access to the HE Data Specification document which is available via the secure portal.

You will need to register your learners via the Portal. More information can be found in our Access to HE Provider Handbook.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must be done so in accordance with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) regulatory guidelines and in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes. Please see our Access to HE Provider Handbook for more information.

Provider Staff Requirements

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

For the delivery and assessment of this qualification, it is expected that staff have a qualification at the level higher than the qualification in a related academic subject and have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are occupationally competent and have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

Assessment

Each Access to HE Diploma must be supported by assessment plans to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and confidence that will prepare them for the rigorous assessment regimes in higher education.

Tutors must develop plans which show how they intend to assess each unit and the Diploma as a whole. These plans must be internally moderated. The assessment plan should cover the whole Diploma and include:

- Number of assignments
- Type and range of assessments
- How tasks will allow for differentiation
- An assessment strategy for the whole Diploma
- A schedule of delivery and assessment/ scheme of work
- Consideration as to whether the strategy prepares learners for Higher Education

In order to achieve the Diploma, learners must meet all Learning Outcomes and associated Assessment Criteria in all units approved in the Diploma specification.

Each Assessment Criterion must be assessed only once. For graded units, a grade can only be determined upon completion of all unit learning outcomes.

There are three Grading Standards which must be applied equally to all units and all assessments within graded academic units. The three grading standards are:

1. Knowledge and Understanding
2. Subject Specific Skills
3. Transferable Skills

For more information on grading, please see the Provider Handbook or visit the QAA website here.

A variety of assessment methods should be used which will allow learners the opportunity to develop experience and skills required for HE study.

Where a unit is assessed by more than one assignment, the assessment strategy must clearly state which graded descriptors will be considered for each assignment and how you will apply a single grade for the unit.

Assessment practices must reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Open Awards. Reasonable adjustments may be required for individual learners to enable them to undertake assessments fairly. Please see our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy for more information.

Preparing Assignments

One of the many benefits of an Open Awards Access to HE Diploma is that tutors design the assignments for their own provision to suit the context of delivery and to make the most of the variety of assessments methods available in individual circumstances. Please see our Access to HE Provider Handbook for more information

Drafts, Submissions and Re-submissions

It is a requirement that you publish procedures for the formal submission of work for assessment in your course handbook. These procedures must be the same for all the Access Diplomas that you are approved to deliver.

Please see our Access to HE Provider Handbook for more information

Internal Verification

Internal verification is a process by which the provider systematically samples and evaluates its assessment practices and decisions, and acts on the findings to ensure consistency and fairness. The main purpose is to improve and standardise practice in the assessment of learners.

The Access to HE Coordinator must take responsibility for internal verification

of all Access to HE Diplomas at your organisation and we will expect that you have the appropriate levels of resources to implement these processes.

Verification activities must include:

- Pre-delivery verification
- Verification of achievement

Internal Standardisation

Standardisation is a vital component of any robust quality assurance system and as a condition of provider approval all Open Awards Access to HE providers agree to participate in standardisation activities.

Where more than one tutor / assessor makes assessment decisions and recommendations for the award of credit to learners on the same Diploma or similar courses it is essential that internal verification processes include the standardisation of their practice.

Open Awards expect providers to plan and undertake standardisation of internally- set tasks and the outcomes of internal assessment **at least twice a year**.

Please see our Access to HE Provider Handbook for more information on verification and standardisation activities required.

External Standardisation

Standardisation is a vital component of any robust quality assurance system and as a condition of provider approval all Open Awards Access to HE providers agree to participate in standardisation activities, both internally and externally.

Open Awards runs a series of standardisation activities that are accessible to all Access to HE providers.

Open Awards runs live standardisation events for each pathway to allow practitioners to peer review and learn from each other through networking. We are aware that some staff may wish to participate in standardisation activities but will be unable to attend events at the Open Awards office.

We also offer online standardisation activities. You will be provided with access to an online repository of standardisation activities, training and opportunities to share best

practices.

For more information on each of these processes, please see the Access to HE Provider Handbook.

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.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

Learners presenting evidence of accredited prior learning on non-Access courses can apply for exemption for credit on relevant Level 2 and Level 3 units where appropriate.

Learners who have achieved Access to HE Diploma credits (either from Open Awards or another AVA) may wish to claim credit towards an Open Awards Diploma. Credit transfer is dependent on the content of the unit/s from which those credits were gained matching the content of the unit/s for which they wish to claim.

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

Appendices and Links

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

1. Provider Handbook
2. Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Procedures
3. Complaints Policy
4. Equality and Diversity Policy
5. Invoicing Policy
6. Privacy Policy
7. Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and Procedures

Additional supporting documents can be viewed in the Open Awards Portal.

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