Change lives through learning

EASTERN EDUCATION GROUP

Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in

Quality Improvement in Pharmacy Technical Services (RQF)

Ofqual: 610/8289/2

Qualification Guide

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Version Control	
v1.0	New qualification October 2026.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in Quality Improvement in Pharmacy Technical Services (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	610/8289/2
Sector	1.2 Nursing, and subjects and vocations allied to medicine
Level	Level Four
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2032

Purpose	Prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area
Sub-Purpose	Develop knowledge and/or skills relevant to a particular specialisation within an occupation or set of occupations

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	550
Guided Learning Hours	330

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre -16	x
16 – 18	✓
18+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	Delivery is currently restricted to Eastern Education Group. Learners must have access to a suitable workplace and the activities required to demonstrate occupational competence

Qualification Overview

The Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in Quality Improvement in Pharmacy Technical Services has been developed in partnership with Eastern Education Group to address workforce development needs in the quality assurance and improvement of pharmacy technical services.

The qualification is designed for learners seeking to develop specialist knowledge and skills in quality assurance, quality management and continuous improvement within pharmacy technical services.

It covers quality governance, regulatory compliance, risk management, audit, quality investigations, documentation, data integrity, workforce quality assurance and the improvement of technical service processes.

The qualification consists of nine mandatory units, with an additional optional unit covering quality oversight of aseptic processes. This enables learners to develop a common foundation in quality improvement while undertaking additional specialist learning where relevant to their role or intended progression.

The qualification has been developed with reference to the ST0853 Quality Practitioner apprenticeship standard. It may complement apprenticeship learning where appropriate but is not a mandatory or integrated requirement of the apprenticeship and may be undertaken independently.

The qualification is **not** designed to meet General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) requirements for pharmacy technician or pharmacy support staff education and training. It is not approved by the GPhC or Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) and does not confer professional registration, CQI recognition or authorisation to undertake regulated pharmacy activities.

Successful achievement may support progression into specialist quality assurance, quality improvement or related technical service responsibilities, further study or continuing professional development. It does not independently confirm full occupational competence as a Quality Practitioner or pharmacy technician.

Any Specified Entry Requirements

The qualification is suitable for learners aged 16 and over who are working in, or seeking to develop their knowledge and skills for progression into, pharmacy technical services and related quality assurance and improvement roles.

There are no specified requirements for prior qualifications, occupational experience or professional registration.

There are no prescribed English or mathematics qualification requirements at entry. Where learners require support to develop these skills, Eastern Education Group will identify and arrange appropriate provision.

Before enrolment, Eastern Education Group will assess the learner's starting knowledge, intended progression and individual support needs to ensure that the qualification is appropriate.

Learners must have access to suitable technical information, resources and opportunities to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills required by the mandatory units and any additional optional unit undertaken.

Where practical activities are required, appropriate workplace opportunities, supervised projects or permitted controlled assessment arrangements must be available.

Learners must undertake activities within the limits of their role, competence and authority.

Assessment Summary

The qualification is internally assessed by Eastern Education Group and externally quality assured by Open Awards.

Learners must produce a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of all learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the nine mandatory units.

Assessment may include assignments, technical reports, workplace documentation, projects, practical activities, professional discussions and other appropriate evidence.

Where assessment criteria require practical skills, learners must demonstrate those skills through suitable workplace activities or permitted controlled assessment arrangements. Written explanations alone are insufficient where practical performance is required.

The qualification is graded Pass/Fail. Learners must achieve all required assessment criteria to pass.

Detailed assessment requirements for individual units are provided in the unit specifications.

Qualification Structure

Rules of Combination

Credit Value of the Qualification:	55
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	39
Mandatory Units A:	55 credits required
Optional Units B:	0 credits required; an additional 8-credit unit is available

All nine mandatory units must be achieved to be awarded the qualification.

Learners may undertake the additional optional unit where this is relevant to their occupational role or intended progression. This is not required for qualification achievement.

Qualification Units

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

Unit Reference Number	Unit name	Credits	Level
Y/652/4162	Assurance of Quality Documentation and Data Integrity	5	4
J/652/4158	Assurance of Regulatory and Good Practice Requirements in Pharmacy Technical Services	4	4
R/652/4160	Audit and Assurance of Pharmacy Technical Service Processes	6	3
H/652/4166	Leadership and Accountability in Pharmacy Technical Service Quality Assurance	5	4
T/652/4161	Quality Deviation Investigation and Corrective and Preventive Action	8	5
H/652/4157	Quality Governance and Assurance Systems in Pharmacy Technical Services	6	4
K/652/4159	Quality Risk Management and Incident Learning in Pharmacy Technical Services	6	4
A/652/4163	Quality Systems Improvement in Pharmacy Technical Services	8	5
D/652/4164	Workforce Quality Assurance and Quality Culture in Pharmacy Technical Services	5	4

Optional Units B (Additional optional unit, not required for qualification achievement)

Unit reference	Unit name	Credits	Level
F/652/4165	Quality Oversight of Aseptic Processes in Pharmacy Technical Services	8	4

Learners who successfully complete the optional unit in addition to the nine mandatory units will achieve 63 credits in total. The additional unit may be recorded on the learner's transcript in accordance with Open Awards certification arrangements.

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

Delivery of this qualification is currently restricted to Eastern College Group. The qualification is not available for approval by other providers.

Eastern Education Group must hold Open Awards qualification approval before delivery or learner registration commences and must continue to meet the qualification-specific requirements throughout delivery.

How to Deliver

To request to deliver this qualification, login to the Portal and then click on 'Tracking' and 'Initiate a Workflow'. Select to Apply to Deliver Regulated Qualification(s) – Specialist resources.

As part of the qualification approval process, the approved delivery provider must submit a delivery and assessment plan demonstrating how the qualification will be delivered and assessed in accordance with the requirements set out in this guide.

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

Learners need to be registered via the Portal 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

The approved delivery provider must ensure that the correct qualification route and units are selected at registration.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must comply with Ofqual's regulatory requirements and Open Awards' quality assurance policies and procedures. Providers must also comply with the requirements of the Qualification Assessment Strategy and the Open Awards Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy. Further information is available on our website.

Open Awards will undertake external quality assurance to confirm that assessment decisions are valid and consistent and that providers continue to meet the requirements of the qualification.

Provider Staff Requirements

Providers must have sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver, assess and internally quality assure the qualification. Staff must have current occupational or subject expertise and relevant experience appropriate to their role and to the units they are responsible for.

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

Assessors

Assessors must have relevant occupational or subject expertise and experience in quality assurance and improvement within pharmacy technical services, together with appropriate knowledge of the regulatory and technical requirements relevant to the units they assess.

Assessors must hold, or be working towards, an appropriate assessor qualification and maintain their competence through continuing professional development.

Where specialist expertise is required for particular units, Eastern Education Group must ensure that appropriately competent assessors or additional subject specialists are available.

Internal Quality Assurers (IQA)

Internal Quality Assurers must have appropriate occupational or subject knowledge and experience relevant to quality assurance and improvement within pharmacy technical services, together with the competence necessary to quality assure assessment decisions at the required level.

They must hold, or be working towards, an appropriate IQA qualification and maintain relevant knowledge through continuing professional development.

IQA arrangements must provide independent scrutiny of assessment decisions. Individuals must not internally quality assure assessment decisions they have made themselves.

Specialist Resources

Eastern Education Group must ensure that learners have access to suitable technical information, quality management systems, records, resources and assessment opportunities relevant to the mandatory units and any additional optional unit undertaken.

Appropriate workplace activities, supervised projects or permitted controlled assessment arrangements must be available where practical skills are required.

Learners undertaking the optional aseptic quality oversight unit must have access to suitable technical information and quality assurance evidence relating to aseptic services. The unit does not require learners to undertake aseptic preparation or product release.

The resources required will depend on the units being undertaken and their specific assessment requirements.

Assessment

The qualification is internally assessed with external quality assurance by Open Awards. Assessment evidence is generated throughout the programme and compiled within a portfolio demonstrating achievement of the assessment criteria. The approved provider must assess all units in accordance with the Open Awards Guide to Provider Assessment and Guide to Internal Quality Assurance.

Each learner must produce a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of all required assessment criteria. Assessment methods must be appropriate to the qualification level and the knowledge, understanding and skills being assessed.

The portfolio must contain evidence that is:

- **Validity** – assessment measures the knowledge and practical skills identified within the qualification
- **Reliability** – assessment decisions are consistent between assessors, cohorts and over time
- **Authenticity** – evidence is the learner's own work
- **Sufficiency** – sufficient evidence is available to support assessment decisions
- **Fairness** – assessment is accessible whilst maintaining qualification standards
- **Manageability** – assessment methods are proportionate and appropriate to the qualification purpose
- **Holistic assessment** – wherever appropriate, a single assessment activity may generate evidence for multiple learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Portfolio evidence should be clearly mapped to the relevant learning outcomes and assessment criteria and may include both knowledge and practical evidence generated throughout the programme.

Evidence included within learner portfolios may include, but is not limited to:

Assessment method	Typical application
Direct observation	Practical workplace or controlled-environment activities
Product evidence	Workplace documents, technical records, reports and other learner-generated outputs
Portfolio of evidence	Collation of evidence demonstrating achievement across required units
Professional discussion	Knowledge, technical reasoning, decision-making and authentication or evaluation of practical evidence
Oral or written questioning	Knowledge and understanding
Expert witness testimony	Supporting evidence of activities directly observed by an appropriately competent witness
Reflective accounts	Evaluation of professional practice and learning where appropriate to the AC
Written assignments	Knowledge, analysis, evaluation and written recommendations
Case studies and scenarios	Application of knowledge and technical judgement in realistic contexts
Projects	Planning, investigation, practical application, evaluation and improvement

This list is not exhaustive. Alternative assessment methods may be used where they are appropriate to the assessment criteria and have been approved by Open Awards.

For this qualification, practical assessment requirements vary according to the unit and assessment criteria. Evidence may be generated through authentic workplace activities or appropriate controlled assessment arrangements, including realistic simulations where permitted.

Where practical performance is required, learners must demonstrate the specified skills. Written explanations or hypothetical responses alone must not replace required practical evidence.

Detailed requirements relating to practical assessment, assessment methods and the use of simulation are provided in the qualification assessment strategy and relevant unit specifications.

Assessors must review all learner evidence and confirm that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been achieved before awarding a unit. They must also be satisfied that the evidence submitted is authentic and attributable to the learner.

Providers must retain assessment records (for example, feedback sheets, individual progress records and group progress records) and make them available to Internal Quality Assurers and the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team upon request.

Providers must apply the Open Awards Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy (available on the Portal) to ensure learners are not disadvantaged during assessment.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Learners must ensure that all assessment evidence is their own work and accurately reflects their knowledge, understanding and skills. The use of AI must comply with Open Awards' policies and must not be used to fabricate technical information, workplace activities, assessment records or evidence of practical performance.

Grading

The qualification is graded Pass/Fail.

To achieve a Pass, learners must meet all learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the nine mandatory units, achieving a minimum of 55 credits.

Learners must demonstrate the specialist knowledge, understanding and applied quality assurance and improvement skills required by the units, including the ability to evaluate quality information, identify risks and develop justified recommendations within their professional responsibilities.

The additional optional unit is not required for qualification achievement.

Resits/ resubmissions

Where learners do not achieve one or more assessment criteria, they will normally have a maximum of two further opportunities to provide the required evidence.

Reassessment should focus on the criteria not yet achieved rather than requiring learners to repeat an entire assessment where this is not necessary.

Resubmissions should normally be completed within two weeks of feedback, unless otherwise agreed in accordance with Open Awards' requirements.

Training and support

Open Awards provides a range of training and support resources for Providers. Online training is available free of charge through our online platform.

Information about available training and access arrangements is provided during provider approval and is available through the Open Awards website.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance must provide appropriate coverage of the mandatory units and any additional optional units delivered, all assessors and the different assessment methods used.

Particular attention must be given to the validity and consistency of assessment decisions, including the assessment of applied quality assurance and improvement skills, practical activities and the use of controlled assessment arrangements where applicable.

Sampling arrangements must reflect the qualification's risk classification and the requirements of the Open Awards CASS strategy.

Prior to the commencement of each delivery programme, the approved delivery provider must complete an internal pre-delivery review to confirm that appropriate arrangements are in place for delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance.

The pre-delivery review should confirm that:

- assessment activities appropriately cover all learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- assessment methods are suitable for the qualification level and unit requirements
- portfolio guidance and assessment documentation are current
- observation arrangements are appropriate
- grading arrangements are understood by assessment staff;
- assessment schedules are achievable
- learner support arrangements are in place
- internal quality assurance activities have been planned.

Open Awards may review these arrangements as part of pre-delivery quality assurance activity where appropriate. Providers must ensure assessment decisions are internally quality assured by suitably competent staff before certification claims are made. The approved delivery provider must operate a documented, risk-based sampling strategy.

This qualification has been rated as medium-risk.

The sampling strategy should ensure appropriate coverage of:

- all mandatory units and any additional optional units delivered
- all assessors
- practical assessment activities where applicable
- portfolio evidence
- knowledge-based assessment
- Pass/Fail assessment decisions
- learners representing different achievement profiles
- assessment decisions identified as presenting increased risk.

The Internal Quality Assurer should increase sampling where risk factors are identified.

Examples of increased risk include:

- newly approved assessor
- newly appointed Internal Quality Assurers
- first delivery of a qualification
- revised assessment materials
- previous External Quality Assurance actions
- learner appeals
- suspected malpractice
- inconsistent assessment decisions identified through previous sampling.

Sampling should include both formative sampling during programme delivery and summative sampling before certification claims are submitted.

External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Open Awards operates an external quality assurance process to monitor provider compliance and ensure consistent assessment standards. External Quality Assurers will review assessment and internal quality assurance arrangements and may sample learner evidence and assessment decisions.

Details of the External Quality Assurance and Compliance activities are outlined in the Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny (CASS) strategy.

External quality assurance will include scrutiny of assessment decisions, practical assessment arrangements where applicable, and evidence supporting achievement of the mandatory and additional optional units.

Eastern Education Group must make relevant assessment, internal quality assurance and supporting evidence available to Open Awards in accordance with its quality assurance requirements.

External Standardisation

Providers are expected to participate in Open Awards standardisation activities where requested. Standardisation supports consistency of assessment decisions and provides opportunities to share good practice.

Details of upcoming events are available on the Open Awards website.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) enables evidence of prior achievement to be considered where it demonstrates that the requirements of a unit have already been met.

Evidence of learning must be sufficient, reliable and valid.

Providers must identify any claims for RPL or exemption at the point of learner registration. All RPL decisions must comply with the Open Awards Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and will be subject to external quality assurance.

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:

- Provider Handbook
- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Invoicing Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedures
- Prevent Policy
- Privacy Notice - Learners
- Privacy Policy
- Provider Approval Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and Procedures

Further supporting information can be found on the Open Awards Portal, including:

- Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy
- Guide to Provider Assessment
- Guide to Internal Quality Assurance

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Open Awards
17 De Havilland Drive,
Estuary Commerce Park
Speke
Liverpool
L24 8N
0151 494 2072
enquiries@openawards.org.uk
www.openawards.org.uk
@openawards