Change lives through learning

Open Awards Level 1

Personal Project

Qualification Guide

Contents

Qualification Documentation 4
About the Qualification 5
Qualification Suite 7
Qualification Purpose 7
Qualification Language 8
Curriculum and Qualification Framework Wales Alignment 8
Specified Entry Requirements 9
Accessibility and Inclusion 10
Assessment Overview 12
Progression 14
Qualification Structure 15
Qualification Content 15
Assessment Structure 24
Delivering this Qualification 27
Becoming a Provider 27
How to Deliver 27
Documents Required for Delivery 27
Registering Learners 28
Identification and Learner Authenticity Identification Requirements 28
Withdrawal or Partial Achievement 28
Submitting Grades and Certification 29
Delivery and Resources 30
Provider Staff Requirements 30
Assessment Conditions 31
Support expectations 34
Making Assessment Decisions 36
Resubmissions 38
Learner Feedback 41
Delivery and Assessment Planning 43
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) 44
Training and support 46
Standardisation 47
External Quality Assurance 49
Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL) 56
Appendices and Links 57
Appendix 1 – Progression through Personal Project Suite 58

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Qualification Documentation

The delivery, assessment and quality assurance of Open Awards qualifications are managed through different, interrelated documents as outlined below. Providers must ensure that delivery, assessment and quality assurance decisions align with all documents listed below.

Open Awards Provider Handbook	Sets out the organisational, administrative and quality assurance requirements that apply to all Open Awards providers.
Open Awards Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy (CASS)	Explains Open Awards' Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny arrangements, including moderation, risk-based sampling, provider monitoring and standardisation.
Qualification Guide	Provides qualification-specific information including the qualification structure, assessment approach, quality assurance requirements, termly assessment cycles, and provider responsibilities. Intended for all staff involved in delivering the qualification.
Assessment Setting Specification	Assessment Component specific documents that define the approved assessment framework including, where applicable, Assessment Strands, Assessment Descriptors, assessment conditions, aggregation rules and evidence requirements that must be followed when assessing the qualification.
Guide to Provider Assessment	Practical guidance for assessors on planning assessments, devising assignments, making assessment decisions and recording assessment decisions.
Guide to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Practical guidance for IQAs on sampling, standardisation, reviewing assessment decisions, maintaining consistency and preparing evidence for external moderation.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Level 1 Personal Project
Qualification Accreditation Number	C00/5327/8
Sector	14 Preparation for Life and Work
Level	Level One (1)
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/08/2034

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

Guided Learning Hours	
Guided Learning (hours)	60
Total Qualification Time (hours)	80

Guided Learning Hours represent the time during which learners are directly supported by a teacher, tutor or trainer. GLH includes both teaching and learning activities and supervised project completion.

GLH may include:

- teaching and learning activities to develop the four integral skills
- guided exploration and selection of project topics
- planning and goal-setting activities
- development of project proposals
- supervised project work and progress reviews
- teacher-led discussions and checkpoints
- reflective evaluation activities
- supervised assessment activity.

Teaching and learning activities are expected to take place throughout delivery, supporting learners in developing the skills required to successfully complete the project.

The qualification is assessed through one integrated Personal Project Assessment Component, completed over time under the guided and controlled assessment conditions set out in the Assessment Setting Specification.

The 60 Guided Learning Hours include both teaching and learning activities and supervised project work.

The percentage weightings shown within the Assessment Structure section relate to the relative contribution of each Assessment Strand. These weightings are used when calculating the overall Qualification Outcome (Grade) and do not represent the allocation of Guided Learning Hours.

Providers may organise delivery flexibly. The allocation of time across stages of the project is indicative and not mandated, enabling providers to adapt delivery to their curriculum context.

Indicative use of GLH

Stage of Learning	Indicative GLH	Purpose
Introduction and project preparation	10 hours	Introducing the project approach, exploring topics, and developing understanding of the four integral skills
Project proposal and planning	10 hours	Selecting a topic, setting goals and creating a project plan
Project process	22 hours	Carrying out the project, gathering information and solving problems
Project outcome	10 hours	Producing and presenting the final outcome
Reflection and evaluation	8 hours	Reviewing the project and reflecting on learning

Teaching and learning activities to develop the four integral skills take place throughout these stages and are integrated into the delivery of the project.

The indicative GLH distribution across the project stages represents the combined time for teaching, preparation, supervised project work and reflection activities. It does not represent the duration of a single assessment session.

The additional time reflected within TQT represents independent research, development of the project outcome and reflective activities completed outside of supervised teaching time.

Qualification Suite

This qualification is part of the suite of Personal Project qualifications designed specifically to support the 14-16 Curriculum for Wales.

Title	Level	Guided Learning Hours	Grades
Open Awards Entry Level Personal Project	Entry Level	60 GLH	Entry 1 Pass Entry 2 Pass Entry 3 Pass Fail
Open Awards Level 1 Personal Project	Level 1	60 GLH	Level 1 Pass Level 1 Merit Level 1 Distinction Fail
Open Awards Level 2 Personal Project	Level 2	60 GLH	Level 2 Pass Level 2 Merit Level 2 Distinction Fail

Qualification Purpose

The Level 1 Personal Project has been designed to enable learners to demonstrate application of the four integral skills through in-depth engagement with a subject of their choice through a personal project:

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Personal effectiveness
- Planning and organising.

This qualification aligns with Curriculum for Wales Progression Step 5 (emerging) by promoting expectations of increasing independence, goal-setting, and sustained engagement.

In addition, the qualification has been designed to support the four purposes within Curriculum for Wales to support learners to become:

- **Ambitious, capable learners:** through planning, managing time, setting goals and applying feedback
- **Enterprising, creative contributors:** through generating ideas, producing original outcomes, and presenting work
- **Ethical, informed citizens:** through purposeful topic selection linked to community, social issues, or personal interests
- **Healthy, confident individuals:** through building resilience, confidence, and the ability to evaluate performance.

The Curriculum for Wales emphasises integrating cross-cutting themes into qualifications to provide learners with a holistic and inclusive education. These themes include Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Human Rights Education and Diversity, and Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE).

Consideration must be given to cross-cutting themes when planning the teaching and learning of this qualification, and in supporting learners to identify a suitable topic, focus or context for their project.

Qualification Language

This qualification can be taught and assessed in either English or Welsh language.

Providers will be asked to confirm the learner's language of assessment at the point of registration, wherever possible, so that appropriate Welsh- or English-language quality assurance and moderation arrangements can be made.

All qualification materials and guidance will be made available in both English and Welsh languages.

Providers must ensure that learners have access to the language of their choice and that evidence submitted for assessment remains consistent with the learner's selected language of assessment.

Any translation or interpretation support must be used in line with the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

Curriculum and Qualification Framework Wales Alignment

The Level 1 Personal Project aligns with the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) Level 1 descriptor.

Learners at this level demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills to carry out straightforward tasks, taking some responsibility for their own learning and performance.

The qualification requires learners to plan and complete a simple project, applying basic research, problem-solving, and reflection.

It provides clear progression from Entry Level 3, moving from supported participation to increasingly independent task management and basic evaluation.

Specified Entry Requirements

This qualification is suitable for learners who are:

- typically aged 14–16 years
- working broadly at Level 1 of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)
- capable of completing a structured project with some guidance and supervision.

The qualification may be delivered to learners aged 16+ where appropriate to their individual learning plan and broader curriculum.

There are no formal prior qualifications or achievements required for entry. Providers must use initial assessment and diagnostic tools to ensure the qualification is appropriate for each learner's current level of skills and understanding.

Learners would normally have:

- achieved skills at Entry Level 3 or above in literacy and personal development, or
- completed prior units in Personal and Social Development (PSD), Independent Living Skills, or Employability Skills at Entry Level 3 as a minimum, or
- demonstrated the ability to follow multi-step instructions, research information, and evaluate their own work with limited guidance.

Learners who have participated in learning experiences broadly aligned to Curriculum for Wales Progression Step 5 (emerging) (learners show independence, self-reflection, and sustained engagement with tasks) may be well prepared for this qualification.

This is not a formal entry requirement, and providers should use professional judgement and initial assessment to determine learner readiness.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The qualification is designed to be fully accessible to learners with a wide range of abilities and additional learning needs (ALN).

Providers must ensure fair access through reasonable adjustments, which may include:

- Adapted learning environments, resources, or timings where needed
- Alternative evidence formats (written, digital, oral, visual, or practical)
- Assistive technology, communication aids, or adapted assessment materials where appropriate, provided these support access only and do not guide or structure the learner's response
- Additional support for planning and organisation where this does not compromise assessment validity.

Accessibility arrangements may include alternative evidence formats, assistive technologies, or adapted materials where these reflect the learner's normal way of working or address an identified need. All such arrangements must enable the learner to demonstrate the full requirements of the Learning Outcomes at the appropriate level.

Adaptations may change how a learner accesses or presents the assessment, but must not change what is being assessed, the level of demand, or the requirement for independent performance.

To maintain consistency and validity:

- adaptations must not provide structured guidance that directs the learner's response
- adaptations must not reduce the complexity or scope of the assessment
- learner evidence must remain authentic and demonstrate independent decision-making, planning and evaluation.

All accessibility arrangements must operate within the defined assessment controls for the qualification and must not introduce additional support beyond what is permitted under those conditions.

Further detail on the types of permitted adaptations, conditions for their use, and requirements for recording and quality assurance are set out in the Assessment Setting Specification.

Providers must ensure that all reasonable adjustments preserve the validity of the assessment by ensuring that decisions, ideas, and reflections remain authentically the learner's own. Where support workers, interpreters, or communication aids are used, providers must record:

- what support was given
- why it was required
- how the learner's autonomy was preserved.

Reasonable adjustment records may be reviewed by Open Awards through moderation and wider risk-based quality assurance activity to confirm that adjustments have been applied consistently and appropriately.

Please see Open Awards' Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy available on the Portal for more information.

Assessment Overview

The qualification is assessed through one integrated Personal Project Assessment Component.

Assessment must be conducted in accordance with the mandatory Assessment Setting Specification, which defines the assessment framework, Assessment Strands, Assessment Descriptors, assessment conditions and evidence requirements.

The project is completed through the stages of planning, carrying out, completing and reviewing a personal project. Evidence generated throughout these stages is assessed holistically against the four Assessment Strands defined in the Assessment Setting Specification.

The Assessment Strands organise assessment decisions within the integrated project and are not separate Assessment Components or separate assessment events.

The project is entirely non-examination based.

A wide range of project types is permitted e.g.,

- A written report or presentation
- A digital product (e.g. video, audio recording, or infographic)
- A creative artefact (e.g. model, painting, display board)
- A performance or event (e.g. short play, workshop, demonstration).

The learner's proposed project context must be reviewed and approved by the teacher/assessor before the learner begins substantive Project Process activity. Project Context Approval confirms that the proposed project is appropriately scoped, manageable and capable of providing opportunities to generate evidence across all four Assessment Strands.

Project Context Approval is not an assessment or grading decision.

Further detail on the requirements for approving project proposals is provided in the Assessment Setting Specification.

Projects are expected to be submitted for assessment in a digital format, with a range of supporting evidence (written, digital, visual, oral etc.). Paper-based submissions are accepted to ensure accessibility for the individual learner, but Open Awards recommends a 'digital first' approach where possible.

The project is provider-assessed using the published Assessment Descriptors. Provider assessment decisions must be internally quality assured before Assessment Strand scores are submitted to Open Awards.

Learner evidence and provider assessment decisions are then subject to Open Awards moderation. Following moderation, Standards Review provides the final pre-release assurance checkpoint before Qualification Outcomes are confirmed.

The qualification is graded as **Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit or Level 1 Distinction** based on the learner's overall level of achievement.

Learners who do not achieve all the Learning Outcomes will be awarded a Fail.

Assessment decisions are based on cumulative evidence generated throughout the project and considered against all four Assessment Strands.

For each Assessment Strand, the assessor determines an Assessment Strand Outcome by applying the published Assessment Descriptors. The corresponding Assessment Strand scores are combined using the published aggregation methodology to determine the provisional Qualification Outcome. No further professional judgement is applied at qualification aggregation stage.

Please see the Assessment Setting Specification document for more information on the assessment structure, minimum evidence requirements, and making assessment decisions.

Progression

Within the qualification suite, learners may progress through the levels (see appendix 1).

- Entry Level
- Level 1
- Level 2.

This qualification aligns with Curriculum for Wales Progression Step 5 (emerging) and supports learners in consolidating independence, creativity, and responsibility for learning.

It provides a practical framework for applying integral skills within project-based contexts.

Learners will engage with a range of Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs):

- **Expressive Arts:** developing creative ideas and presenting original outcomes
- **Health and Wellbeing:** managing challenges, showing perseverance, and reflecting on progress
- **Humanities:** exploring social, environmental, or ethical themes in personal or community contexts
- **Languages, Literacy and Communication:** using communication skills to present ideas effectively in written, oral, or digital formats
- **Mathematics and Numeracy:** using basic numerical skills to support planning and carrying out the project
- **Science and Technology:** applying problem-solving and investigation skills to practical projects.

Learners who consistently demonstrate structured independence in planning, decision-making and reflection will be well-prepared to progress to Level 2. Evidence of sustained independence is a key marker of readiness for analytical learning at higher levels.

Progression Opportunities

14–16 phase:

- Contributes to Curriculum for Wales project-based learning and skills pathways.
- Prepares learners for Level 2 vocational qualifications, GCSE-equivalent learning, or sector-based tasters.
- Supports employability and career readiness through goal-setting, presentation, and time management.

Post-16 phase:

- Provides a stepping stone to Level 2 qualifications such as Personal Project (Level 2), Employability Skills, or Vocational Awards.
- Builds transferable skills for apprenticeships, traineeships, or further education programmes requiring independent learning and reflection.

Qualification Structure

Qualification Content

The qualification content has been designed to cover the four integral skills:

- Planning and Organising
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Creativity and Innovation
- Personal Effectiveness.

These skills are embedded throughout the project and are demonstrated across all stages of planning, carrying out, completing and reviewing the project.

Learners are not assessed against these skills separately. Instead, the integral skills are integrated within the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors for each Assessment Strand.

Assessment decisions are based on how well learners meet the Learning Outcomes and demonstrate the characteristics described within the Assessment Descriptors across the completed project.

Learners have opportunities to demonstrate all four integral skills throughout the completion of their Personal Project. The integral skills are embedded within the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors and are not separately weighted in calculating the Qualification Outcome.

Integral Skill	
Planning and Organising	Supports defining goals, structuring the project, and managing time and resources throughout the project.
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Supports research, decision-making, and reflection throughout the project.
Creativity and Innovation	Supports the initial and ongoing development, shaping and realisation of ideas throughout the project.
Personal Effectiveness	Supports self-motivation, resilience, growing independence, and reflection throughout the project.

Learners must be assessed against the following Learning Outcomes associated with each Assessment Strand.

The indicative content identifies key areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that must be addressed through teaching and learning to enable learners to achieve the Learning Outcomes. The examples (e.g.,) provided are illustrative and not prescriptive.

Assessment Strand 1: Project Proposal (10%)

Teaching and learning activities within this Assessment Strand support the development of all four integral skills:

- **Planning and Organising** is developed through setting structured tasks and identifying resources
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** is developed through giving reasons for project ideas using simple research or prior knowledge
- **Creativity and Innovation** is developed through generating and developing project ideas
- **Personal Effectiveness** is developed through taking responsibility for decisions with guidance and showing ownership of the project.

Learning Outcomes	Indicative Content
1.1 Identify and explain a project idea and its purpose. 1.2 Demonstrate creativity in developing the project idea. 1.3 Plan the project with clear goals, resources and timelines. 1.4 Demonstrate personal effectiveness through taking responsibility for planning decisions.	Teaching and learning for this Assessment Strand must support learners to identify a clear project idea and produce a plan. Providers must ensure that teaching and learning activities collectively enable learners to demonstrate all Learning Outcomes and the associated integral skills. **Understanding project purpose:** identifying a project idea linked to personal interest, learning, or a familiar context. **Idea generation and selection:** exploring ideas and selecting one that is realistic and achievable. **Justifying project choice:** giving reasons for choosing the project (e.g. interest, usefulness, relevance). **Goal-setting:** setting clear and achievable goals (e.g. introduction to SMART principles) **Planning and organisation:** outlining tasks, order of activities and basic timelines (e.g. lists, simple plans, visual timelines) **Resource identification:** recognising materials, tools or information needed.

	Awareness of challenges: identifying simple risks or issues and possible solutions. **Personal ownership:** taking responsibility for decisions with guidance where needed. **Creative development:** shaping and refining the project idea.

Assessment Strand 2: Project Process (40%)

Teaching and learning activities within this Assessment Strand support the development of all four integral skills:

- **Planning and Organising** is developed through managing time, following a plan and completing tasks
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** is developed through using information to make decisions and solve simple problems
- **Creativity and Innovation** is developed through developing ideas and adapting the project in response to challenges
- **Personal Effectiveness** is developed through working with some independence, showing persistence and responding to feedback.

Learning Outcomes	Indicative Content
2.1 Follow a plan to complete project task. 2.2 Use simple research and problem-solving to make decisions. 2.3 Demonstrate creativity in developing and adapting the project. 2.4 Demonstrate personal effectiveness through managing progress and responding to challenges.	Teaching and learning for this Assessment Strand must support learners to carry out their project and develop their ideas over time. Providers must ensure that teaching and learning activities collectively enable learners to demonstrate all Learning Outcomes and the associated integral skills. **Time and task management:** following a plan and completing tasks in sequence. **Decision-making:** taking responsibility for completing tasks, making straightforward choices about how to proceed. **Research:** gathering simple information (e.g. internet searches, books, asking questions). **Using information:** selecting and using information to support decisions. **Problem-solving:** identifying issues/ challenges and trying solutions. **Adapting plans:** making changes when things do not go as expected. **Creative development:** developing ideas and trying different approaches.

	Use of feedback: responding to feedback to improve work. **Recording progress:** keeping a log, notes, or evidence of progress. **Personal effectiveness:** showing effort, responsibility, and reflections throughout.

Assessment Strand 3: Project Outcome (30%)

Teaching and learning activities within this Assessment Strand support the development of all four integral skills:

- **Planning and Organising** is developed through completing the project in line with goals and preparing the final outcome
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** is developed through making decisions to ensure the outcome is suitable for its purpose and audience
- **Creativity and Innovation** is developed through producing an outcome that shows originality or personal input
- **Personal Effectiveness** is developed through applying effort, maintaining focus and completing the project.

Learning Outcomes	Indicative Content
3.1 Produce a final outcome that meets project goals. 3.2 Demonstrate creativity and effort in producing the final outcome. 3.3 Present the outcome appropriately for its purpose and audience.	Teaching and learning for this Assessment Strand must support learners to produce and present a completed project outcome. Providers must ensure that teaching and learning activities collectively enable learners to demonstrate all Learning Outcomes and the associated integral skills. **Producing the outcome:** creating a product, performance or presentation based on the plan. **Application of skills:** using appropriate tools, techniques or methods. **Creativity:** showing originality or personal input in the outcome. **Meeting purpose:** ensuring the outcome links to the original goals. **Audience awareness:** presenting work in a way that is suitable for others to understand. **Quality and improvement:** checking and improving work where needed **Presentation and communication:** sharing the outcome clearly (e.g. presentation, display, digital format).

	Personal effectiveness: maintaining effort and focus to complete the project.

Assessment Strand 4: Reflection and Evaluation (20%)

Teaching and learning activities within this Assessment Strand support the development of all four integral skills:

- **Planning and Organising** is developed through reviewing how the project was planned and carried out
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** is developed through describing decisions and considering what worked well and what could be improved
- **Creativity and Innovation** is developed through reflecting on how ideas developed during the project
- **Personal Effectiveness** is developed through reflecting on personal progress, strengths and areas for improvement.

Learning Outcomes	Indicative Content
4.1 Describe how well the project met its goals. 4.2 Identify strengths and areas for improvement. 4.3 Reflect on personal development and skills gained.	Teaching and learning for this Assessment Strand must support learners to reflect on their project and identify learning. Providers must ensure that teaching and learning activities collectively enable learners to demonstrate all Learning Outcomes and the associated integral skills. **Reviewing outcomes:** comparing what was planned with what was achieved. **Identifying strengths and challenges:** describing what went well and what was difficult. **Evaluation:** giving reasons for success or difficulties. **Use of feedback:** considering feedback from others and identifying key learning points. **Reflection:** thinking about choices made during the project **Personal development:** recognising skills developed (e.g. planning, creativity, confidence). **Future improvements:** suggesting simple changes for next time.

	Communication of reflection: presenting reflection in a clear format (written, oral, or digital).

Assessment Structure

The qualification is assessed through one integrated Personal Project Assessment Component, organised into four Assessment Strands that reflect the stages of the project process.

The Assessment Strands organise assessment decisions within the integrated project. They are not separate Assessment Components or separate assessment events.

The percentages shown in the table below represent the assessment weighting of each Assessment Strand. These weightings determine the relative contribution of each Assessment Strand when calculating the learner's final qualification grade.

These percentage weightings:

- are used to calculate the learner's final qualification grade
- do not represent the allocation of Guided Learning Hours
- do not represent the weighting of integral skills.

Assessment Strand	Assessment Weighting	Integral Skill
Project Proposal Learner identifies and explains a project idea, sets goals, gives reasons for their idea, and produces a project plan.	10%	Planning and Organising (setting simple goals, structuring tasks and identifying resources) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (giving reasons for the project idea using research or prior knowledge) Creativity and Innovation (generating and developing the project idea) Personal Effectiveness (taking responsibility for decisions, showing ownership of the project)
Project Process Learner carries out the project, follows a plan, uses simple research and problem-solving, and adapts work in response to challenges.	40%	Planning and Organising (managing time, following a plan and completing tasks) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (using information to make decisions and solve problems) Creativity and Innovation (developing ideas and adapting the project in response to challenges)

		Personal Effectiveness (working with some independence, managing own progress and responding to feedback)
Project Outcome Learner produces a final outcome that meets project goals, applies skills, and presents work appropriately for its purpose and audience.	30%	Planning and Organising (completing the project in line with goals and preparing the final outcome) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (making decisions to ensure the outcome is suitable for its purpose and audience) Creativity and Innovation (producing an outcome that shows originality or personal input) Personal Effectiveness (applying effort, maintaining focus and completing the project)
Reflection and Evaluation Learner reviews the project, describes strengths and challenges, reflects on decisions, and identifies improvements.	20%	Planning and Organising (reviewing how the project was planned and carried out) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (describing decisions and considering what worked well and what could be improved) Creativity and Innovation (reflecting on how ideas developed during the project) Personal Effectiveness (reflecting on personal progress, strengths and areas for improvement)

Assessment and Aggregation
The Personal Project is provider-assessed using the published assessment framework and Assessment Descriptors set out in the Assessment Setting Specification.

Tutors/assessors must communicate the Assessment Descriptors to learners either by giving them a copy or explaining them to ensure learners are fully aware of what they need to do to access the grades available.

For each Assessment Strand, assessors make a holistic assessment decision against the published Assessment Descriptors using evidence generated throughout the completed project.

For the purposes of aggregation only, the outcome of each assessment decision is recorded as a numerical score, as defined in the Assessment Setting Specification.

Provider assessment decisions must be internally quality assured before Assessment Strand scores are submitted to Open Awards.

Providers submit the four internally quality assured Assessment Strand scores. The Open Awards system automatically applies the published aggregation methodology to generate the learner's provisional Qualification Outcome. No further professional judgement is applied at the aggregation stage.

Because the qualification contains one mandatory Personal Project Assessment Component, no further aggregation across Assessment Components is required.

The provisional Qualification Outcome remains subject to Open Awards moderation and Standards Review before it is confirmed and released.

See the Assessment Setting Specification document for full details.

The assessment framework provided within the Assessment Setting Specification must not be structurally amended.

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

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

How to Deliver

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

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

Approval for this qualification is subject to pre-verification by Open Awards. See the External Quality Assurance details outlined below.

Documents Required for Delivery

Before planning or commencing delivery, Providers must ensure that they have access to and are working from:

- this Qualification Guide
- the Assessment Setting Specification
- Open Awards' Quality Assurance policies and guidance, including:
  - Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy (CASS)
  - Guide to Provider Assessment
  - Guide to Internal Quality Assurance.

Providers may schedule teaching, project activity and assessment throughout the academic year in accordance with learner readiness and their Delivery and Assessment Plan. Providers must allow sufficient time for assessment and Internal Quality Assurance to be completed before the published submission cut-off for the termly assessment cycle in which they intend the learner's Qualification Outcome to be confirmed.

Registering Learners

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

Short courses (15 weeks or less) within 25 working days of the course start date.
Long courses (over 15 weeks) within 60 working days of the course start date.
You will need to register your learners via the Portal.

Please ensure all learner details are provided to avoid delays to your learner registrations being processed. Learner Registration Forms (LRFs) can be submitted by the Provider Administration Contact.

If an end-date for the course is not provided, Personal Project registrations will remain valid for two years from the date of registration.

Identification and Learner Authenticity Identification Requirements

Providers must have systems in place to ensure that an individual completing an assessment is the person they are claiming to be.

It is a provider's responsibility to confirm the identity of a learner as part of its registration process. Providers must have robust procedures to confirm and record learner identity at registration and before assessment.

Withdrawal or Partial Achievement

Following registration, providers are required to account for all learners during and at the end of their course. Where a learner leaves their course for any reason, providers are required to notify Open Awards and to provide reasons for the withdrawal.

Please see the Open Awards Provider Handbook for the process of withdrawing learners via the Portal.

As this is a single component qualification, no partial award of achievement can be made.

Submitting Grades and Certification

Providers must determine an Assessment Strand Outcome for each of the four Assessment Strands and record the corresponding numerical Assessment Strand score. Following Internal Quality Assurance, providers submit the four Assessment Strand scores to Open Awards.

The Open Awards system automatically applies the published aggregation methodology to the four Assessment Strand scores to generate the learner's provisional Qualification Outcome. No further professional judgement is applied at the aggregation stage.

Open Awards operates three termly assessment cycles each academic year. For each termly assessment cycle, Open Awards will publish:

- the submission cut-off
- the moderation deadline
- the Standards Review period
- the Qualification Outcome results-release date.

The termly assessment cycles do not define periods during which providers may or may not deliver or assess the Personal Project. Providers may schedule project activity and assessment throughout the academic year according to learner readiness, the published assessment requirements and their Delivery and Assessment Plan.

The published submission cut-off determines the termly assessment cycle in which the learner's outcome will be quality assured and released. Provider assessment and Internal Quality Assurance must be completed before the relevant submission cut-off.

Submissions received after a published cut-off enter the next termly assessment cycle. There is no requirement for providers to stop assessing learners between cycles.

For the first year of delivery, there will be no Autumn 2027 termly assessment cycle for submission and confirmation of Qualification Outcomes. Providers may begin delivery and assessment from September 2027; the first termly assessment cycle will be available from Spring 2028 onwards. The submission cut-off date will be published on the Open Awards website.

Assessment Strand Outcomes and the provisional Qualification Outcome remain subject to Open Awards moderation and Standards Review. Providers must not communicate provisional outcomes to learners as confirmed results until these processes have been completed.

The Summer termly assessment cycle will be scheduled so that Qualification Outcomes required for learners completing the qualification that academic year are available on or before the relevant national 14-16 Qualifications Results date. The specific deadlines for each term will be published on the Open Awards website before the start of each academic year.

Delivery and Resources

Provider Staff Requirements

Providers are responsible for ensuring that their staff have appropriate subject, assessment and quality assurance competence and have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

To deliver this qualification, providers should have staff able to fulfil the following roles:

- Tutor/ teacher
- Assessor
- Internal Quality Assurer
- Assessment administrator.

Providers must ensure that staff:

- have appropriate subject knowledge and assessment competence
- are familiar with the qualification requirements and Assessment Setting Specifications
- participate in relevant standardisation and continuing professional development
- have access to appropriate support and guidance.

Providers must notify Open Awards of relevant staffing changes.

Providers must ensure that all relevant staff have access to, and are familiar with, this Qualification Guide, the Assessment Setting Specifications and applicable Open Awards quality assurance policies before assessment delivery begins.

Providers must ensure appropriate separation of duties to manage actual or perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the Open Awards Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Assessors must:

- hold or be working towards an appropriate assessor or teaching qualification
- demonstrate current subject and assessment competence
- maintain relevant continuing professional development.

Assessors must be able to demonstrate an understanding of project-based assessment and the requirements for Project Context Approval, including judging project scope, manageability and suitability for the qualification level.

Providers must ensure assessors participate in standardisation activities covering both assessment decisions and project proposal approval decisions.

Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) must:

- hold or be working towards an appropriate internal quality assurance qualification
- have appropriate authority and resources to oversee internal quality assurance arrangements
- maintain current knowledge of assessment and quality assurance practice.

Providers must notify Open Awards of changes to key assessment and quality assurance personnel as these may affect the provider's risk status and quality assurance requirements.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment applies across all four Assessment Strands of the project, including the Project Proposal.

Assessment for this qualification takes place under differentiated levels of control:

Level	Assessment Strand 1 (Project Proposal – Guided Conditions)	Assessment Strands 2–4 (Controlled Conditions)
Level 1	A defined level of teacher/assessor support is permitted to ensure that learners develop an appropriate and feasible project. Teacher support must be limited to general guidance on feasibility, scope and appropriateness.	Supervision and restrictions on support ensure the authenticity and reliability of learner evidence. Teacher intervention must be minimal and restricted to clarification of instructions only. Learners are expected to demonstrate independence in planning, execution and evaluation.

This differentiated approach ensures that:

- learners are supported to define a valid and assessable project, and
- all subsequent assessment evidence is produced under conditions that ensure it is the learner's own work.

During development and approval of the Project Proposal, learners must not be given an indication of their likely performance against specific Learning Outcomes or Assessment Descriptors. Formal assessment of Assessment Strand 1 takes place only when the completed project evidence is reviewed.

Accessibility arrangements must operate within these defined levels of control and must not introduce additional guidance, prompting or structure that would compromise the required level of independence or the validity of the assessment.

Assessment Strand 1: Project Proposal (Guided Conditions)

The Project Proposal contributes to the final Qualification Outcome and forms part of the overall assessment of the completed project portfolio.

It is completed under guided conditions to ensure that:

- the project topic/focus is appropriate in scope and demand
- the learner is able to generate evidence across the full range of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors within the qualification.

The approval of a project proposal is not a formal assessment decision. Assessment decisions relating to Assessment Strand 1 (Project Proposal) are made when the completed project portfolio is reviewed.

At this stage, teachers/assessors may provide general guidance to support the learner.

This may include:

- discussing and refining project ideas
- advising on feasibility, scope, time requirements and resource requirements
- supporting the learner to ensure the project is manageable and appropriate for the level.

Teachers/assessors must review and approve the proposed project to confirm that it:

- is sufficiently demanding
- is achievable within the available time
- is manageable within the resources available to the learner and provider
- allows the learner to generate evidence across all Assessment Strands.

However, teachers/assessors must not:

- determine or select the project idea on behalf of the learner
- provide model answers or exemplars of completed proposals
- complete any part of the planning or justification
- provide detailed feedback that directs the learner on what to include or how to improve their work.

The final proposal, including all decisions, planning and justification, must:

- represent the learner's own work
- be produced independently
- be authenticated by the assessor

Providers must ensure that approved project proposals are comparable in scope and demand and provide appropriate opportunities for learners to demonstrate the full range of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors. Internal Quality Assurance and standardisation must include review of Project Context Approval decisions to support consistency of scope and demand across learners, assessors and cohorts.

Records of approved project contexts and Project Context Approval decisions must be retained to support Internal Quality Assurance and Open Awards risk-based quality assurance activity.

For clarity, Assessment Strand 1 (Project Proposal) is not assessed against the Assessment Descriptors until the full project is completed. At this stage, the project proposal is reviewed and approved but is not formally assessed.

Assessment decisions are made holistically against the completed project portfolio rather than through a series of discrete assessment points.

Assessment Strands 2–4: Project Process, Outcome and Evaluation (Controlled Conditions)

Once the project proposal has been reviewed and approved, Assessment Strands 2–4 must be completed under controlled conditions.

These conditions ensure that:

- all work produced is the learner's own
- learners complete the assessment under supervision
- assessment decisions are valid and reliable.

Under controlled conditions:

- learners must complete their work independently
- teacher/assessor support must be limited to clarification of instructions only
- learners must not receive feedback that directs or improves their responses during assessment
- learners must not be given model answers, templates that structure responses, or guidance on how to meet the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors.

None of the Assessment Strands require a timed assessment. Therefore, providers must ensure that their delivery and assessment arrangements provide sufficient time for learners to complete the project within the qualification's published TQT and assessment requirements.

Please refer to the Accessibility and Inclusion section above for further information.

Support expectations

Support expectations vary appropriately by level.

At Levels 1 and 2:

- Clarification of task instructions is permitted. This may include repeating or rephrasing instructions but must not include guidance on how to complete the task or what the learner should include in their response
- Learners are expected to plan, develop and complete their work independently
- Generic planning tools that support organisation may be used, provided they do not guide the learner's response
- Teachers may remind learners of the task requirements but must not guide how the learner structures or develops their response
- Teachers must not provide scaffolding, templates or structured prompts that direct learners on how to complete the task or what to include in their responses
- Teachers must not provide feedback on the quality or content of learner work during the assessment, including prompts that suggest improvements or indicate that responses are incomplete
- Learners must demonstrate the ability to organise their work and respond to the task requirements with minimal support.

The following are not permitted during the assessment:

- Providing model answers or examples of completed work
- Editing or correcting learner work
- Giving feedback that directs learners to improve the quality of their responses
- Completing any part of the assessment task on behalf of the learner.

Recording Support Provided

Providers must ensure that any significant support provided to learners during the assessment is recorded. This must include the nature of the support given and the circumstances in which it was provided. Records must be retained as part of the provider's assessment documentation and made available to Open Awards as part of internal or external quality assurance activities if requested.

Provider Internal Quality Assurance and Open Awards moderation/wider quality assurance activity may review the appropriateness of support provided.

Authenticity
Providers must ensure that work submitted for assessment is the learner's own. Assessors must confirm the authenticity of learner evidence through observation of project work, discussion with the learner and review of progress records.

Teachers must monitor the level of support provided to ensure that assessment outcomes reflect the learner's independent achievement.

The following forms of teacher/ assessor support are permitted at all levels:

- Clarification of task instructions
- Re-reading or rephrasing instructions (without altering demand).
- Use of prompts to refocus attention
- Use of communication aids or assistive technology
- Modelling of process (but not modelling of answers)
- General encouragement and reassurance.

Making Assessment Decisions

Assessment decisions must:

- be based on valid and authentic learner evidence
- be made against the published Assessment Descriptors
- reflect evidence generated throughout the completed project
- comply with the assessment conditions set out in this Qualification Guide and the Assessment Setting Specification.

The Personal Project is assessed through one integrated Personal Project Assessment Component. Whilst assessment decisions are organised into four Assessment Strands, evidence may contribute to multiple Assessment Strands throughout the project lifecycle.

Project proposal approval is **not** an assessment decision. Assessment decisions are made only after sufficient evidence has been generated through completion of the project.

Assessment decisions are therefore made holistically across the four Assessment Strands using evidence from the completed project portfolio.

For each Assessment Strand, assessors determine whether the relevant Learning Outcomes have been achieved and which published Assessment Descriptor best reflects the learner's performance.

Assessors make professional judgements only when determining the outcome for each Assessment Strand. The learner's overall qualification grade is calculated by applying the published aggregation rules to the Assessment Strand scores.

For aggregation purposes only, each Assessment Strand Outcome is converted to the corresponding numerical Assessment Strand score. The four Assessment Strand scores are submitted to Open Awards following Internal Quality Assurance.

The Open Awards system automatically applies the published aggregation methodology to generate the learner’s provisional Qualification Outcome. No further professional judgement is applied at the aggregation stage.

Assessment decisions must be supported by appropriate assessment records that clearly demonstrate how the published Assessment Descriptors have been applied.

Assessment decisions must be internally quality assured before Assessment Strand outcomes are submitted to Open Awards.

Evidence generated outside the permitted assessment conditions or which does not comply with the Assessment Setting Specification cannot be accepted towards the qualification.

Assessment Strand Outcomes and the resulting Qualification Outcome remain provisional until Open Awards moderation and Standards Review have been completed. Providers must not communicate provisional outcomes to learners as confirmed results.

Resubmissions

A learner must only start their assessment once their teacher/ assessor has confirmed they are ready to be assessed.

Resubmission decisions can only be made after the learner has completed their project and the assessor has reviewed the completed project portfolio against the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors. As assessment decisions are made holistically using evidence from the completed project, resubmission decisions cannot be made until the completed project has been fully assessed.

In the context of this qualification, the following definitions apply:

Resubmission	A resubmission may be offered where the assessor identifies minor gaps in the learner's evidence against one or more Learning Outcomes. The learner is given up to two opportunities within the permitted timeframe, to provide additional evidence addressing the identified gaps. No grade is determined until the resubmission opportunity has been completed.
Resit	A fail result is issued where the learner has not met the qualification requirements and is not eligible for a resubmission. The learner may subsequently be re-entered for the qualification at a later date. Learners must complete a new project against a new project brief or topic. Learners must be given new teaching/learning opportunities before they are re-entered for the qualification.

Where the learner does not meet one or more Learning Outcomes at Level 1 Pass and the identified gaps meet the resubmission criteria below, they may be given a maximum of two resubmission opportunities to provide additional evidence addressing those gaps.

Resubmissions are permitted only where evidence is insufficient to meet one or more of the Learning Outcomes. They must be targeted and proportionate, addressing only the identified gaps in evidence.

Resubmissions may include the use of alternative form of evidence with the parameters below.

All resubmission decisions, including the use of alternative evidence, must be clearly distinguishable from the work originally submitted and subject to internal quality assurance to ensure consistency and validity.

Resubmissions must be completed within a maximum of 10 working days of the learner receiving the resubmission decision, unless an approved reasonable adjustment or special consideration applies.

The 10-working-day resubmission period is separate from the termly assessment cycle timetable. Providers must allow sufficient time for any permitted resubmission, assessment of the additional evidence and subsequent Internal Quality Assurance to be completed before the relevant submission cut-off. Where this cannot be completed by the cut-off, the learner's Assessment Strand scores must be submitted in the next termly assessment cycle.

Learners must not be given an indication of their likely qualification grade (Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction) at the point of resubmission. They must only be given feedback on the specific areas that they need to address through the resubmission.

Examples of appropriate supplementary evidence may include:

- Completion of unfinished sections of the original assessment activity
- Additional learner-generated evidence directly linked to the original assessment brief
- Clarification or extension of evidence already produced within the portfolio
- Additional application of skills within the original assessment context
- Completion of partially evidenced reasoning or decision-making.

Supplementary evidence must not:

- Be used to improve a grade e.g., from a Merit to Distinction
- Become repeated redrafting or improvement cycles
- Involve extensive teacher correction or coaching
- Fundamentally replace weak original evidence
- Create multiple iterative reassessment opportunities
- Become an ongoing portfolio collection process
- Introduce unrelated new assessment tasks
- Involve extensive rewriting of previously completed work.

Alternative forms of evidence (e.g. question-and-answer, professional discussion, or observation) may be used only where:

- a learner has attempted the original assessment, but evidence is incomplete or insufficient
- the alternative method allows the learner to demonstrate the same knowledge, skills and level of demand as originally required
- the assessor is satisfied that the evidence remains valid, authentic and sufficient.

Alternative evidence must not:

- reduce the level of challenge or assessment demand
- replace substantial parts of the project
- be used to reassess the full Assessment Strand or project.

Resubmissions must not be used to enable learners to achieve a higher grade. For example, if a learner achieves a Level 1 Pass or Level 1 Merit, they must not be given the opportunity to resubmit in an attempt to achieve a higher grade.

In exceptional circumstances, where a learner's performance has been adversely affected by factors outside of their control at the time of assessment, providers may apply for special consideration in line with Open Awards' Special Consideration Policy.

A special consideration is not a resubmission opportunity and must not be used to routinely improve learner grades. It is applied only where there is clear evidence that assessment performance has been impacted, and any adjustment will be made in accordance with Open Awards' published procedures.
Where a learner does not meet the qualification requirements and is not eligible for a resubmission because substantial additional work, significant redevelopment of the project, or extensive new evidence would be required, a fail result will be issued for that assessment attempt. The learner may subsequently be re-entered for the qualification at a later date; however, this is treated as a new assessment attempt and requires completion of a new project based on a new project brief or topic.

The provider is responsible for maintaining a record of each learner's project brief or topic to ensure that this is the case.

The decision to allow a resubmission is not subject to approval from Open Awards in advance. However, if providers are unsure whether a learner's attempt should be subject to a resubmission or a resit they must contact Open Awards for support.

Providers must retain records of the rationale for all resubmission decisions, including the identified evidence gaps and the additional evidence requested.

Open Awards will review the application of resubmission arrangements through moderation and wider external quality assurance activity to ensure they are applied consistently across providers.

Where concerns are identified, Open Awards may require corrective actions, increased moderation sampling, additional training, enhanced quality assurance activity, amendments to provider processes, or changes to provider risk ratings.

Learner Feedback

Tutors/assessors must provide feedback to learners in a timely manner. Learners must be clearly told when they can expect to receive this feedback, e.g. via an assignment brief.

All feedback must be sufficient, focused and developmental. It must reference the relevant Learning Outcomes, Assessment Descriptors or qualification requirements and explain the basis for the assessment judgement. Feedback should support learner understanding of strengths, areas for improvement and any evidence gaps identified.

During project approval and delivery, teachers/assessors may provide formative feedback and guidance in accordance with the permitted support arrangements. Following assessment, feedback must reflect the learner's completed evidence and must not direct the learner on how to achieve a higher grade.

Feedback on work that has not met one or more Learning Outcome should clearly identify the areas requiring improvement. Feedback must support progress and clarify expectations for any permitted future attempt but must not provide model answers or overly detailed guidance that could constitute coaching.

Where a resubmission opportunity is permitted, feedback must identify the specific evidence gaps that need to be addressed but must not direct the learner on exactly how to produce the additional evidence.
Feedback must be provided in Welsh or English in line with the learner’s chosen language of assessment.

Quality Assurance Framework

Open Awards operates a risk-based quality assurance framework to support the valid, reliable and consistent delivery and assessment of this qualification across all approved providers.

The qualification is quality assured in accordance with:

- Open Awards Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy
- requirements set out within this Qualification Guide
- the Assessment Setting Specification
- Guide to Internal Quality Assurance

The quality assurance framework is designed to ensure that:

- assessment decisions are valid, reliable and consistent across all providers
- assessment is delivered in accordance with the specified assessment conditions and controls
- learners produce authentic evidence that is their own work
- qualification outcomes are based on the consistent application of the published Assessment Descriptors
- providers maintain effective internal quality assurance arrangements
- qualification outcomes are confirmed through moderation
- qualification standards are maintained through Standards Review.

Quality assurance responsibilities are shared between providers and Open Awards.

Providers are responsible for delivering, assessing and internally quality assuring the qualification in accordance with the Qualification Guide and Assessment Setting Specification.

Open Awards undertakes risk-based moderation, Standards Review and ongoing provider monitoring through its CASS Strategy and qualification-specific quality assurance arrangements.

Delivery and Assessment Planning

Before delivering this qualification, providers must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support the valid, reliable and consistent delivery and assessment.

Providers must produce a delivery and assessment plan before delivery begins. This forms part of the qualification approval and delivery-readiness process and must be submitted to Open Awards for review. The plan must demonstrate that the provider has appropriate staffing and experience, resources, assessment arrangements and Internal Quality Assurance arrangements in place to deliver the qualification.

The delivery and assessment plan must demonstrate how the provider will:

- sequence the delivery of the qualification content
- schedule assessment activity in accordance with learner readiness and the published termly assessment cycles
- ensure appropriate staffing and learner support arrangements
- manage Project approvals
- implement effective internal quality assurance arrangements
- manage assessment submissions, learner feedback, resits and resubmissions
- maintain appropriate assessment records.

Providers may schedule project activity and assessment throughout the academic year. The published submission cut-off determines the termly assessment cycle in which completed outcomes will be moderated, reviewed and released. Providers must allow sufficient time for assessment and Internal Quality Assurance to be completed before the relevant submission cut-off.

Where an Interim Quality Review is required, its timing will be agreed with Open Awards using the provider's Delivery and Assessment Plan.

The Delivery and Assessment Plan is reviewed by Open Awards as part of Pre-Verification before first delivery. Please see the Pre-Verification section below for further information.

Providers are responsible for notifying Open Awards of any significant changes to their delivery and assessment plans.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Providers delivering this qualification must operate effective internal quality assurance (IQA) arrangements to ensure assessment decisions are valid, reliable, consistent and supported by appropriate learner evidence before outcomes are submitted to Open Awards.

Internal Quality Assurance forms an essential part of the qualification quality assurance framework and should operate throughout delivery and assessment rather than solely at the point of submission.

For the Personal Project, Internal Quality Assurance must cover both Project Context Approval and final assessment decisions.

Internal Quality Assurance processes must ensure that:

- Project Context Approval decisions are made consistently and in accordance with the Assessment Setting Specification
- approved project contexts are appropriately scoped and sufficiently demanding for Level 1
- approved project contexts provide appropriate opportunities for learners to generate evidence across all four Assessment Strands
- assessment decisions are made consistently using the published Assessment Descriptors
- learner evidence is authentic, valid and sufficient
- assessment records are complete and auditable
- Assessment Strand Outcomes and corresponding scores are appropriately documented before submission.

Providers must maintain an Internal Quality Assurance plan that identifies how assessment decisions and Project Approval decisions will be monitored. The IQA plan would normally form part of the Delivery and Assessment plan and include:

- assessor standardisation activities
- sampling arrangements
- monitoring of Project Approval
- monitoring of assessment decisions and records
- actions arising from Internal Quality Assurance activities and continuous improvement.

The Internal Quality Assurance plan and associated records must be made available to Open Awards during moderation or other risk-based quality assurance activity where requested.

Internal Quality Assurance operates at two relevant stages for this qualification:

Project Approval IQA
Provider IQA must include sampling and standardisation of Project Context Approval decisions during the early project lifecycle. This review confirms that project contexts have been approved consistently, are appropriately scoped and demanding for Level 1, and provide suitable opportunities to generate evidence across all four Assessment Strands. Project Context Approval IQA does not determine an Assessment Strand Outcome.

Post-assessment IQA
Post-assessment IQA takes place after the assessor has determined the Assessment Strand Outcomes but before Assessment Strand scores are submitted to Open Awards. It must confirm that the Assessment Descriptors have been applied consistently, Assessment Strand Outcomes are supported by learner evidence and the corresponding scores have been recorded accurately.

Throughout delivery, the provider's internal quality assurance processes must monitor assessment decisions, support the consistent application of Assessment Descriptors, and identify any actions required to maintain assessment standards.

All assessment decisions must be subject to robust internal quality assurance sampling prior to submission to Open Awards. Providers are required to:

- implement a planned IQA strategy covering all sites and assessors
- conduct representative sampling of assessment decisions, including across levels, sites, and assessors
- undertake standardisation activities to ensure consistent interpretation of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors where more than one assessor is responsible for assessing the personal project.
- and maintain clear records of:
    - assessment decisions
    - Project approval decisions
    - learner feedback
    - IQA sampling and feedback to assessors
    - standardisation outcomes.

All IQA activity must be completed before Assessment Strand scores are submitted to Open Awards.

Open Awards will conduct moderation and wider risk-based quality assurance activity to confirm that providers are delivering and assessing the qualification in line with the published requirements. Providers must maintain appropriate records of delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance activities and make these available to Open Awards on request.

Please see the Guide to Internal Quality Assurance for more information.

Training and support

Open Awards provides training and support to assist providers in delivering, assessing and quality assuring this qualification consistently and in accordance with the published qualification and Assessment Strand requirements.

Providers must ensure that all staff involved in delivery, assessment and quality assurance receive appropriate induction, training and standardisation before undertaking their role. Staff must:

- Understand the requirements of this Qualification Guide and Assessment Setting Specification
- Understand the assessment model and quality assurance requirements
- Participate in appropriate induction, training and standardisation activities
- Maintain appropriate occupational and assessment competence.

Training and support includes:

- reviewing and approving project proposals
- judging project scope, demand and manageability
- supporting learners during project planning without over-directing
- distinguishing project approval from assessment decisions
- applying Learning Outcomes and Assessment Descriptors consistently
- making assessment decisions across integrated project evidence
- assessment conditions, permitted support and learner independence
- application of resubmission and resit arrangements
- providing appropriate feedback following assessment
- internal quality assurance requirements
- external quality assurance and moderation arrangements
- malpractice and maladministration prevention
- updates relating to qualification delivery and assessment.

Training and support are available through:

- Online guidance and support materials
- Standardisation events and webinars
- Quality and Standards Advisors (QASAs)
- The Open Awards website and Provider Handbook.

External standardisation activities focus on:

- Review and approving project proposals
- Consistent application of Assessment Descriptors
- Review of learner evidence, including borderline examples
- Assessment, moderation and quality assurance requirements
- Malpractice prevention.

Open Awards maintains records of standardisation activities and uses outcomes to inform moderation, Standards Review, qualification support, provider training and future standards-maintenance activity.

Standardisation

Maintaining consistent assessment standards across providers is a shared responsibility between providers and Open Awards. Providers are responsible for ensuring assessment decisions are consistent within their organisation through internal quality assurance and standardisation. Open Awards supports consistency across providers through external standardisation, moderation and ongoing quality assurance.

Further information about internal quality assurance and external quality assurance arrangements is provided in the Guide to Internal Quality Assurance, Guide to Provider Assessment and the Open Awards Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy.

Internal standardisation

Where a provider has more than one assessor, the IQA must ensure that internal standardisation activities take place regularly throughout delivery.

Internal standardisation should:

- review assessment decisions against the published Assessment Descriptors
- ensure consistent interpretation and application of the Assessment Descriptors
- review project proposal approval decisions
- identify any training or support requirements
- ensure assessment decisions are valid, reliable and consistent across assessors and sites (where applicable).

Providers should maintain appropriate records of internal standardisation activities as part of their quality assurance arrangements.

Standardisation supports consistent assessment practice but does not confirm individual learner outcomes.

External Standardisation

All providers approved to deliver the qualification are required to participate in Open Awards' qualification-specific external standardisation activities.

External standardisation supports a shared understanding of the published Assessment Descriptors and assessment requirements before and during live delivery. Activities may be delivered online or face-to-face and will normally include:

- review of exemplar learner evidence
- application of the Assessment Descriptors
- discussion of assessment decisions and project approval
- common issues identified through moderation and Standards Review
- updates to qualification requirements and assessment guidance
- sharing of effective practice across providers.

Providers are expected to ensure assessors and IQAs attend the required external standardisation activities.

Using Standardisation to Maintain Assessment Standards
Standardisation is used to support the consistent interpretation and application of the published Assessment Descriptors throughout delivery.

Open Awards will continually review and update training materials, exemplification and guidance using evidence gathered through:

- provider feedback
- moderation findings
- Standards Review
- qualification monitoring
- qualification review and development.

Providers should ensure that assessment decisions continue to reflect the most up-to-date guidance and standardisation materials issued by Open Awards.

Moderator Standardisation and Monitoring
Moderators and Open Awards Quality and Standards Advisors involved in the Personal Project qualification are required to participate in regular moderator standardisation activities to ensure moderation decisions remain valid, reliable and comparable across providers and termly assessment cycles.

Moderator standardisation activities focus on:

- consistent application of the published Assessment Descriptors
- comparability of standards across providers and termly assessment cycles
- discussion of difficult or borderline moderation decisions
- emerging issues and trends
- sharing effective practice.

The outcomes of moderator standardisation activities are recorded by Open Awards and used to inform future moderation, provider guidance, training and continuing professional development.

Open Awards also monitors moderator performance through routine quality assurance activity, including review of moderation for accuracy, consistency and quality. Where concerns are identified, Open Awards may require additional training, increased monitoring or other appropriate corrective action.

External Quality Assurance

Following provider assessment and Internal Quality Assurance, Open Awards undertakes External Quality Assurance to confirm that assessment decisions have been made consistently and in accordance with the published requirements.

Open Awards applies a risk-based approach to provider quality assurance through its Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy.

Provider risk ratings determine the level of quality assurance activity undertaken across the qualification, including sample sizes for moderation.

Each provider is assigned a risk rating of either New Provider, Low, Medium or High. All providers new to delivering the qualification will be assigned a NEW provider risk rating.

A provider's risk rating is reviewed on an ongoing basis using evidence including:

- previous compliance history
- effectiveness of internal quality assurance arrangements
- accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions
- provider experience
- previous moderation outcomes.

The provider's risk rating will be reviewed following all external quality assurance touchpoints to ensure that it remains appropriate at all times. Risk ratings are reviewed, as a minimum, on an annual basis through compliance reviews.

Please refer to the CASS strategy for details on compliance reviews.

This qualification has been classified as medium risk in line with Open Awards' CASS strategy.

The approach to External Quality Assurance includes three distinct touchpoints:

- Pre-verification
- Interim quality review
- Summative moderation.

Following completion of moderation and resolution of all required moderation actions, Standards Review provides the final pre-release assurance and governance checkpoint before Qualification Outcomes are confirmed and released.

Pre-Verification (Prior to Delivery)
All providers delivering the qualification are subject to pre-verification before their first delivery. This is completed as part of the qualification approval process.

The purpose of pre-verification is to identify and address risks before learners begin the qualification rather than to evaluate provider performance.

Providers must submit a delivery and assessment plan for Open Awards to pre-verify delivery and assessment arrangements before the provider is approved to deliver the qualification.

This includes review of:

- delivery and assessment plans
- Internal quality assurance plans
- staffing, assessor and IQA competence
- standardisation arrangements
- provider understanding of assessment requirements
- provider understanding of project approval requirements
- resources, facilities and equipment
- arrangements for recording assessment decisions and learner evidence.

A feedback session will be arranged to discuss all findings and providers will receive a written report.

Where pre-verification confirms that the provider has appropriate arrangements in place:

- qualification approval is confirmed
- delivery may commence in accordance with the approved delivery and assessment plan.

Where concerns are identified:

- SMART actions will be issued
- qualification approval may be deferred until required actions have been completed
- additional evidence or clarification may be requested
- further pre-verification activity may be undertaken where necessary.

Low and medium risk providers will not normally be required to submit delivery and assessment plans in subsequent years. High risk providers are required to submit delivery and assessment plans in subsequent years at the point of registration to support ongoing EQA and provider monitoring.

Interim Quality Review
The Interim Quality Review takes place during delivery after project proposals have been approved and learners have commenced substantive project activity.

The Interim Quality Review is a quality assurance review of Project Context Approval arrangements. It does not moderate learner assessment decisions or determine Assessment Strand Outcomes.

Interim Quality Reviews will normally apply to:

- New providers
- High-risk providers
- Providers where concerns have been identified through quality assurance activity.

Whilst Interim Quality Reviews will normally only apply for new and high-risk providers, Open Awards reserves the right to undertake interim and additional quality reviews for medium or low-risk providers where identified risks, moderation outcomes, provider changes, or other quality indicators suggest additional assurance activity is required.

The review focuses on:

- approved project proposals
- assessor approval decisions
- learner support arrangements
- internal quality assurance activity
- assessment and delivery processes.

Approval of a project proposal is not a formal assessment decision.
The Interim Quality Review therefore does not moderate learner assessment decisions. Assessment Strand 1 (Project Proposal) is assessed later, as part of the holistic assessment of the completed Personal Project.

Project proposals and project approval arrangements are reviewed to confirm that they:

- are appropriately scoped and sufficiently demanding for the qualification level
- are manageable within the available time
- allow learners to generate evidence across all Assessment Strands
- are suitable for the learner and educational context.

Open Awards will sample a minimum of 10% of learners' approved project contexts or three projects, whichever is greater. Additional samples may be requested where required to provide sufficient assurance.

Where concerns are identified, Open Awards may:

- require corrective actions
- increase the sample size covered by the Interim Quality Review
- provide additional support or training
- increase provider risk ratings
- increase summative moderation sampling.

Where the validity of assessment outcomes may be affected, Open Awards may require the provider to:

- review affected project proposals
- provide additional support and oversight through IQA activity
- implement revised project plans where appropriate
- ensure that learners are not disadvantaged by any corrective action.

Any corrective action will be proportionate to the nature of the concern and will take account of the stage reached by the learner within the project lifecycle.

Where provider IQA activity has already identified and appropriately addressed concerns prior to the Interim Quality Review, this will be taken into account when determining any further actions required.

Scheduling the Interim Quality Review

The timing of the Interim Quality Review will be agreed between Open Awards and the provider as part of the review of the provider's delivery and assessment plan. The review will be scheduled after project proposals have been approved and learners have begun substantive project activity, but before substantial assessment evidence has been generated. This enables Open Awards to review live project approval arrangements whilst avoiding unnecessary disruption to teaching, learning and assessment.

Providers must notify Open Awards as soon as reasonably practicable if there are significant changes to their approved delivery and assessment plan, including changes that may affect:

- assessment timings
- learner cohorts
- delivery schedules
- intended termly assessment cycle
- the planned timing of project proposal approval.

Where necessary, Open Awards will review the revised arrangements with the provider and agree to any changes to the timing of the Interim Quality Review or other quality assurance activities.

Failure to notify Open Awards of significant changes may affect quality assurance arrangements and, where appropriate, the provider's risk rating.

Open Awards Moderation
Following assessment and completion of post-assessment Provider Internal Quality Assurance, Open Awards undertakes moderation to confirm that:

- Assessment Descriptors have been applied consistently
- Assessment Strand Outcomes are supported by the learner evidence
- Assessment Strand Outcomes have been recorded and submitted accurately
- the published aggregation methodology has been applied correctly by the Open Awards system
- assessment conditions have been applied appropriately
- provider Internal Quality Assurance arrangements have operated effectively.

Providers may submit completed, internally quality assured Assessment Strand scores at any point during the term, provided they are submitted no later than the published cut-off for the relevant termly assessment cycle.

Open Awards may undertake moderation as submissions are received and does not need to wait until the cycle submission cut-off or until all providers have submitted. This enables moderation queries, expanded sampling and required provider actions to be resolved earlier where possible.

Early completion of moderation does not result in early release of an individual learner's Qualification Outcome. All outcomes submitted into the same termly assessment cycle remain provisional and progress to the same Standards Review. Confirmed Qualification Outcomes are released together on the published results-release date for that cycle.

Moderation uses a risk-based sampling approach in accordance with the Open Awards CASS Strategy and provider's risk rating. The provider's risk rating may be adjusted following moderation outcomes, previous quality assurance findings or issues identified during moderation.

Moderation includes review of:

- learner retained evidence
- assessor decision records
- internal Quality Assurance records
- supporting documentation.

Sampling follows Open Awards' risk-based quality assurance approach:

Risk	Minimum sample size
New Providers	50%, minimum 10 learners, 100% where cohort below 10
High	50%, minimum 10 learners, 100% where cohort below 10
Medium	20%, minimum 3 learners, 100% where cohort below 3
Low	10%, minimum 3 learners, 100% where cohort below 3

Following moderation, Moderators may:

- confirm provider assessment decisions
- require amendments to Assessment Strand Outcomes where decisions are not supported by the evidence
- request additional existing learner evidence, assessment records, Internal Quality Assurance records or other supporting documentation required to complete moderation
- increase the moderation sample where further assurance is required
- require provider actions where wider concerns are identified.

Where insufficient evidence has been made available to reach a moderation decision, the provider will be given the opportunity to submit the missing existing learner evidence, assessment records or other relevant documentation before moderation is concluded.

This does not permit new learner evidence to be generated retrospectively to address an assessment decision. Where further learner assessment is required, the relevant resubmission or resit arrangements apply.

Managing Moderation Disagreements and Expanded Sampling

Where moderation identifies a disagreement with a provider assessment decision, Open Awards will consider the nature, significance and potential extent of the issue before confirming affected Qualification Outcome.

Where the disagreement could affect an Assessment Strand Outcome or Qualification Outcome, Open Awards will normally expand the moderation sample to determine whether the issue is isolated or may affect a wider group of learners.

Additional sampling will be targeted to the area most likely to be affected. This may include learners associated with the same:

- assessor
- Internal Quality Assurer
- Assessment Strand
- learner cohort or other relevant group.

The size and scope of any additional sampling will be proportionate to the nature of the concern and the level of assurance required. Open Awards may increase sampling progressively where further inconsistencies are identified.
Where the affected population is smaller than the additional sample required to investigate the issue securely, Open Awards may review all learners within that affected population.

Where expanded moderation provides sufficient assurance that an inaccurate assessment decision is genuinely isolated, the affected learner's Assessment Strand Outcome and resulting Qualification Outcome may be amended.

Where moderation identifies a wider pattern or systematic issue, Open Awards will extend its review to the affected learner population and correct any outcomes where the available evidence demonstrates that amendment is required. Open Awards will not apply a blanket adjustment to learners whose evidence has not been reviewed.

Where Open Awards requests further evidence during moderation, this relates to existing learner evidence, assessment records, Internal Quality Assurance records or other relevant documentation. Moderation does not provide an opportunity for learners to generate new assessment evidence.

Where concerns are identified, Open Awards may also require proportionate actions, including:

- further moderation
- additional assessor or Internal Quality Assurer standardisation
- provider action planning
- increased future sampling
- enhanced assessment approval controls
- review of the provider's risk rating
- other appropriate quality assurance or sanctions activity.

All moderation actions required to secure current learner outcomes must be completed before those outcomes are confirmed.

Assessment Outcomes remain provisional until moderation has been completed and the relevant Standards Review has taken place.

Standards Review

Following completion of moderation and resolution of all required moderation actions for the relevant termly assessment cycle, Open Awards undertakes Standards Review before Qualification Outcomes are confirmed and released.

Standards Review considers evidence including:

- moderation outcomes
- provider performance
- assessment outcome distributions
- assessment trends across termly assessment cycles
- equality and accessibility considerations.

Standards Review is an overarching review of the operation of assessment standards. It does not revisit individual learner assessment decisions, change individual Qualification Outcomes or trigger further moderation of learner evidence. Individual learner outcomes are determined through provider assessment and Open Awards moderation.

Where trends or concerns are identified, Open Awards may review assessment materials, update guidance, increase quality assurance activity or implement other actions necessary to maintain qualification standards for future assessment activity.

The Standards Review does not determine assessment boundaries or pass marks. Its purpose is to maintain consistency in the application of assessment standards across providers and termly assessment cycles.

Following completion of Standards Review, Open Awards confirms Qualification Outcomes for the termly assessment cycle in accordance with the published results timetable.

Enquiries and Appeals

Providers and learners have the right to request a review of assessment decisions in accordance with the Open Awards Enquiries and Appeals Policy.

Providers must operate a documented internal appeals procedure and inform learners of their right to appeal.

Further information is available within the Open Awards Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Procedures available on the Open Awards website.

Malpractice, Maladministration and Incident Management

Providers must have procedures in place to prevent, identify and manage suspected malpractice or maladministration.

Open Awards' published Malpractice, Maladministration and Incident Management Policy defines the responsibilities of providers, learners and Open Awards, together with the procedures to be followed where concerns arise.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that:

- potential malpractice and maladministration are identified, prevented, corrected and/or mitigated
- any event that could lead to an Adverse Effect is identified, prevented, corrected and/or mitigated.

Open Awards will investigate reported incidents in accordance with its published policy and may require corrective action where appropriate.

Further information is available within the Open Awards Malpractice and Maladministration Policy available on the Open Awards website.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) does not apply to this qualification.

This qualification is assessed through a single, synoptic personal project completed under controlled conditions over time. Learners are required to generate integrated evidence across all Assessment Strands (project proposal, process, outcome, and evaluation), demonstrating the full range of Learning Outcomes and integral skills.

As assessment is holistic and based on the learner's performance across the full project cycle, prior learning cannot be used as a substitute for any part of the assessment.

However, learners may draw on prior knowledge, understanding or experiences to inform their choice of project topic and approach, where appropriate. All assessed evidence must be produced as part of the current project and meet the requirements for authenticity and supervision set out in this Qualification Guide and the Assessment Setting Specification. 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:

- Qualification Guide (this document)
- Assessment Setting Specifications
- Open Awards Provider Handbook
- Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy
- Guide to Provider Assessment
- Guide to Internal Quality Assurance
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Invoicing Policy
- Privacy Policy.

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

Appendix 1 – Progression through Personal Project Suite

CQFW Level	Typical Learner Descriptor	Knowledge and Understanding	Skills and Application	Autonomy and Responsibility	Project Expectations	Evaluation and Reflection
Entry Level 1 (Developing Awareness)	Learners engage in familiar, structured activities and can follow simple instructions with support.	Understands very simple information and ideas related to familiar contexts.	Takes part in structured tasks with support; begins to recognise choices and outcomes.	Requires continuous support; participates in tasks and activities.	Produces a simple project outcome with support, demonstrating early engagement with ideas and tasks.	Says what they did and what they liked about the project.
Entry Level 2 (Guided Independence)	Learners follow simple sequences of tasks with regular support, showing growing confidence.	Understands simple facts and processes; uses information in familiar situations.	Completes tasks following guidance; makes simple choices and begins to use information.	Works with regular support; takes some responsibility for completing tasks.	Produces a simple project outcome following a plan, showing developing application of skills.	Describes what worked well and what was difficult, with support.
Entry Level 3 (Structured Independence)	Learners plan and carry out straightforward tasks in familiar contexts with guidance.	Understands and uses information and ideas in simple, familiar situations.	Applies practical and planning skills to complete tasks; makes simple decisions and solves basic problems.	Works with guidance but shows increasing independence and responsibility.	Plans and completes a straightforward project, making basic decisions and recording progress.	Reflects on what worked and what could be improved; identifies personal effort and learning.

Level 1 (Independent Application)	Learners apply knowledge and skills to complete structured tasks and projects with some independence.	Understands main ideas, processes and relationships.	Applies skills to plan, carry out and review a project; uses information to support decisions.	Works independently for most tasks, seeking support when needed.	Defines and completes a structured project, setting goals and following a clear plan.	Explains what worked well and what could be improved, reflecting on decisions and outcomes.
Level 2 (Analytical Independence)	Learners apply knowledge and understanding to varied contexts, making reasoned decisions with minimal guidance.	Demonstrates understanding of facts, ideas and principles, and applies them in combination.	Selects and applies research, analysis and problem-solving skills to achieve high-quality outcomes.	Works independently, taking responsibility for planning, decision-making and quality assurance.	Designs and produces a purposeful project, demonstrating creativity, critical thinking and effective execution.	Analyses performance using evidence, evaluates outcomes and identifies improvements and next steps.

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