



# Customised Qualification Development Guide for Centres

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## Overview

This guide is designed to inform centres of what is required in order for IQ to approve a Customised Qualification (CQ) and how to complete the IQ [Customised Qualification Development Form](#).

CQs are bespoke centre devised qualifications that have been developed to meet the needs of a particular market, range of learners or employer(s) or stakeholder(s).

CQs are generally written by the centre and supported by IQ developers. The process of developing a qualification depends largely on what material has already been developed, and at this stage it is important to point out that a training course is not a qualification. There may be some overlap of materials, but in general, they are quite different.

In working out a cost and a time scale for development, IQ will take into consideration the size and level of the qualification, the preferred assessment methodology and how much, if any, of the existing material can be used in the qualification.

IQ request centres complete a [Business Case Form](#) that demonstrates demand for the qualification, how it proposes to deliver and assess the qualification, the target market and the expected number of registrations prior to completing the Customised Qualification Development Form.

## Stages of Qualification Development

### Pre development

1. Existing Centres complete the [Business Case Form](#) and submits to IQ at [info@industryqualifications.org.uk](mailto:info@industryqualifications.org.uk)
2. New Centres also complete the [IQ Centre Approval Form](#) and submits to IQ at [info@industryqualifications.org.uk](mailto:info@industryqualifications.org.uk)
3. Business case is approved or declined in principle by approval panel
4. Centre completes the IQ [Customised Qualification Development Form](#) using this Guide to support
5. Development of qualification approved or declined by approval panel
6. Centre are quoted and invoiced for the development
7. Once invoice has been paid development is scheduled

**The development process** involved IQ providing qualification development experience and the centre providing subject knowledge and broadly follows:

1. Qualification developer contacts centre to establish parameters and timelines Questions and queries at any stage
2. Unit development
3. Syllabus development is started
4. Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and qualification levelling process completed
5. Assessment documentation / development
6. Syllabus and Assessment sign off
7. Qualification goes live

**Centre approval and qualification approval** carried out by Quality Assurance Department as opposed to your Qualification Developer. For a qualification to be able to go live:

1. The centre must first be an approved IQ centre and
2. Submit a completed IQ Customised Qualification Personnel Approval Form, which should already have been issued at this stage.
3. Please contact [info@industryqualifications.org.uk](mailto:info@industryqualifications.org.uk) for details.

### Going live - Your new qualification

Once the development of your CQ is complete, your qualification developer will send a going live-release\*\* email to the centre and Quality Assurance, who will link your new qualification to your centre within 24 hours and advise the centre. At this point, the process is complete and you can start registering your candidates on the qualification.

## Customised Qualification Development Components

Customised qualifications are just like any other IQ qualifications, except they are not regulated and are only available for use by the relevant client.

Qualifications have **four main components**:

1. The Qualification Syllabus
2. Assessments
3. Mark schemes or some other method of deciding if the learner has achieved the qualification
4. A quality assurance process to ensure the validity of the qualification

All four components are needed in order to create the customised qualification. The following guidance indicates what is required for each component.

Some of this will be provided by the client, for example the content of the qualification, and input on what the assessment method should be. Other parts, in particular the quality assurance, will follow guidance provided by IQ.

## The Qualification Syllabus

The syllabus will include the following information which you are asked to provide via to the [Customised Qualification Development Form](#):

- the qualification title,
- the qualification description
- the qualification objective
- the qualification purpose
- the sector the qualification sits in
- the qualification structure – number of mandatory and optional units (if any)
- the rule of combination – what a learner must complete before the qualification can be awarded
- levels of attainment
- information on how the qualification will be delivered
- information on assessment methodology and any associated requirements
- learner age range and geographical coverage
- any prior qualification, knowledge, skills or understanding which the candidate is required to have before taking the qualification,
- progression opportunities on completion of the qualification
- the qualifications and/or the relevant sector experience required for the trainers/assessors of the qualification
- the unit content in the form of learning outcomes, assessment criteria and indicative content - knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of the qualification (giving a clear indication of their coverage and depth), often called 'the taught content'
- the Total Qualification Time, expressed in hours
- additional guidance to the learner, for example lists of recommended reading or resources

Please follow the guidance in this document when completing the [Customised Qualification Development Form](#)

## Assessments

Sample assessment(s) and associated mark schemes must be produced alongside the Customised Qualification Development Form.

The assessment must be designed so that it:

- is fit for purpose;
- can be delivered efficiently (in terms of the arrangements for registration, assessing, certifying)
- is manageable for the centre to deliver;
- allows reasonable adjustments to be made for learners in accordance with Equality laws;
- allows learners to generate evidence which can be authenticated;
- allows learners who have reached the relevant standard of knowledge, skills and/or understanding to demonstrate it
- allows assessors and IQ to differentiate accurately and consistently between a range of attainment by learners

What assessments you submit will depend entirely on how you propose to ensure that learners have met the standards.

Typical these forms of assessment are called *summative* and include:

- Tests carried out under examination conditions at the centre
  - Typically set, delivered and marked by the centre and externally verified by IQ
  - Can be short answer, multiple choice, essay-style
- Portfolios of evidence gathered together by the learner during the course, internally marked by the centre, then externally verified by IQ
  - This approach is useful for assessing practical competencies
  - A range of different types of evidence can be included in a portfolio of evidence

Ensure you provide an example of each form of assessment that learners are going to use.

Annotate each example to show which Assessment Criteria the assessment is designed to cover.

Typically, your assessments should cover all the Assessment Criteria, although in some forms of assessment, it is possible to cover a sample of the Assessment Criteria – it is important to include an explanation of which approach you are taking, and why.

## Mark Schemes

You must include a mark scheme, or a description of how the assessment evidence is to be evaluated to determine if the learner has passed (met the standard).

## Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is all about ensuring that:

- The learner is who they say they are
- The work produced is all their own work
- The assessment has been carried out under the prescribed conditions
- The assessment materials are kept safe and secure

Quality assurance also ensures that:

- Marking is fair and consistent
- Internal Verification
- Assessment does not get more or less difficult over time, as different courses are run
- That any tests are unbiased, and map into the assessment criteria as they are supposed to

**Please include a description of your procedures for ensuring that quality assurance is as required.**

## Level Descriptors

Achievement at Entry 1 recognises progress along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of skills, knowledge or understanding that relate to the immediate environment.

Achievement at Entry 2 reflects the ability to make use of skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities with guidance.

Achievement at Entry 3 reflects the ability to make use of skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts, with appropriate guidance where needed.

Achievement at level 1 reflects the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills and procedures to complete routine tasks. It includes responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance.

Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. It includes taking responsibility for completing tasks and procedures and exercising autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.

Achievement at level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity. It includes taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within limited parameters. It also reflects awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.

Achievement at level 4 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. It includes taking responsibility for overall courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within fairly broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.

Achievement at level 5 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address broadly-defined, complex problems. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

Achievement at level 6 reflects the ability to refine and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address complex problems that have limited definition. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are able to underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.

Achievement at level 7 reflects the ability to reformulate and use relevant understanding, methodologies and approaches to address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological perspectives, and how they affect their area of study or work.

Achievement at level 8 reflects the ability to develop original understanding and extend an area of knowledge or professional practice. It reflects the ability to address problematic situations that involve many complex, interacting factors through initiating, designing and undertaking research, development or strategic activities. It involves the exercise of broad autonomy, judgement and leadership in sharing responsibility for the development of a field of work or knowledge or for creating substantial professional or organisational change. It also reflects a critical understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the field of knowledge or work.

## Guidance to completing the Customised Qualification Development Form

### Qualification Title

- Use the following wording style:

***IQ Level 4 Organisation Award/Certificate/Diploma in Underwater Basket weaving***

- The title must reflect what the qualification is about, without unexplained acronyms. The word 'Principles' in the title indicates this is a knowledge qualification and word 'Practice' that it is competence.
- **Level:** refer to the level descriptors to choose the appropriate level and complete the second part of the [Total Qualification Time \(TQT\) form](#). The final level of the qualification is confirmed once the unit development is complete.
- **Award/Certificate/Diploma:** this relates to the size of the qualification as described in the Total Qualification Time. As a general guide, Award is up to 120 TQT, Certificate is up to 121-369 TQT, Diploma is 370 TQT plus.

### Qualification Description

Include here the aims of the qualification, its target audience (industry professions etc), benefit to learners, if directly based on NOS or other standards.

### Objective

This is a clear statement of the intended objective of the qualification, both for the learner, and in relation to the sector.

List of objectives (**please select only one**):

- A. Preparing learners to progress to a qualification in the same subject area but at a higher level or requiring more specific knowledge, skills and understanding,
- B. Preparing learners to progress to a qualification in another subject area,
- C. Meeting relevant programmes of learning,
- D. Preparing learners for employment,
- E. Supporting a role in the workplace, or
- F. Giving earners personal growth and engagement in learning

### Purpose

This is a clear statement of the intended purpose of the qualification, both for the learner, and in relation to the sector.

List of purposes (**please select only one heading and sub-heading eg A + A1**):

- A. Recognise personal growth and engagement in learning
  - A1 Recognise development of skills for life
  - A2 Recognise development of knowledge and/or skills to operate independently and effectively in life, learning and work
  - A3. Recognise development of personal skills and/or knowledge
  - A4. Recognise development of employability skills and/or knowledge
- B. Prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area
  - B1. Prepare for further learning or training GCSE , Access to HE, or Pre-U qualification
  - B2. Develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area
- C. Prepare for employment
  - C1. Prepare for employment in a broad occupational area
  - C2. Prepare for employment in a specific occupational area
- D. Confirm occupational competence and/or 'licence to practice'
  - D1. Confirm competence in an occupational role to the standards required



D2. Confirm the ability to meet a 'licence to practice' or other legal requirements made by the relevant sector, professional or industry body

E. Updating and continuing professional development (CPD)

E1. Update knowledge and/or skills relating to legal, technical, process or best practice changes/requirements

E2. Develop knowledge and/or skills in order to gain recognition at a higher level or in a different role

E3. Develop knowledge and/or skills relevant to a particular specialization within an occupation or set of occupations

**Sector**

Choose **one** of the following sectors your qualification belongs to and copy the number and title to the template.

1.0 - Health, Public Services and Care

1.1 - Medicine and dentistry

1.2 - Nursing, and subjects and vocations allied to medicine

1.3 - Health and social care

1.4 - Public services

1.5 - Child development and well being

2.0 - Science and Mathematics

2.1 - Science

2.2 - Mathematics and statistics

3.0 - Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care

3.1 - Agriculture

3.2 - Horticulture and forestry

3.3 - Animal care and veterinary science

3.4 - Environmental conservation

4.0 - Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies

4.1 - Engineering

4.2 - Manufacturing technologies

4.3 - Transportation operations and maintenance

5.0 - Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

5.1 - Architecture

5.2 - Building and construction

5.3 - Urban, rural and regional planning

6.0 - Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

6.1 - ICT practitioners

6.2 - ICT for users

7.0 - Retail and Commercial Enterprise

7.1 - Retailing and wholesaling

7.2 - Warehousing and distribution

7.3 - Service enterprises

7.4 - Hospitality and catering

8.0 - Leisure, Travel and Tourism

8.1 - Sport, leisure and recreation

8.2 - Travel and tourism

9.0 - Arts, Media and Publishing

9.1 - Performing arts

9.2 - Crafts, creative arts and design

- 9.3 - Media and communication
- 9.4 - Publishing and information services
  
- 10.0 - History, Philosophy and Theology
  - 10.1 - History
  - 10.2 - Archaeology and archaeological sciences
  - 10.3 - Philosophy
  - 10.4 - Theology and religious studies
  
- 11.0 - Social Sciences
  - 11.1 - Geography
  - 11.2 - Sociology and social policy
  - 11.3 - Politics
  - 11.4 - Economics
  - 11.5 - Anthropology
  
- 12.0 - Languages, Literature and Culture
  - 12.1 - Languages, literature and culture of the British isles
  - 12.2 - Other languages, literature and culture
  - 12.3 - Linguistics
  
- 13.0 - Education and Training
  - 13.1 - Teaching and lecturing
  - 13.2 - Direct learning support
  
- 14.0 - Preparation for Life and Work
  - 14.1 - Foundations for learning and life
  - 14.2 - Preparation for work
  
- 15.0 - Business, Administration, Finance and Law
  - 15.1 - Accounting and finance
  - 15.2 - Administration
  - 15.3 - Business management
  - 15.4 - Marketing and sales
  - 15.5 - Law and legal services

### **Qualification Structure Overview**

This section is a summary of the structure of the qualification, in tabular form. See [Guidance To Developing Units](#) section for details of how to write Units, and Total Qualification Time (TQT) section below for an overview on how to calculate hours.

A qualification is divided into units and generally the more units a qualification has the longer the development time and cost. Please provide the unit titles and indicate if they are Mandatory or Optional – please note if providing optional units, there should be a minimum of two for learners to choose from.

### **Rules of Combination**

List any rules about units that must be achieved in order to achieve the whole qualification, for example. “To achieve the qualification learners must achieve the Mandatory units and two Optional units.”

### **Levels of Attainment**

Give the overall level of attainment that can be achieved by a learner. For example, the qualification may be Pass or Fail, or it may have some grades such as Pass, Merit, and Distinction.

The detail of how any grades are achieved is usually found in the Assessment section.

### **Barred units**

Include details of any barred units ie, where if one unit is taken another cannot be taken because of too much overlapping content.

### **Guidance on Delivery**

Include here any guidance that will help learners understand how the course is to be delivered, for example whether there is any e-learning, or on-site learning.

### **Assessment**

This section details how the learner is to be assessed. Units are *usually* assessed separately, but this is not compulsory.

Centres should provide a justification for the assessment methodology chosen.

Each assessment method must be described; eg *Unit 1 is assessed by a 30 question multiple choice test and Unit 2 is assessed by a 3000 word assignment, set by the centre, internally marked and externally marked by IQ.*

**Sample assessments and Mark Schemes must be attached to the form.**

### **Age Range and Geographical Coverage**

Indicate the intended **age range**, typically 16-18 years or 19+ although other age ranges may be required to meet, for example, health and safety regulations.

Also indicate the geographical coverage that may apply.eg this qualification is valid in:

**England / Wales / Northern Ireland / Scotland / International only** as agreed in your business case form.

### **Candidate Entry Requirements**

List any prior qualification, knowledge, skills or understanding which the learner is required to have before taking the qualification eg, as a minimum the candidate should be able to work at one level under the qualification.

### **Progression**

Indicate what progression opportunities exist for the learner as a result of gaining this qualification in the form of other qualifications, leading directly to employment etc.

### **Tutor Requirements**

Include here a description of the qualifications and experience required for tutors/trainers delivering this course.

On page 2 of the CQDG form you are asked to provide the names of two tutors and an internal verifier who meet these requirements and who will be available for consultation during the development of this qualification.

**Centre requirements**

This section is for any specialised centre requirements necessary to undertake the delivery of this qualification e.g for a cookery qualification, centres must be able to provide suitable facilities e.g suitable kitchen and equipment.

## Guidance to developing Units

The following section is designed to assist with the completion of the Unit template found in the [Customised Qualification Development Form](#). Centres may wish to copy this template into a word document per unit during development and submit the word document as a separate attachment.

### Unit Development

For the knowledge, skills and understanding, and the criteria against which learners' attainment is measured, **IQ has adopted the Learning Outcomes (LOs), Assessment Criteria (ACs) and Indicative Content approach.**

Learning outcomes are grouped into logical sets that are called Units. A qualification may have only one Unit. Each Learning Outcome has associated with it a set of Assessment Criteria. These are what the learner needs to do in order to demonstrate that they can be awarded the qualification. Typically, a Unit will have between 2 and 6 Learning Outcomes, and a Learning Outcome will have between 2 and 5 assessment criteria. Many awarding organisations allow you to access their specifications and it is often useful to see how other qualifications are worded. Indicative content is a summary / key areas that must be included in the teaching ie if a subject expert was given this specification to teach they would know the essentials that must be taught.

#### Guidance on writing the Unit Title:

- A unit title must not repeat the qualification title, except for single unit qualifications (where both titles **must** be the same).
- A unit title should not be more than 80 characters, including spaces and punctuation
- Titles should use full words and avoid punctuation
- Unit titles should not normally include words such as initial or advanced, as difficulty is shown by qualification level.
- Please insert your title in the 'Working Title' field and leave 'Final Title' blank.

#### Guidance on writing Unit Description:

The unit description should provide a summary of what the learner can expect to be able to do on completion of the unit. It is easier to complete this once the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been written.

#### Guidance on writing Learning Outcomes:

Learning outcomes describe what the learner *knows, understands* and/or *can do*. Taken together across the qualification, they represent the *standard* of the qualification. The level of demand (cognitive or practical) of these learning outcomes is one of the main factors that determines the *level* of the unit. Cross reference this with the level descriptors to check your level matches the learning outcomes. The use of the word principles is a common way of referring to knowledge about something, while the word practice is often used to indicate being able to do something. Do not write any learning outcomes that are not assessed.

#### Guidance on writing Assessment Criteria:

Assessment criteria are what the learner needs to be able to do in order to confirm that they have met the standard. They always start with a verb which is closely related to the level of the unit. For example, verbs like *list, describe, give (reasons for)* are generally associated with levels 1 and 2. *Explain, and analyse* are examples of verbs for higher level assessment criteria. Do not use any verbs that are not capable of being assessed.

#### Guidance on Indicative Content:

This is used to describe the subject content that relates to that particular assessment criterion. It is also the place where the range of knowledge or understanding can be defined. For example, in AC 3.2 highlighted below "In writing: email, memos, formal letters dealing with client's problems and information leaflets" provides the range of written materials to be covered.

The example below is *one* Learning Outcome from *one unit* of the Level 2 Client Service qualification. You need to do this for each Learning Outcome of each unit using the template in the [Customised Qualification Development Form](#).

#### Unit 1: Delivery of effective client service

Learning Outcome 3 - The learner will:

Assessment Criteria - The learner can:

Indicative Contents:

<p>Understand principles of responding to clients' problems or complaints</p>	<p>3.1</p>	<p>Identify common causes of client problems and complaints</p>	<p>Common causes of client problems/ complaints: Waiting too long to be served, being passed between staff members, inexperienced staff, misleading/ incomplete/ unavailable information, faulty products, failure to follow up on queries, poorer service compared to competitors etc.</p>
	<p>3.2</p>	<p>Identify different methods of communication</p>	<p>Verbal/ body language in person: covering: tone, volume, nodding, smiling, active listening; including: shop floors, visits and product fairs.  <b>In writing: email, memos, formal letters dealing with client's problems and information leaflets.</b>                  Phone calls: staff on standby/ making follow up calls; extension numbers, accessing computerised information during calls etc.</p>
	<p>3.3</p>	<p>Describe the importance of adapting methods of communication and behaviour to meet the individual needs of clients</p>	<p>Addressing individual clients: Lack of technical knowledge, linguistic ability, age group, hearing impairment, cultural differences and mood (impatient, angry, upset etc.).                  Importance of adapting communication: Speaking clearly/ with suitable terminology improves understanding, remaining calm/ friendly diffuses emotional situations, adapting communication can resolve client needs promptly and to satisfaction of client.</p>
	<p>3.4</p>	<p>Explain how the non-verbal communication of the service deliverer can affect the behaviour of the client</p>	<p>How non-verbal communication can effect behaviour of client: Including: facial expression, gesturing, posture, personal space, handshakes, appearance (hairstyle, clothing etc.); effect on client behaviour: just as important as what is said, can make them more relaxed, feel appreciated, reciprocate behaviour/ attitude of service deliverer etc.</p>
	<p>3.5</p>	<p>Describe how personal presentation, approach and attitude will influence the perception of the service delivered</p>	<p>Influence of presentation, approach and attitude on perception of service delivered:                  Creating a positive first impression, dressing to show commitment to core values of business (e.g. fashion designers, sports facilities etc.), uniform shows consistent service across different stores, friendly attitude conveys care for interests of client etc.</p>

**Guidance on Delivery and Assessment**

This section provides an opportunity for the developer to expand and explain any aspect of the unit further and to include ideas on how the unit can be delivered and assessed. Attention should be given to the delivery and assessment needs of **all** potential candidates, ensuring no barriers to entry, other than those directly related to the integrity of the units i.e. does it cater for the needs of race, disability and gender.

**Any relevant standards / mapping to standards or NOS / or assessment strategy**

This section allows you to list any relevant standards/mapping or National Occupational Standards.

## Resources and Useful websites

Include any publications or web sites that would be useful to a learner.

### Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

This is usually calculated separately for each unit, then added up to give a total for the qualification. This figure is important to give learners an idea of what the time commitment is. In order to calculate the TQT please refer to and complete the separate document [Calculating TQT and Calculating Level](#). (For regulated qualifications, this document is required to evidence how these calculations were achieved with at least two practitioners involved in the process.)

The TQT has 2 components that are added together:

- **Guided learning hours (GLH)** - Actual number of hours in the Unit for the learner to be participating in education and training under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of a supervisor, trainer or tutor, INCLUDING time spent undertaking invigilated assessment (examination). This can include:
  - Timetabled hours
  - Invigilated assessment
  - Other supervised activity
  - Assessment (not invigilated but with tutor)
  - Practice time - with tutor
  
- **Directed Assessment and Learning (DAL)** All other learning - Actual number of hours in the Unit for the learner to spend in preparation, study or other form of participation, including assessment (assignments/coursework) which takes place directed by, but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a supervisor, trainer or tutor. This can include:
  - Directed study (e.g Home study)
  - E- Learning (without tutor interaction)
  - Directed practice time -without tutor
  - Portfolio assessment –without tutor
  - Research

### Calculating the Level of the Unit

Using the Level Descriptors provided on page 7 of this guide, please calculate the level of the unit recording it on the Calculating Level form. This process is repeated for all units in the qualification, after which the overall qualification level is calculated.