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Performance Table Qualification Qualification Level Conditions

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Introduction

About this document

This document is part of a suite of documents which sets out our regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering Performance Table Qualifications.

Requirements set out in this document

This document sets out the Performance Table Qualification Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements.

It sets out our requirements in relation to the following –

- Assessment strategies. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition PTQ4.1(b).
- Qualification purposes. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition PTQ6.1.
- Assessment. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition PTQ10.1.
- Specified levels of attainment. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition PTQ11.1.
- Standard setting. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition PTQ12.1.

At present, these conditions and requirements apply only to key stage 4 technical award qualifications that –

- are listed on the Secretary of State's performance tables, or
- were listed on the performance tables on or after the date these conditions came into effect but were subsequently removed.

We will consider extending these conditions and requirements to cover other qualifications that appear on the performance tables and consult where we propose to do so. Where we decide to extend the conditions and requirements to other qualifications, we will add those qualifications to the definition of Performance Table Qualifications.

With respect to all Performance Table Qualifications, awarding organisations must also comply with:

- our *General Conditions of Recognition*,¹ which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications, and

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

- all relevant Regulatory Documents.²

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² www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-document-list

Condition PTQ1: Disapplication of certain General Conditions of Recognition

PTQ1.1 In respect of each Performance Table Qualification which an awarding organisation makes available, or proposes to make available, the following General Conditions of Recognition do not apply –

- (a) Conditions E1.1 – E1.2,
- (b) Condition E7, and
- (c) Condition E9.

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Condition PTQ2: Notification to Ofqual of certain events

- PTQ2.1 Where an awarding organisation makes a notification to Ofqual under Condition B3.1 in relation to a Performance Table Qualification that it makes available, or proposes to make available, it must specify in that notification that the relevant event relates to such a qualification.

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Condition PTQ3: Data collection by Ofqual

- PTQ3.1 An awarding organisation must comply with the terms of any notice published by Ofqual that requires the awarding organisation to provide information to Ofqual in relation to a Performance Table Qualification which the awarding organisation makes available, or proposes to make available.
- PTQ3.2 For these purposes, and without prejudice to the generality of Condition PTQ3.1, a notice published by Ofqual may –
- (a) do anything that a notice given under Condition B4.1 may do,
 - (b) require information to be submitted to Ofqual periodically, and specify the relevant dates of submission, and
 - (c) require information which includes –
 - (i) other qualifications that have been, or are being, taken by Learners taking the qualification,
 - (ii) individual Learners' outcomes at qualification and assessment level, including, as relevant, for Learners who have yet to compete the qualification,
 - (iii) registration information, assessment dates and assessment locations for individual Learners,
 - (iv) marks and specified levels of attainment for individual Learners, including historic data in relation to those which have subsequently been amended through any process,
 - (v) the document produced under Condition G1.3 in relation to each assessment,
 - (vi) details of Reasonable Adjustments made and Special Consideration given in relation to individual Learners and assessments,
 - (vii) details of the form and performance of individual assessments, including errors in assessments,
 - (viii) monitoring of Assessors' marking of each Component, and
 - (ix) the evidence used in setting specified levels of attainment under Condition PTQ12.

Condition PTQ4: Assessment strategies

- PTQ4.1 In respect of each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –
- (a) establish and maintain an assessment strategy for that qualification,
 - (b) ensure that the assessment strategy complies with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time, and
 - (c) have regard to any guidance in relation to assessment strategies which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
- PTQ4.2 In particular, an awarding organisation must ensure that the assessment strategy for a Performance Table Qualification sets out how the awarding organisation intends to secure, on an ongoing basis, compliance with its Conditions of Recognition in respect of the assessments for that qualification.
- PTQ4.3 An awarding organisation must ensure that all assessments for a Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, are designed, set, delivered and marked in compliance with its assessment strategy for that qualification.
- PTQ4.4 An awarding organisation must –
- (a) keep under review its assessment strategy for a Performance Table Qualification, and revise it where necessary, so as to satisfy itself that the assessment strategy meets at all times the requirements of Conditions PTQ4.1 and PTQ4.2,
 - (b) review its assessment strategy for a Performance Table Qualification promptly upon receiving a request from Ofqual to do so, and subsequently ensure that its assessment strategy complies with any requirements that Ofqual has communicated to it in writing, and
 - (c) promptly notify Ofqual of any revisions made by it to any assessment strategy.
- PTQ4.5 An awarding organisation must –
- (a) upon receiving a request from Ofqual to do so, demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction that it has complied with its assessment strategy for a Performance Table Qualification in respect of any

particular assessment for that qualification, or provide an explanation to Ofqual as to why it has not so complied, and

- (b) give effect to any recommendation that Ofqual may make in respect of its compliance with its assessment strategy.

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Condition PTQ5: Performance Table Qualification Review

PTQ5.1 Following any review by Ofqual of a Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, specified to it by Ofqual in relation to the qualification.

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Condition PTQ6: Qualification purposes

PTQ6.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available –

- (a) meets the general purposes for such qualifications published by Ofqual and revised from time to time, having regard to any guidance which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time,
- (b) has one or more specific purposes which are consistent with the general purposes, and
- (c) is designed to achieve a balance between the qualification's purposes in line with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

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Condition PTQ7: Levels

PTQ7.1 An awarding organisation must assign one or both of the following levels to each Technical Award which it makes available, or proposes to make available, and assign the same level or levels to each Component of that qualification –

- (a) Level 1.
- (b) Level 2.

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Condition PTQ8: Total Qualification Time

PTQ8.1 In respect of each Performance Table Qualification that it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- (a) design that qualification such that the number of hours for Guided Learning will be at least that specified by Ofqual from time to time,
- (b) based on its design, assign to that qualification the appropriate number of hours for Guided Learning, and
- (c) assign to that qualification a number of hours for Total Qualification Time by applying the TQT Criteria.

PTQ8.2 An awarding organisation must –

- (a) keep under review the number of hours it has assigned to each Performance Table Qualification for each of Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning,
- (b) in particular, review the numbers of hours assigned following any revision to –
 - (i) the number of hours for Guided Learning specified by Ofqual under Condition PTQ8.1(a), or
 - (ii) the TQT Criteria, and
- (c) revise the number of hours that the awarding organisation has assigned, if appropriate.

PTQ8.3 Following any review by Ofqual of the number of hours assigned to a Performance Table Qualification in respect of Total Qualification Time or Guided Learning, an awarding organisation must revise that number in any manner required by Ofqual.

Interpretation

PTQ8.4 For the purposes of this Condition, references to a 'qualification' are references to the qualification as a whole and not to individual units.

Condition PTQ9: Content

PTQ9.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that the knowledge, skills and understanding that will be assessed as part of each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, are appropriate in relation to –

- (a) the qualification's purposes,
- (b) the level of the qualification,
- (c) the design of the assessments to be taken for the qualification, and
- (d) the number of hours for Total Qualification Time assigned to the qualification.

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Condition PTQ10: Assessment

- PTQ10.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
- PTQ10.2 An awarding organisation may apply for an exemption from any requirement published under Condition PTQ10.1 with respect to which Ofqual has stated that it will accept such an application.
- PTQ10.3 Condition PTQ10.1 does not apply to the extent that an awarding organisation has been granted an exemption by Ofqual under Condition PTQ10.2.

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Condition PTQ11: Specified levels of attainment

- PTQ11.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that the specification for each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, sets out specified levels of attainment which comply with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
- PTQ11.2 An awarding organisation may apply for an exemption from any requirement published under Condition PTQ11.1 with respect to which Ofqual has stated that it will accept such an application.
- PTQ11.3 Condition PTQ11.1 does not apply to the extent that an awarding organisation has been granted an exemption by Ofqual under Condition PTQ11.2.

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Condition PTQ12: Standard setting

PTQ12.1 In respect of each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time in relation to –

- (a) the promotion of consistency between the measurement of Learners' levels of attainment in that qualification and similar qualifications made available by other awarding organisations, and
- (b) the setting of specified levels of attainment.

PTQ12.2 In setting the specified levels of attainment for a Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, an awarding organisation must have regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

PTQ12.3 In respect of each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, the range of evidence to which an awarding organisation has regard for the purposes of Condition PTQ12.2 will only be appropriate if it includes evidence of –

- (a) the Level of Demand of the assessments for that qualification,
- (b) the level of attainment demonstrated in those assessments by an appropriately representative sample of Learners taking that qualification,
- (c) where available, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners taking that qualification in a –
 - (i) prior assessment (which was not for that qualification), whether or not that assessment was for a regulated qualification, or
 - (ii) prior qualification, whether or not that qualification was a regulated qualification, and
- (d) following the first year in which the qualification is awarded, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners who have previously been awarded the qualification.

PTQ12.4 An awarding organisation must maintain a record of –

- (a) the evidence to which it has had regard in setting the specified levels of attainment for each Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, and
- (b) its rationale for the selection of and weight given to that evidence.

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Condition PTQ13: Withdrawal of Performance Table Qualifications from Performance Tables

- PTQ13.1 In respect of a Performance Table Qualification which it makes available, an awarding organisation must –
- (a) promptly notify Ofqual –
 - (i) where it proposes to withdraw that qualification from inclusion in the Performance Tables, and
 - (ii) where for any other reason that qualification will, or is likely to, no longer be included in the Performance Tables, and
 - (b) provide, as part of the notification, a description of the circumstances in which the need for the notification has arisen.
- PTQ13.2 Where either of the situations in Condition PTQ13.1(a)(i) or (ii) applies –
- (a) Ofqual may decide, upon application by the awarding organisation or otherwise, that the Performance Table Qualification Level Conditions should no longer apply to that qualification, and
 - (b) the awarding organisation must comply with any requirements communicated to it by Ofqual in writing as part of that decision.
- PTQ13.3 Any decision by Ofqual under Condition PTQ13.2 may include a decision that the Performance Table Qualification Level Conditions shall not apply to the relevant qualification from a particular date.

Condition PTQ14: Interpretation and Definitions

- PTQ14.1 The rules of interpretation and definitions outlined in General Condition J1 shall apply to the Performance Table Qualification Level Conditions.
- PTQ14.2 Except in the circumstances described in Condition PTQ14.3, the requirements imposed by the Performance Table Qualification Level Conditions apply in addition to the requirements imposed by the General Conditions of Recognition.
- PTQ14.3 To the extent that there is any inconsistency between a requirement of a Performance Table Qualification Level Condition and a requirement of a General Condition of Recognition, such that an awarding organisation could not comply with both such requirements, the awarding organisation must comply with the requirement of the Performance Table Qualification Level Condition and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the General Condition of Recognition.
- PTQ 14.4 In these Conditions, the following words shall have the meaning given to them below (and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly)

–

Performance Tables

The information on school performance published annually by the Secretary of State under section 537(6) of the Education Act 1996.

Technical Award

A qualification –

- (a) intended primarily to be taken by Learners at the fourth key stage as defined in section 82(1)(d) of the Education Act 2002, and
- (b) which has been approved by the Secretary of State for inclusion in the Performance Tables from 2023 onwards.

This includes a qualification which met the above two criteria at any time on or after the date on which these conditions came into effect but which is no longer included in the Performance Tables for any reason.

Performance Table Qualification

A Technical Award.

Performance Table Qualification Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to all Performance Table Qualifications, except where an application has been granted under Condition PTQ13.2, and which uses the numbering format 'PTQn.n', where 'n' denotes a number.

Assessment strategy requirements

Condition PTQ4.1(a) requires an awarding organisation to establish and maintain an assessment strategy for each Technical Award which it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition PTQ4.2 requires an awarding organisation to ensure that the assessment strategy for a Technical Award sets out how the awarding organisation intends to secure, on an ongoing basis, compliance with its Conditions of Recognition in respect of the assessments for that qualification.

Condition PTQ4.1(b) requires an awarding organisation to have regard to any requirements in relation to assessment strategies published by Ofqual.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition PTQ4.1(b) below.

General requirements

There are three key properties of effective assessment strategies.

1. A coherent and logical narrative

An assessment strategy should present a coherent and logical narrative that includes clear and concise evidence demonstrating how an awarding organisation will seek to ensure that the qualification is fit for purpose. While the detailed requirements section below sets out the type of content required within the assessment strategy, the tables (and their content) are not intended to act as a template specifying the form that the assessment strategy must take. In particular, the assessment strategy should not be presented as a set of discrete answers to the questions and requirements set out below, as this approach risks lacking coherence. Rather, it must demonstrate consistency between different justifications and explanations, by –

- linking back to previously referred aspects (e.g. the content domain and assessment model should be demonstrably consistent with the purpose of the qualification), and
- demonstrating clear consideration and understanding of the consequences of decisions (e.g. of the implications of the assessment model used for the approach to setting and maintaining standards). Many decisions entail trade-offs (e.g.

between Validity and marking Reliability, for example when using selected-response item types in some written assessments). These should be addressed as appropriate, so that the thinking behind the key decisions that the awarding organisation has made in developing the qualification is clear.

2. The use of argument and justification with evidence

In an assessment strategy, all statements that may have implications for the fitness for purpose of the qualification should be underpinned with argument and supporting evidence. Such statements should not constitute only assertion. For example, the following statement provides no evidence or justification to support the assertion that multiple choice questions align best with the content being assessed in the qualification –

'The two external assessments will comprise only multiple choice questions. This item type aligns best with the type of content we are assessing in this qualification.'

The reasoning and evidence behind such assertions must be provided. An awarding organisation must focus solely on the inclusion of material that supports its arguments for the fitness for purpose of the qualification.

An awarding organisation must not include descriptions of processes or include/refer to pre-existing process documentation if the relevance of this content to the Validity and fitness for purpose of the assessments has not specifically been drawn out.

3. A focus on the fitness for purpose of the qualification

The primary purpose of an assessment strategy is to demonstrate that the choices that have been made in the development and ongoing monitoring of the qualification ensure that the qualification meets the Conditions and is thus valid and otherwise fit for purpose.

In particular, where an awarding organisation seeks an exemption under Condition PTQ10.2 or Condition PTQ11.2 from any requirement in relation to assessment or specified levels of attainment it must highlight this intention and ensure that its alternative approach is fully justified within the assessment strategy, including consideration of the consequential risks.

Detailed requirements

We set out below our detailed requirements on the specific information and evidence an awarding organisation must include in its assessment strategy. The requirements are set out in eight sections, as shown below. These sections are intended to represent the key stages in the lifecycle of a qualification, and an awarding organisation's assessment strategy must be structured so as to reflect them.

	Section
1	Qualification origination
2	Content domain
3	Assessment design
4	Assessment delivery
5	Marking and standardisation
6	Attainment and reporting
7	Standard setting and maintenance
8	Qualification monitoring

For each of the 8 sections, indicative content is provided within a table that includes subheadings, corresponding questions, an explanation of the importance of those questions, and the Ofqual Conditions to which they relate. In many cases, the column explaining the importance of information will also make clear where links should be made to other aspects of the qualification to aid the coherence of the document. For example, the content within the Assessment Structure subheading highlights the importance

of demonstrating that the assessment model is consistent with both the purposes of the assessments and its content domain. Note, however, that the links highlighted in the table are not exhaustive and should be regarded simply as indicative of the types of dependencies between different aspects of the qualification that may need to be addressed.

The content within each table should not be seen as a template for an awarding organisation's assessment strategy. The subheadings and corresponding questions are designed to support thinking about the types of content that may be relevant. Depending on the nature of a particular qualification, there may be additional areas that require focus. Similarly, some areas covered in the table may require more extended focus, while other areas may not be applicable.

An awarding organisation is not required to include sample assessment materials within its assessment strategy. However, awarding organisations must include examples (e.g. of test items, tasks and mark schemes) to exemplify any points or arguments made within the document where appropriate.

Qualification origination

This refers to the initial approach to scoping the specification, including clearly defining the purposes of the assessment and its target population.

	Key questions	Why this is important	Examples of relevant conditions
Purposes	<p>What are the specific purposes of the qualification?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What priorities have been established between the different purposes? - Where there are competing purposes (including general purposes specified under Condition PTQ6.1), what trade- 	<p>The qualification should articulate meaningful and accurate purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - as key aspects of the qualification, such as the content domain and assessment structure, must be designed to be consistent with the qualification purposes - so that users of the qualification are not misled. 	Condition PTQ6.1

	offs have been considered, and how have these been resolved?		
Target group(s)	<p>What population of Learners is the qualification suitable for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there particular groups of Learners for whom the qualification would not be suitable? 	<p>Full consideration of the target Learner group(s) is necessary to ensure that key aspects of the qualification, such as the content domain and assessment model, are designed appropriately.</p>	<p>Condition D1 Condition E4.2 Condition PTQ9.1</p>

Content domain

This refers to the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught and assessed in the qualification.

Structure	<p>What are the fundamental knowledge and skills inherent in the qualification, and how are they represented? Refer to the key elements of the content domain where applicable, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning outcomes - topics (and their weightings) - content statements - assessment objectives 	<p>The content domain should be aligned with the purposes, level and target group(s) of the qualification.</p> <p>A poorly defined domain can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learners being insufficiently prepared for assessments - the development of assessments and criteria/mark schemes that fail to appropriately target the domain in a way that is fair and/or transparent - the qualification failing to meet one or more of its general or specific purposes. 	<p>Condition PTQ9.1</p>
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	What is the size of the qualification?	The Total Qualification Time and number of Guided Learning Hours should be justified in relation to the purposes, level and target group(s) of the qualification.	Condition PTQ8
Demand	What steps were taken to ensure that the demand of the qualification content is set appropriately?	The demand of the qualification content should be considered in relation to the target group(s) and to other qualifications at the same level.	Condition PTQ9.1
Optionality	Are there any optional routes? These might be between assessments or within assessments. If there are, how have any consequential threats to Comparability and content domain coverage been addressed?	The presence of optional routes may have implications for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comparability (i.e. between different routes) - content coverage (where one or more routes may omit key elements of the content domain). 	Condition PTQ9.1 Condition G1.2(a)

Assessment design

This refers to all aspects of the structure and development of Assessments by Examination and Non-exam Assessments.

Assessment structure	What is the model of assessment used? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many assessments are there in total, and what are the weightings between them? - What is the balance of assessment by Assessment 	The key structural aspects of the assessment should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consistent with the purposes of the qualification - appropriate in relation to the content domain 	Condition D1 Condition E4.2 Condition G1 Condition PTQ6.1 Condition PTQ10.1
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	<p>by Examination and Non-exam Assessment, etc.?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the overall assessment time, and what is the rationale for this? - What is the approach to requiring Learners to draw together knowledge, skills and understanding appropriately from across the course of study? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conducive to the development of robust standard setting and standards maintenance processes. 	
Assessment development	<p>What is the process for developing assessment materials?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the different stages involved? - Who is involved at each stage? - What is the approach to training individuals who will be responsible for setting assessments, including ensuring security and mitigating any conflicts of interest? 	<p>The process of assessment development should facilitate the development of valid and fit for purpose assessments.</p>	<p>Condition A4 Condition D1 Condition E4.2 Condition G1 Condition G3 Condition G4 Condition G9.1 – G9.2</p>
Item and task Validity	<p>What steps are taken to ensure that assessment tasks elicit the assessment evidence they ought to elicit? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that each task triggers its intended learning outcomes 	<p>Poorly designed assessments could impact on their ability to elicit reliable information regarding the proficiency of Learners.</p>	<p>Condition D1 Condition E4.2 Condition G1 Condition G3</p>

	<p>and no unintended learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that Learners understand what each task is asking them to do - that bias and other construct irrelevant factors are minimised - that Learners have sufficient time to complete tasks. 		
Sampling	Where applicable, how is content sampled from the content domain?	The sampling methodology should demonstrate adequate coverage of the domain both over time and in relation to individual assessments.	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition G1</p> <p>Condition G9.3</p>
Assessment by Examination	<p>What parts of the content domain are assessed through Assessment by Examination, and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What item types are used? - How has the balance between different item types been determined? - How are mark schemes designed, and what steps are taken to ensure they support reliable application? 	<p>Assessments by Examination should be justified in relation to their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - alignment with the purposes of the qualification - effectiveness in assessing the knowledge and skills laid out in the content domain - conduciveness to achieving reliable outcomes for Learners. 	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition G1</p> <p>Condition G9.3</p> <p>Condition PTQ6.1</p> <p>Condition PTQ10.1</p>
Non-exam Assessment	What parts of the content domain are assessed through Non-exam Assessment, and why?	The use of Non-exam Assessment should be justified, with a particular emphasis on:	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition A6</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p>

	<p>What type(s) of Non-exam Assessments are used, and why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why this type of assessment is required in order to maximise assessment Validity - what the key threats to Reliability and Validity are, and how these have been mitigated. 	<p>Condition G1 Condition G9.3 Condition PTQ10.1</p>
Centre adaptation	<p>What approach is taken to whether Centre adaptation of tasks will be permitted, and in terms of the extent to which Centres are, for example, otherwise required to interpret or expand tasks set by the Awarding Organisation?</p> <p>What is the rationale for the approach?</p>	<p>It is important to demonstrate how Comparability is assured in relation to any Centre adaptation (or similar) of assessments set by the Awarding Organisation.</p>	<p>Condition D1 Condition E4.2 Condition G1 Condition G9 Condition PTQ10.1</p>
Controls	<p>What controls are specified?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are assessment tasks to be performed within specified time limits? Are Learners permitted to ask for support? - Are Learners permitted to access resources? 	<p>It is important that any controls have been fully considered and specified to ensure assessments are Valid, Reliable and appropriate for the target group.</p>	<p>Condition G8 Condition G9</p>
Generating outcomes (assessment level)	<p>What is the approach to generating scores for individual assessments?</p>	<p>It is important that the approach to generating scores for a given assessment is in line with the purposes of the qualification and the aspects of the content that it is assessing. (For example, mandating the achievement of</p>	<p>Condition PTQ6.1 Condition G1.2(a)</p>

		certain specific sub-sets of the content may not be appropriate unless, for example, they would be regarded as a prerequisite for achievement of the qualification, as opposed to the qualification results providing accurate information about Learners' overall proficiency in terms of what is being measured.)	
Optionality	What approach is taken to optionality – both between assessments and within assessments as relevant?	It is important to ensure that standards are maintained when there are optional routes.	Condition G1.2

Assessment delivery

This refers to the available modes of delivery and the availability of assessments.

Modes of assessment delivery (all assessment)	What modes of assessment delivery are available (e.g. paper-based, computer-based)?	<p>The modes of delivery should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appropriate for the target group - manageable for Centres - optimal in terms of eliciting evidence of the skills and knowledge described in the content domain. <p>Prioritisation between these requirements should be detailed.</p>	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition G1</p> <p>Condition G9</p>
Assessment availability	What approach is taken to the availability of assessments, including:	An awarding organisation must:	<p>Condition A6</p> <p>Condition D1</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of assessments to be available - type of assessment (e.g. online and/or paper-based) - approach to Learners taking an assessment again. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - justify its approach in relation to the purpose of the assessment. - detail specific risks that have been identified (such as to the Comparability and predictability of assessments), and how these have been mitigated. 	<p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition G1</p> <p>Condition G9</p> <p>Condition PTQ10.1</p>
Security	What approach is taken to ensuring the secure transmission, distribution and storage (including by Centres) of materials?	Inadequate approaches to security can undermine Reliability – if, for example, assessment scores do not accurately reflect Learners’ attainment.	<p>Condition G4</p> <p>Condition G9</p>
Centre feedback	What approach is taken to ensuring that Centres provide appropriate feedback to Learners and that the frequency of this is also appropriate?	If feedback from Centre assessors to Learners is provided excessively frequently and/or is excessively directive about what must be included/addressed as part of the assessment, this creates the potential that assessment scores do not accurately reflect Learners’ attainment.	<p>Condition C1</p> <p>Condition C2</p> <p>Condition G9</p>

Marking and standardisation

This refers to the approach taken to the marking of all assessments.

Marking approach (all assessments)	<p>What approach is taken to the marking of assessments?</p> <p>What steps are taken to identify the risk of any adverse effect which</p>	An awarding organisation must justify its approach to marking in relation to the qualification	<p>Condition PTQ6.1</p> <p>Condition A6</p> <p>Condition D1</p>
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	may result from the awarding organisation's approach to marking assessments?	purposes and the need for reliable outcomes.	Condition H1 Condition H2 Condition H5
Monitoring marking (all assessments)	What processes are in place to monitor accuracy and consistency of marking and issuing of results, and to take remedial action where necessary?	An awarding organisation must justify its approach to monitoring in relation to the need for reliable outcomes.	Condition H1 Condition H2 Condition H5 Condition H6.1(d)
Assessor standardisation (all assessments)	What approach is taken to training and standardising assessors, including details of standardisation procedures and any wider training?	It is important to clearly articulate expected criteria for the judgements of success in order to ensure the Reliability of the judgements that are made.	Condition G1.3 Condition H1 Condition H2 Condition H5
Moderation (Non-exam Assessments)	What is the approach to Moderation, and the rationale for this approach? What are the risks with this approach, and how will they be managed?	An awarding organisation must justify its approach to Moderation in relation to the need for Reliable outcomes.	Condition A6 Condition C1 Condition C2.1 and C2.3(j) Condition D1 Condition H2 Condition H5
Centre training and monitoring (Non-exam Assessments)	What approach is taken to the provision of guidance and training to Centres around marking? How are Centres monitored?	An awarding organisation must justify its approach to training in relation to the need for Reliable outcomes.	Condition C1 Condition H1 Condition H5 Condition PTQ10.1

Attainment and Reporting

This refers to the identified levels of attainment and the grading structures used to characterise these levels.

Levels of attainment	<p>What characteristics differentiate learners who have demonstrated different levels of attainment?</p> <p>Are differences between adjacent levels of attainment easy to detect (i.e. the levels are clearly discrete) or hard to detect (i.e. achievement is more continuous)?</p>	The characteristics identified should follow clearly from relevant elements of the content domain.	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition G1.3</p>
Grading structure	<p>What grading structure is employed, and what is the justification for it? How do the assessments generate Reliable information in line with the proposed grading?</p>	The grading structure should be justified in relation to the purposes of the assessment, the identified levels of attainment and the assessments proposed.	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition PTQ6.1</p> <p>Condition PTQ11.1</p>
Aggregation (qualification level)	<p>What is the justification for the approach to aggregation, for example, the extent to which Learners' results for the qualification reflect their overall attainment across all assessments, or their attainment in particular assessments?</p> <p>What is the approach to scaling/ aggregation, where relevant?</p>	<p>The approach should be justified in relation to the content domain and purposes of the qualification.</p> <p>An appropriate scaling and aggregation scheme is needed to ensure appropriate discrimination between Learners.</p>	<p>Condition D1</p> <p>Condition E4.2</p> <p>Condition PTQ12.1(b)</p>
Reviews	<p>What steps are taken to ensure that concerns over inaccuracy of assessment</p>	<p>An appropriate process is fundamental to ensuring that</p>	<p>Condition I1</p>

	<p>results are addressed adequately and appropriately? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that they are investigated fairly, thoroughly and in a timely fashion - that justified concerns over inaccuracy are resolved by following an appropriate due process. 	<p>appropriate inferences are drawn from results.</p>	
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Standard setting and maintenance

This refers to the processes for setting and maintaining standards, and the types of evidence that are used.

Approach	<p>What is the approach to setting and maintaining appropriate grading standards within the qualification?</p>	<p>It is important the approach to standard setting and maintaining follows an appropriate technical methodology.</p>	Condition PTQ12
Evidence	<p>What quantitative and qualitative information is used?</p> <p>How is the weighting of evidence determined when multiple sources of evidence are used?</p>	<p>It is important the approach to standard setting and maintaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - includes full consideration of the strengths and limitations of the different types of available evidence, and the weight given to different evidence - leads to securing fair outcomes over time and between Learners. 	Condition PTQ12

Modes of assessment	Where there are multiple modes (e.g. paper and computer), how is Comparability maintained?	It is important to ensure that standards are maintained when there are multiple modes of assessment.	Condition D1 Condition E4.2
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Qualification monitoring

This refers to the processes that are applied on an ongoing basis to monitor the Validity of key aspects of the specification, such as its assessments, susceptibility to malpractice and maladministration and standard maintenance processes.

Approach	Describe the techniques and measures used to monitor all key aspects of the qualification that may affect its Reliability and Validity. This should include, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviewing of functioning of previous assessments - security/malpractice issues/incidents - feedback through engagement with users of the qualification 	Failure to consider the on-going Validity of the qualification increases the likelihood of threats manifesting themselves and/or assessment processes ceasing to remain fit for purpose.	Condition A6 Condition A8.1 Condition D1 Condition D3 Condition E4.2 Condition G1 Condition G4 Condition G9.3 Condition PTQ10.1
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Qualification purposes

Condition PTQ6.1 allows us to specify requirements in relation to the general purposes which a Technical Award must meet, as well as how the qualification's general and specific purposes must be balanced.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition PTQ6.1 below.

General purposes

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Technical Award which it makes available, or proposes to make available, meets the general purposes of providing –

- (a) Users of the qualification with reliable evidence of Learners' attainment in relation to the knowledge, skills and understanding assessed as part of the qualification (General Purpose A),
- (b) Learners with a breadth and depth of study of a sector or broad occupational group (but not a particular occupation or skill), to prepare them for further study (General Purpose B),
- (c) a basis for schools and colleges to be held accountable for the performance of their Learners (General Purpose C), and
- (d) a course of learning with which Learners can suitably engage (General Purpose D).

Balancing the purposes

An awarding organisation must ensure that in the design of each Technical Award which it makes available, or proposes to make available, priority is given to the general qualification purposes in the following order (from highest priority to the lowest) –

- (a) General Purpose A,
- (b) General Purposes B and C, and
- (c) General Purpose D.

For example, in ensuring that the qualification provides an engaging and accessible course of learning (General Purpose D), an awarding organisation should make sure that the provision of reliable evidence of attainment (General Purpose A) is not compromised.

An awarding organisation should seek the optimum balance between General Purposes B and C.

The specific purposes set under Condition PTQ6.1(b) must reflect the balance of, and be consistent with, the general qualification purposes.

Number of hours of Guided Learning

Condition PTQ8.1(a) allows us to specify a number of hours for Guided Learning in relation to Technical Awards.

We set out our specification for the purposes of Condition PTQ8.1(a) below.

For the purposes of Condition PTQ8.1(a) an awarding organisation must design each of its Technical Awards such that the number of hours for Guided Learning will be at least 120 hours.

NOT YET IN FORCE

Assessment requirements

Condition PTQ10.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the assessment of Technical Awards.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition PTQ10.1 below.

We also set out the requirements in relation to which an awarding organisation may apply for an exemption under Condition PTQ10.2.

Assessment by Examination

An awarding organisation must ensure that the assessments for a Technical Award include one or more Assessments by Examination³ –

- (a) through which at least 40% of the total marks for the qualification are made available, and
- (b) in which the evidence generated by the Learner is required to be in writing.

An awarding organisation may apply to Ofqual for an exemption from the requirement in (a) and/or (b) above. An awarding organisation may also apply for an exemption to the requirement that the Assessment by Examination is taken simultaneously by all Learners.

Any such exemption will be only granted where an awarding organisation is able to demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction that –

- (a) its alternative assessment structure will improve the Validity of the qualification, and
- (b) the controls which it proposes to put in place are sufficient to manage any risks to which its alternative approach gives rise.

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Learner takes the Assessment by Examination in the assessment series immediately prior to his or her certification for the qualification.

Where an exemption is granted to the requirement for at least 40% of the total marks for the qualification to be made available through Assessments by Examination, an

³ For the purposes of these requirements an Assessment by Examination is defined as an assessment which is -

- (a) set by an awarding organisation,
- (b) designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant Learners at a time determined by the awarding organisation, and
- (c) taken under conditions specified by the awarding organisation (including conditions relating to the supervision of Learners during the assessment and the duration of the assessment).

awarding organisation must ensure that each Learner takes assessments through which at least that percentage of marks is made available immediately prior to his or her certification for the qualification. These assessments must include any Assessments by Examination that remain in the qualification.

Setting of Non-exam Assessments

An awarding organisation must set all assessments which are not Assessments by Examination ('Non-exam Assessments').

An awarding organisation must ensure that all Non-exam Assessments are mark-based.

An awarding organisation may apply to Ofqual for an exemption from the requirement to use mark-based Non-exam Assessments.

Centre Adaptations to Non-exam Assessments

An awarding organisation may permit a Centre to adapt questions or tasks in Non-exam Assessments for the purpose of making those assessments more accessible to Learners.

Where an awarding organisation permits a Centre to adapt questions or tasks, such adaptations must relate only to the context presented by that question or task. An awarding organisation must not permit a Centre to amend –

- (a) the knowledge, skills or understanding that a Learner is required to demonstrate in the question or task,
- (b) the Level of Demand of the question or task, or
- (c) any specified conditions under which the assessment must be completed, including in particular the time within which the assessment must be completed (unless any such amendment is part of a Reasonable Adjustment or for the purposes of Special Consideration).

Resubmission of evidence for Non-exam Assessments

An awarding organisation may allow a Learner to retake a Non-exam Assessment through submission, in a new or revised form, of evidence generated by that Learner which he or she has submitted for the purposes of taking the assessment on a previous occasion.

Marking of assessments

An awarding organisation must ensure that evidence generated by Learners in the Assessments by Examination for a Technical Award is marked by the awarding organisation or a person connected to it.

Evidence generated by a Learner in a Non-exam Assessment for a Technical Award may be marked –

- (a) by the awarding organisation or a person connected to the awarding organisation,
- (b) by a Centre, or
- (c) through a combination of (a) and (b).

In any event, the awarding organisation must demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction in its assessment strategy that –

- (a) it has taken all reasonable steps to identify the risk of any Adverse Effect which may result from its approach to marking the assessments (and to Moderation where appropriate), and
- (b) where such a risk is identified, it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent that Adverse Effect or, where it cannot be prevented, to mitigate that Adverse Effect.

Guidance for Centres

Under Condition G10.2(a) an awarding organisation must ensure that every assessment for a qualification which it makes available is fit for purpose on delivery.

Under Condition C2.5 an awarding organisation must provide effective guidance to a Centre in respect of the parts of the delivery of a qualification that the Centre undertakes.

Under Condition H1.1 an awarding organisation must ensure that the criteria against which Learners' performance will be differentiated are applied accurately and consistently by all Assessors.

Taking these obligations together, and without prejudice to any other action that they might require, an awarding organisation must provide effective guidance to Centres in respect of the adaptation, delivery and marking by Centres, as relevant, of assessments for a Technical Award which it makes available, or proposes to make available.

Availability of assessments

In each academic year, an awarding organisation must provide –

- (a) two assessment series on set dates during which Learners can complete the Assessment(s) by Examination for a Technical Award, and
- (b) two windows for the submission of proposed marks (or, where approved, grades) in relation to any Non-exam Assessment marked by Centres.

Requirements in relation to the specified levels of attainment to be used for Technical Awards

Condition PTQ11.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the specified levels of attainment that must be used for Technical Awards.

Condition PTQ12.1(b) allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to how those specified levels of attainment are set.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Conditions PTQ11.1 and PTQ12.1(b) below.

Specified levels of attainment in Technical Awards

In relation to each Technical Award, an awarding organisation must ensure that the specified levels of attainment take the form of a scale –

- (a) with a minimum of three points, and
- (b) with a maximum of –
 - (i) for a level 1 or level 2 qualification, four points, and
 - (ii) for a qualification spanning both level 1 and level 2, seven points.

A Learner who does not meet the criteria to be awarded a specified level of attainment must be issued with a result of 'unclassified'.

Setting the specified levels of attainment

In setting the specified levels of attainment for a Component of a Technical Award, an awarding organisation must ensure that these are set for the Component as a whole.

An awarding organisation must also ensure that any result for a Component that it issues in respect of a Learner is based on the Learner's performance within that Component as a whole.

An awarding organisation may apply to Ofqual for an exemption from either or both of these requirements.

An awarding organisation must not publish where it will set its specified levels of attainment in advance of the assessments for the qualification being marked.

An awarding organisation must explain in its assessment strategy its approach to the aggregation of Component results at qualification level.



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