

Vocational Qualifications

Level 4 Diploma Career Information and Advice – 04663

Level 6 Diploma Career Guidance and Development – 04664

EQAs' report 2021/2022

About this EQAs' report

This report on the 2021/22 assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice for future assessments.

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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Overview

During 2021-22 forty-four centres were active offering for the most part both qualifications. The centres have been supported by four EQA's, although one has recently resigned and will not be replaced for the 2022-23 OCR year. The centres generally continue to offer a high-quality provision with effective IQA and assessor practice being demonstrated.

The two qualifications have been in operation for a year and have been well received by centres. Some of the feedback has been focused on how they are both more relevant for the evolving career development sector with current terminology in place and some units streamlined to take out repetition of learning outcomes and criteria. The adding of optional units allows for more variety of choice and is inclusive of the varied job roles across the sector.

The Careers Enterprise Company led Career Leadership training and the evolving Career Development Professional Level 6 apprenticeship have increased candidate numbers for the Level 6 and offered relevant CPD opportunities.

Both options have raised the profile of career development and OCR as the awarding body for the Level 6 qualification. A number of centres have completed claims for Units 17-19 for Level 6 and some DCS recommendations have been approved.

General comments

During 2021-22 there have been some specific issues related to assessment, staffing levels, occupational competence and sampling levels within both qualifications.

The issues resulted in sanctions ranging from Level 2 to Level 3B but again were only relevant to less than 10% of centres. The issues raised are highlighted below.

- 1) Insufficient levels of IQA, feedback and assessor support.
- 2) Insufficient levels of recorded IQA planning and CPD opportunity.
- 3) Insufficient levels of staffing for both qualifications or not having the requirements to work at Level 6 as set within the Centre Handbook.

The IQA sampling levels have been at a higher rate as centres adapt to the new qualifications. This was recommended to centres at the start of the 2021-22 year and there is evidence within EQA reports of relevant feedback provided to support assessor development. The assessment practice generally is of a good standard and using a range of holistic methods to meet learner need. Several centres are providing a comprehensive taught programme to support skills and theory learning. It is evident that new centres are receiving clear guidance, especially during the approval process.

Some centres have sought advice on the following topics:

- 1) RPL guidance for schemes 04512 (Level 4) to 04664 (Level 6) and mapping processes to ensure validity of the process.
- 2) Clarification on some terminology within units, particularly for the new optional units at both levels.
- 3) Guidance on presentation and recording of verbal feedback for observed interviews and the use of virtual technology for assessment processes.
- 4) Levels and types of CPD opportunity for both IQA and assessor teams.

The queries were responded to by either the Chief Verifier or EQA assigned to the centres.

Comments on individual units

Centres are familiar with the general requirements set within units for both qualifications and assessment practice. The issues highlighted within the section above are limited in range and tends to be due to insufficient management and support of processes and teams. At present centres have not highlighted any concerns with the 'new' qualifications or unit content. As centres start to submit full claims during 2022-23, then feedback may be provided for consideration. Both qualifications remain relevant and important for practitioners working within career development.

Sector update

As stated within the Overview section there has been some significant developments with focused options to train and qualify as a careers practitioner.

New centres have been approved within the last year and has supported geographic development of both qualifications. The qualifications are held in high regard within the careers development sector with Level 6 being viewed as the 'benchmark' for professionalism and linked to government careers strategy.

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