

Vocational Qualifications

Level 4 Diploma Career Information and Advice – 04663

Level 6 Diploma Career Guidance and Development – 04664

EQAs' report 2022/2023

About this Moderators' report

This report on the 2022/23 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

Centres are continuing to finalise candidates on the legacy qualifications at Level 4 (04512) and Level 6 (10215) while delivering or preparing to deliver the revised qualifications (04663 and 04664). The general comments from centres are that the revised qualifications are welcomed as it ensures that they remain up to date and consistent with industry requirements within the career sector.

A number of centres also provide the careers apprenticeship programme and have looked at ways that the 'apprenticeship standards' can be combined with the vocational qualification. It is important however, that any evidence produced for the 'standards' reflect the demands of the vocational qualifications in particular paying attention to the demands of the command verbs such as critically analyse/critically evaluate. It cannot be assumed that the evidence required is identical between the two qualification types.

Assessment personnel within centres are maintaining their CPD by participating in a range of activities such as online webinars, conferences and training events offered by the Careers Institute.

EQA visits are conducted remotely with centres and have worked well. Centres provide access to candidate portfolios through their chosen e-portfolio portals and meet with the EQA using Microsoft Teams.

General comments

As with all vocational qualifications, it is important that centres make sure that candidates meet the demands of the command verbs when presenting their evidence as well as addressing any mandatory requirements for observations and/or witness testimonies. Many centres still continue to deliver training, carry out assessments and interact with their candidates online. This was a necessity during the pandemic and centres had to identify effective ways to enable candidates to continue to progress through their qualifications. The centres have identified that this has been positively received by candidates and works well and therefore continue to adopt this approach.

EQAs have noted that the use of audio professional discussions has provided an opportunity to enhance candidate evidence and extract further detail and information in areas where more substance to the written evidence is required. Centres are reminded that it is perfectly acceptable to obtain audio witness testimonies, where the assessor can conduct an interview with the relevant witness and ask questions about the candidate's performance in certain situations within their working environment.

It is important that when assessing evidence for the units against the different Learning Outcomes, that attention is paid to whether the learning outcome states that a candidate must 'understand' or 'be able to'. Learning outcomes stating that a candidate 'must be able to...' MUST reflect actual practical activities that the candidates have carried out while working with clients and/or other stakeholders. It is not sufficient for a candidate to provide evidence from a purely theoretical perspective as these are performance requirements that must reflect what they do in the workplace.

When carrying out observations with candidates, it is important that assessors also provide detailed feedback identifying the good practice as well as identifying areas where there could be improvement or things to consider for the future. While many centre assessor do actually include very good feedback, there are some centres where this was not available.

Comments on individual units

Level 4 (04663)

Unit 3: Interact with clients to determine their need for career guidance and development

This unit has four Learning Outcomes(LOs) as follows:

- LO1: Understand the skills required to interact with clients to establish their career guidance and development needs
- LO2: Understand the use of different digital technologies to communicate with clients
- LO3: Be able to interact with clients to determine their needs for careers guidance and development
- LO4: Be able to identify client career guidance and development needs

Within LO1 and LO2, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding as reflected in the command verbs explain and evaluate. Some candidates had not always actually evaluated the use of digital technologies to communicate with clients, but merely gave a detailed explanation as to what they used, how they used it and its purpose. When providing evidence for an evaluation, it is important that candidates provide their opinion concerning the different technologies available and how useful they are for different circumstances. Even if they do not use a particular technology that is available, they should still be able to provide an opinion as to its usefulness/effectiveness for different situations.

LO3 and LO4, requires candidates to provide evidence of competence performance and there is also a mandatory requirement for an observation. When assessors are observing candidates, they must always be mindful of the individual assessment criteria and make sure that they provide a clear account as to how the candidate met a particular assessment criterion. For example, if a candidate tailored communication in the interaction to meet the needs of individual clients, what did they do and how did they do it? How effective was it? It cannot be assumed that it has been done - the EQA needs to see the evidence so assessors must make sure that their observations are suitably descriptive.

Unit 22: Use digital technology in the career development sector

This unit has been particularly popular with some candidates and there are potential links with LO2 from Unit 3.

The unit has the following Learning Outcomes:

- LO1: Understand how digital technology can be used in the career development sector
- LO2: Understand the legislative requirements and ethical implications when using digital technology
- LO3: Understand different platform features used to enhance communication and maintain the safety and well-being of users
- LO4: Be able to plan how to use digital technology to deliver an outcome
- LO5: Be able to use the digital technology to deliver the outcome and maintain the well-being of users
- LO6: Be able to evaluate the use of digital technology in delivering an outcome

In this unit candidates are required to carry out a series of evaluations and analysis. LO1 and LO4 requires the candidate to critically evaluate. To critically evaluate, consideration should be given to breaking the command verbs down into their respective components to help candidates understand the depth required, e.g.

Critical: expressing the relative merits and faults of something

Critical evaluation: expressing the relative merits and faults of something by judging the:

- effectiveness
- value
- quality
- use of

This should be a fairly substantial piece of work - candidates who only provide one or two short paragraphs have clearly not provided enough evidence for a critical evaluation.

LO2 requires candidates to analyse the impact of relevant legislation on the use of digital technology in the sector. An analysis requires candidates to:

- conduct a detailed and methodical examination of the relevant legislation and potential impact when using digital technology in a careers environment. It is important that the candidates do not just impart their knowledge, but continually consider where it fits into the bigger picture of the points they are trying to get across. In order to achieve this they need to consider:
 - what is the legislation, its purpose and mandatory requirements
 - what does the literature about the legislation say, this could include research papers, literature reviews, best practice statements or guidelines as well as the technological resources they actually use with clients
 - how does the above points support their opinion/experience relating to the points they are trying to get across
- Finally, they need to be able to make a judgement on the evidence they have presented, its quality and whether it can or cannot support their opinions/arguments/judgements.

Level 6 (04664)

Unit 3: Career guidance and development theories and models

This unit requires candidates to develop their critical understanding and develop their practice by researching the theories and models relating to career guidance and development when supporting clients. Candidates are required to carry out a critique, critically evaluate and critically analyse through the unit. These command verbs even for a Level 6 candidate can be daunting and it is noted how many times assessors have requested candidates to 'add more detail' to their evidence.

To aid candidates it is important that they are made aware of what these command verbs actually mean and how they approach them in order to present sufficient evidence. For example:

Critique: In order to carry out a critique, candidates are required to:

- comment on the merit of the theories and models, opinions and relevance
- make a judgement on the evidence
- consider the strengths/benefits and limitations/weaknesses.

Critically analyse: It helps candidates if they understand the requirements of the different components of the command verbs as follows:

- **Critical:** expressing the relative merits and faults of something
- **Analysis:** A detailed and methodical examination of something. It is important that candidates do not just impart their knowledge but continually consider where it fits into the bigger picture of the argument they are trying to get across.

Candidates should consider:

- who is involved with the giving and receiving of career and market labour information e.g. the careers advisor, the client, parents/carers and issues each experience
- what does the literature say e.g. research papers, literature reviews, best practice statements or guidelines as well as the resources used for delivery
- consider whether the above supports their argument and relates to the points they are trying to get across
- they need to be able to make a judgement on the evidence that they have presented and its quality and when it can or cannot support the argument

Critical evaluation: Candidates are required to expressing the relative merits and faults of the theories and models from a wide range of research by judging the:

- effectiveness
- value
- quality
- use of

It can be clearly seen that this is a substantial amount of evidence that candidates have to present, and it is important that throughout they reflect on their current practice and how they could adopt new ideas, develop their practice.

Unit 11: Engage with other relevant people to help clients to meet their career development needs

While on the surface this appears to be a relatively small unit with just two Learning Outcomes, there is still a large amount of work required to provide sufficient evidence. LO1 requires candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the rationale for working with others to help clients to meet their career development needs. Within this learning outcome they are required to analysis and evaluations. It is important that candidates provide more than detailed explanations and follow a similar approach to those provided for unit 3 when carrying out analysis and evaluations. It is a Level 6 qualification and therefore expected that candidates would have conducted detailed research into the who, how and the rational for engaging with other people to support clients.

LO2 requires candidates to be able to agree how others will help clients to meet their career development needs, so this learning outcome clearly requires candidates to provide evidence of competent performance. It is therefore important that candidates set the scene and without providing any confidential/sensitive information give an overview of the context, the who, the what and the why must all be clearly provided. For example, what are client A's career development needs? This would set the initial scene for the context. What evidence can they provide of consulting with the client and others on how these career development needs can be met and that there is an agreement on how they can support the client? How have they explored with all parties how to overcome any barriers? When and who with were action plans agreed to support the candidate with their career development needs and what roles and responsibility does each person have?

Sector update

A report published by BFI and ERIC stated that there is a significant knowledge gap that 13-16 years old have about potential career opportunities in the screen industries. This is compounded by the majority of careers teams and advisors not feeling that they are equipped with sufficient up to date information, guidance or career pathways into the industry. The screen industry must take on a more active role by forging stronger links between education and career guidance providers. There is a wide array of career opportunities within the screen industry and therefore the forging of stronger links through education and the careers guidance providers will make them more accessible to young people.

A report by Careers England, identified that 33% of employers are unable to recruit career advisers with the skills and qualification required. This results in challenges for schools and colleges who are obliged to provide students with independent personal guidance delivered by a qualified careers adviser. The funding for careers guidance has significantly reduced and has resulted in skilled careers advisers leaving the sector to work in other areas. However, the need for qualified careers advisers has increased over the years and will continue to increase. The Career Development Policy Group has approached the Government to offer incentives e.g. bursaries and enhanced starting salaries as an encouragement for people to join the profession.

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