



A Guide to Assessing AIM Awards Qualifications

for centre staff

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Introduction

The aim of this document is to provide guidance for Tutors, Assessors and Internal Verifiers (IVs) on the assessment requirements of Ofqual regulated, AIM Awards qualifications. It sets out the expectations for the achievement at each level and provides guidance on a range of assessment methods and activities.

What is assessment?

Assessment is the process of providing a judgement on an individual's level of learning. Learners must generate and collect evidence of their knowledge and competence against standards. Assessment is the judgement made of this evidence against the defined standards.

What does an AIM Awards qualification look like?

Each qualification is made up of **components**. Each component has **standards**, which are the requirements of that component. Learners must provide evidence to meet all of the standards in the component.

Standards can be of two types:

- Competence/skills based
- Knowledge based

Competence/skills based standards generally begin with 'Be able to' and the evidence must be observable.

Knowledge based standards generally begin with 'Know' and 'Understand' and the evidence can be recorded by means other than observable, although observation remains a valid method.

Each standard is usually accompanied with **assessment** requirements. These set out the recommended knowledge and/or skills required to achieve the standard. Learners must evidence all of the assessment requirements to successfully achieve the standard, unless otherwise stated.

Ofqual Level Descriptors

Each qualification and component is assigned a level from Entry Level to Level 8. The Ofqual Level Descriptors provide a general shared understanding of learning and achievement at each level. The descriptors are intended for the outcomes of learning and not the process of learning or the method of assessment.

Each level descriptor is divided into two categories:

- a. knowledge and understanding; and
- b. skills

Component Guided Learning Hours

Each component will be assigned a number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH). This is the number of notional hours it takes a typical learner to achieve the component. These are Tutor-led hours only and may include classroom activities, supervised work placements and invigilated assessments.

Qualification Guided Learning Hours

The total Guided Learning Hours of the minimum required components for the qualification will give the Qualification Guided Learning Hours.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Each qualification will be assigned a Total Qualification Time (TQT) value. TQT is the number of notional hours it takes a typical learner to achieve the full qualification and is made up of two elements:

- the minimum number of Qualification Guided Learning Hours - the number of Tutor-led contact hours
- the number of hours spent on preparation, studying and the assessment that is non-guided

For example, the number of Tutor-led contact hours (GLH) for a qualification is 25 and the number of hours spent by the learner (non-GLH) on preparation and studying is 5 hours. Therefore the Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification is 30 hours.

Who is involved in the delivery and assessment of AIM Awards qualifications?

What is an Assessor?

An Assessor is a person who is competent in interpreting standards and levels, and is knowledgeable in the subjects in which they are assessing. An Assessor can provide an objective assessment of a learner's understanding, knowledge and/or skill.

What is a Tutor?

A Tutor is knowledgeable and competent to train or tutor a learner, but not necessarily able to assess the learner against the standards. They may, however, be able to provide a witness statement e.g. if they are a skilled plasterer and can attest to the standard achieved by the learner by providing relevant written feedback on observed learner practice. In some cases, the Assessor and Tutor may be the same person.

What is an Internal Verifier?

An Internal Verifier (IV) is a person whose main responsibility is to monitor the work of all Assessors involved with the qualification, to ensure that they are applying the standards consistently throughout all assessment activities. Internal Verifiers will also verify the assessment processes used. This role is intended to provide support, advice and guidance to Assessors through a number of activities, such as standardisation and where necessary, give or arrange training/CPD.

Staffing requirements

Requirements of staff assessing and internally verifying components are dependent on the qualification. These requirements will be detailed in the specific Qualification Centre Handbook and must be evidenced to AIM Awards at qualification approval.

Assessing and verifying AIM Awards qualifications

Marking tasks

Assessors must mark learner work against the standards of the component to ensure that it is at the correct level and is sufficient, appropriate, and authentic. Centres must ensure that learner evidence is generated by that learner, i.e. that plagiarism does not occur.

Assessors must judge and mark whether each standard is either achieved or not achieved. **Components are achieved when all standards of that component have been achieved.** All reasonable steps must be taken to avoid any part of the assessment of a learner (including verification) being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.

Recording achievement

Assessors must make it clear to the Internal and External Verifiers where achievement of each standard has been evidenced - we provide Learner Record of Achievement forms for all components of the qualification for use by centres. Once the work has been marked and signed off as meeting the standards by the Assessor, final feedback should be provided to the learner. A Recommendation for the Award of Credit (RAC) form will be produced for each programme once learners are registered and the Assessor must tick the RAC to indicate which component(s) each learner has achieved and sign to confirm the certification.

Internal verification

The completed marked work should be presented to the Internal Verifier for sampling according to the centre's internal verification plan. This plan must cover all internally assessed components, including the observation of Assessors assessing practical activities. AIM Awards provide sample internal verification documentation available to centres on our website.

These sample forms include:

- Assessment and Internal Verification Plan
- Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
- Internal Verifier Report of Observed Assessor Performance

Once this process has been completed, the Internal Verifier must sign the RAC to confirm their approval of learner achievement.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a process of assessing and validating learning or achievement that has not been certificated or accredited previously towards the qualification being studied. Qualification achievement can be submitted via an RPL claim (Exemption). RPL is a negotiated process between the learner and Assessor, and the learner must provide evidence of prior work, learning or achievement to fully satisfy the components. See the AIM Awards website for the full policy on RPL.

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are adjustments made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The nature of any reasonable adjustments depends on the particular requirements as well as on the qualification and assessment methods. Reasonable adjustments are generally not appropriate where the learner's particular difficulty directly affects performance in the actual attributes to be assessed. Please refer to the specific Qualification Centre Handbook for guidance on Reasonable Adjustments.

Special considerations

Special consideration is consideration to be given to a learner who has temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury, or
- some other event outside of their control

which has had or is reasonably likely to have had an effect on their ability to take an assessment or on their level of attainment in an assessment. Special consideration is not appropriate for a minor illness or a minor disturbance.

It may not be possible to apply special consideration where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date rather than apply special considerations. Please refer to the specific Qualification Centre Handbook for guidance on Special Considerations.

External Verification

Once learner work has been completed, assessed and internally verified according to the centre's internal verification plan, the work should be presented for external verification. The External Verifier (EV) will expect to be able to look at all completed and assessed learner work that is being claimed for on the RAC(s). The EV will review records of assessment, internal verification documentation, feedback to learners and any records of reasonable adjustments applied. The completed RAC(s) must also be made available for the EV to review. If the EV is satisfied with the standards of assessment and verification, they will sign the RAC(s) and learners will be certificated.

Malpractice/maladministration

Confidentiality of assessment papers, mark schemes and learner work must be maintained at all times. Centres must ensure that they inform AIM Awards of any potential breach of confidentiality. Further details on Malpractice can be found on the AIM Awards website.

AIM Awards qualification standardisation

Centres will be required to provide samples of assessment tasks for AIM Awards qualification standardisation activity. Qualification standardisation is a process that promotes consistency in the understanding and application of standards and provides AIM Awards with important information for the qualification review process.

It is a requirement of the Centre Agreement that centres offering components from the qualification must contribute assessment materials and learners' evidence for standardisation if requested. AIM Awards will write to you to request samples if necessary.

Outcomes from qualification standardisation will be made available to those centres using that qualification.

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Entry Level

Expectations for assessment at Entry Level 1

Knowledge and Understanding <i>The learner...</i>	Progresses along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of knowledge and/or understanding that relate to the subject or immediate environment
Skills <i>The learner can...</i>	Progress along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of skills that relate to the subject or the immediate environment

Expectations for assessment at Entry Level 2

Knowledge and Understanding <i>The learner...</i>	Has basic knowledge or understanding of a subject and/or can carry out simple, familiar tasks and Knows the steps needed to complete simple activities
Skills <i>The learner can...</i>	Carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities Follow instructions or use rehearsed steps to complete tasks and activities

Expectations for assessment at Entry Level 3

Knowledge and Understanding <i>The learner...</i>	Has basic knowledge or understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts and Knows and understands the steps needed to complete structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts
Skills <i>The learner can...</i>	Carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts Be aware of the consequences of actions for self and others

Verbs for assessment at Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at these levels.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Access	Obtain or retrieve information
Carry out	Complete a task or activity
Communicate	Share or exchange information
Contribute to	Give ideas or opinions about the topic
Define	Give the meaning of a word or phrase
Demonstrate	Complete a task or activity to show competence Show an understanding of the topic
Give (an example of...)	Provide a relevant example for the topic
Give ways	Provide information to show understanding of the topic
Identify	List or name the main points
Indicate	Point out or show
Label	Give the correct term to the topic, object or activity
List	State or make a list of items, words, statements or comments
Locate	Find, identify or show where
Name	Give the correct words which identify the object or activity
Order	Arrange in a logical way
Outline	Identify briefly the main points
Perform	Carry out or do an action or a task
Plan	Think about and organise information
Produce	To make, bring or find
Recognise	Acknowledge; know from before
Respond to	Reply or answer in words, actions or diagrams
Select	Choose
Show	Give or demonstrate information or knowledge
State	Give brief information about the topic in words, actions or diagrams
Suggest (ideas)	Propose an idea
Use	Apply knowledge to demonstrate understanding

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 1

Expectations for assessment at Level 1

Knowledge and Understanding <i>The learner...</i>	Has basic factual knowledge of a subject and/or knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined routine tasks and address simple problems and Is aware of aspects of information relevant to the area of study or work
Skills <i>The learner can...</i>	Use basic cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined routine tasks and procedures Select and use relevant information Identify whether actions have been effective

Verbs for assessment at Level 1

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Assemble	Gather together for a common purpose; fit together the separate parts
Carry out	Complete a task or activity
Collect	Gather together
Communicate	Share or exchange information
Compare	Looking at similarities and differences
Demonstrate	Complete a task or activity Show an understanding of the topic
Describe	Write or speak about the topic or activity
Develop	Build on a topic or activity
Give (examples of)	Provide relevant examples for the topic
Give ways	Provide information about how to support the topic
Identify	List or name the main points

Illustrate	Give clear information with examples (e.g. spoken, written, pictures, diagrams etc.)
Indicate	Point out or show using words, illustrations or diagrams
List	State or make a list of items, words, statements or comments
Locate	Find, identify or show where
Outline	Identify briefly the main points
Perform	Carry out or do an action or a task
Produce	To make, create, bring or find
Show	Give or demonstrate information or knowledge
State	Give the main points in brief, clear sentences
Suggest	Propose an idea or ways of doing
Summarise	Briefly present an abstract of the main points
Use	Apply knowledge to demonstrate understanding

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 2

Expectations for assessment at Level 2

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p><i>The learner...</i></p>	<p>Has knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures and ideas in an area of study or field of work to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems</p> <p>Can interpret relevant information and ideas</p> <p>Is aware of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work</p>
<p>Skills</p> <p><i>The learner can...</i></p>	<p>Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems</p> <p>Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions</p> <p>Identify how effective actions have been</p>

Verbs for assessment at Level 2

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Apply	Link existing knowledge to new or different situations
Assess	Consider information in order to make decisions
Agree	Arrive at a mutual understanding with people
Be responsive	Show sensitivity to people or events Take actions to support people or events
Carry out	Complete a task or activity
Contribute to	Give ideas or opinions about the subject Take part in activities or work roles
Classify	Organise according to a specific criteria
Confirm	Give approval to, verify
Compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences



Comply	To conform to something for example, a rule, law, policy, or regulation
Define	State the meaning of a word or phrase or process
Demonstrate	Apply skills in a practical situation Show an understanding of the topic
Describe	Write or speak about the topic or activity giving detailed information
Develop	To identify and build on a topic
Differentiate	Identify the differences between two or more things
Distinguish	Show or recognise the difference between items, ideas or information
Enable	Empower, aid, support or help people to make decisions Take part in processes or undertake tasks
Encourage	Support people to achieve
Establish	Secure acceptance for Come to an understanding of
Estimate	Give an approximate decision or opinion using previous knowledge or experience
Explain	Make clear Give reasons for
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses Make points for and against
Give (positive and negative points...)	Provide information showing the advantages and disadvantages of the subject
Give an example of...	Provide a sample or model relevant to the topic
Give reasons	Provide information to show why
Give ways	Provide information to show how
Identify	Provide brief information about a subject, specific process or activity
Illustrate	Give clear information or descriptions with examples (e.g. spoken, written, pictures, diagrams etc.)
Indicate	Point out or point to Direct attention to
Interact	Work together with Make a working relationship with
Intervene	Be involved with people to have an effect on their actions
Justify	Validate the chain of events leading up to, how something has occurred, make clear the reasons why something has occurred, account for the logic behind any reasoning, name the theoretical premise that underpins any law, system or thought pattern, be answerable for actions and decisions made

Locate	Find, identify or show where
Maintain	Keep up or continue in current condition
Make	Construct, compose, produce
Manage	Be able to deal with
Observe	Watch
Order	Place information in a logical sequence
Outline	Identify or briefly describe the main points
Plan	Think about and organise information in a logical way
Perform	Carry out or do; take an action; follow an instruction
Present	To introduce; to bestow; to offer to view
Produce	Make, create, bring or find through learning or creative ability
Protect	Safeguard, keep safe
Provide	Supply relevant information, products or resource
Record	Keep information in writing or by other methods
Reflect	Learners should look at their actions, experiences or learning and think about how this could inform their future action, learning or practice
Report	Make an official or formal statement Put information together for others
Respond to	Take action Reply or answer
Review and revise	Look back over the topic or activity and make or identify adjustments, changes or additions that would improve the topic or activity
Select	Choose for a specific purpose
Share	Give information to others Let others have information or resources
Show	Give or demonstrate information or knowledge
State	Give the main points in brief, clear sentences
Suggest	Propose an idea or ways of doing
Summarise	Briefly present an abstract of the main points
Support	Uphold or back up people's decisions Give help or advice
Use	Take or apply an item, resource or piece of information as required
Use (a range of...)	Provide information relevant to the task or topic
Work (with others)	Engage with people or in tasks Operate

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 3

Expectations for assessment at Level 3

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p><i>The learner...</i></p>	<p>Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine</p> <p>Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work</p> <p>Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work</p>
<p>Skills</p> <p><i>The learner can...</i></p>	<p>Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine</p> <p>Use appropriate investigation to inform actions</p> <p>Review how effective methods and actions have been</p>

Verbs for assessment at Level 3

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Analyse	Break the topic down into separate parts and examine each part Show how the main ideas are related and why they are important
Apply	Explain how existing knowledge can be linked to new or different situations or in practice
Assess	Estimate or make a judgment
Carry out	Complete a task or activity
Clarify	Explain the information in a clear, concise way
Classify	Organise according to specific criteria
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequence or logical order

Compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences
Comply	To conform to something for example, a rule, law, policy, or regulation
Conduct	Carry out
Confirm	Give approval to, verify
Consider	Ponder, contemplate, study in order to make a decision
Co-ordinate	Organise people, information or a situation so that there is an effective outcome
Critically compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences
Critically review	In detail, revisit and consider the merit of
Demonstrate	Apply skills in a practical situation or show an understanding of the topic
Describe	Write or speak about the topic or activity giving detailed information
Develop	To identify and build on a topic, plan or idea
Diagnose	Identify the cause based on valid evidence
Differentiate	Identify the differences between two or more things
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions
Distinguish	Explain the difference between two or more items, resources or pieces of information
Draw conclusions	Identify outcomes which could lead to recommendations
Engage	Work in conjunction with, or work together with, or ensure participation in
Establish	Secure acceptance for Come to an understanding of
Estimate	Give an approximate decision or opinion using previous knowledge or experience
Evaluate	Review evidence from different perspectives and come to a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment
Explain	Make clear detailed information giving reasons, and showing how or why
Extrapolate	Identify relevant points using the information available
Illustrate	Give clear information or descriptions with examples (e.g. spoken, written, pictures, diagrams etc.)
Implement	To fulfil, perform or carry out a plan, action, task or procedure
Interpret	Explain the meaning
Investigate	To examine, study or inquire systematically
Judge	Form an opinion or make a decision based on evidence
Justify	Give a satisfactory explanation for actions or decision; provide a clear rationale behind the thinking especially with regard to risk and any possible consequences, validate how cause and effect work for a particular scenario
Listen	Hear what is said

Monitor	Watch the progress of
Perform	Carry out or do; take an action; follow an instruction
Plan	Organise information in a logical way using an appropriate format
Practice	The application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it
Prepare	Get ready
Present	To introduce; to bestow; to offer to view
Produce	Make, create, bring or find through learning or creative ability
Provide	Supply relevant information, products or resource
Recognise	Acknowledge validly of; know from before
Record	Preserve in writing or by other methods
Reflect	Learners should look at their actions, experiences or learning and think about how this could inform their future action, learning or practice
Report	Produce a detailed account or statement describing an event, situation or activity
Respond to	Take action; reply or answer
Review and revise	Look back over the topic or activity and make or identify adjustments, changes or additions that would improve the topic or activity
Suggest	Propose an idea or ways of doing
Summarise	Briefly present an abstract of the main points
Supervise	Have responsibility for overseeing people's performance whilst offering support
Undertake	Agree to take on and carry out the task
Use a range of	Provide information relevant to the task or topic

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 4

Expectations for assessment at Level 4

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p><i>The learner...</i></p>	<p>Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work</p> <p>Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work</p>
<p>Skills</p> <p><i>The learner can...</i></p>	<p>Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined</p> <p>Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results</p>

Verbs for assessment at Level 4

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement
Clarify	Explain the information in a clear, concise way
Classify	Organise accurately according to specific criteria
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequence or logical order which is suitable for purpose
Consider	Ponder, contemplate or study in order to make a decision

Critically analyse	This is a development of 'analyse' which explores limitations as well as positive aspects of the main ideas in order to form a reasoned opinion
Critically compare	Examine in detail, consider and contrast similarities and differences and identify the positive aspects and limitations
Critically evaluate	This is a development of 'evaluate' where the learner debates the validity of claims from the opposing views and produces a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement
Demonstrate	Apply skills in a practical situation and/or show detailed understanding of the topic
Describe	Provide a broad range of detailed information about the topic or item in a logical way
Differentiate	Identify the differences between two or more things
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Draw conclusions (which...)	Make a final decision or judgment based on reasons which could lead to recommendations
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Explain	Apply reasoning to account for how something is or to show understanding of underpinning concepts; responses could include examples to support the reasons
Illustrate	Give clear information or descriptions with examples (e.g. spoken, written, pictures, diagrams etc.)
Judge	Form an opinion or make a decision based on evidence
Justify	Give a detailed explanation for actions or decision; provide a clear rationale behind the thinking especially with regard to risk and any possible consequences /validate how cause and effect work for a particular scenario
Reflect	Learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of these in order to suggest significant developments for future action, learning or practice
Review and revise	Look back over the topic or activity and make or identify adjustments, changes or additions that would improve the topic or activity based on additional information or experience
Summarise	Briefly present an abstract of the main points

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 5

Expectations for assessment at Level 5

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p><i>The learner...</i></p>	<p>Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas</p> <p>Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work</p> <p>Understand different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them</p>
<p>Skills</p> <p><i>The learner can...</i></p>	<p>Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems</p> <p>Use relevant research or development to inform actions</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods and results</p>

Verbs for assessment at Level 5

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Act (as a role model)	Serve as a good model in a particular behavioural or social role for another person
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Apply (standards) (data)	<p>Explain how existing knowledge, practices, standards etc. can be linked to new or different situation</p> <p>Use information to determine outcomes/conclusions/recommendations</p>
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement

Clarify	Explain the information in a clear, concise way showing depth and understanding
Collaborate	Work jointly with
Communicate	Convey, receive or exchange spoken or written information
Compare	Examine the subject in detail looking at similarities and differences
Compare and contrast	Examine the subjects in detail, identify similarities and differences, consider these from different perspectives
Conduct	Carry out
Critically analyse	This is a development of 'analyse' which explores limitations as well as positive aspects of the main ideas in order to form a reasoned opinion
Critically evaluate	This is a development of 'evaluate'. Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and difference; consider the evidence and discuss the validity of evidence from opposing views; produce a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgment
Define	State or show clearly and accurately
Demonstrate	Apply skills in a practical situation and/or show an understanding of the topic
Describe	Provide an extended range of detailed factual information about the topic or item in a logical way
Develop	Identify, build and extend a topic, plan or idea
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Distinguish between	Discuss identified differences between more than one item, product, object or activity
Enable	Supply with the means, knowledge, or opportunity; make able
Encourage	Give support to enable actions, ideas, processes
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Explain	Apply reasoning to account for how something is or to show understanding of underpinning concepts (responses could include examples to support the reasons)
Explore	Investigate or examine a range of issues from different perspectives
Facilitate	Make easier; assist the progress of
Formulate	Draw together; put together in a logical way; express in systematic terms or concepts

Give constructive feedback	Provide commentary which serves to improve or advance; be helpful
Identify	Ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of
Implement	Put into practical effect; carry out
Initiate	Originate/start a process
Intervene effectively	Change an outcome
Investigate	Detailed examination or study; enquire systematically
Justify	Give a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for actions and/or decisions; provide a clear rationale behind the thinking especially with regard to risk and any possible consequences /validate how cause and effect work for a particular scenario
Mentor	Serve as a trusted counsellor or teach to another person; help others succeed
Monitor	Maintain regular surveillance
Negotiate	Discuss with a view to finding an agreed settlement
Outline	Identify accurately and describe clearly – the main points
Promote	Encourage the use of or the development of practice, knowledge, theory
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject
Recognise	Acknowledge or agree the validity of Use own knowledge to accept a view, idea, principle
Recommend	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward; revisit and judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Reflect on	Consult with oneself, recognising implications of current practice with a view to changing future practice
Represent views of...	Acts as an Advocate; speak, please or argue in favour of
Research	A detailed study of a subject to discover new information or reach a new understanding
Resolve	Solve; settle; explain
Review	Revisit and consider the merit of
Review and revise	Revisit, judge the merit of and make recommendations for change
Secure	Make safe; obtain (information or evidence)
Select and apply	Make informed choices and link to specific situations
Set objectives	Identify the outcomes required
Summarise	Select the main ideas, arguments or facts and present in a precise, concise way
Support	Strengthen, support or encourage; corroborate, give greater credibility to
Triangulate	Identify three aspects to ensure validity
Work in partnership	Work in association with two or more persons (this may include stakeholders, service users and/or carers)

Level Descriptors for Assessment at Level 6

Expectations for assessment at Level 6

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p><i>The learner...</i></p>	<p>Has advanced practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors</p> <p>Understands different perspectives, approaches or school of thought and the theories that underpin them</p> <p>Can critically analyse, interpret and evaluate complex information, concepts and ideas</p>
<p>Skills</p> <p><i>The learner can...</i></p>	<p>Determine, refine, adapt and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive and practical skills to address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors</p> <p>Use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications</p>

Verbs for assessment at Level 6

We have provided a list of assessment verbs which may be used when designing assessments to meet standards at this level.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive and centre-devised assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use.

Verbs	Explanation
Act (as a role model)	Serve as a good model in a particular behavioural or social role for another person
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Apply (standards) (data)	Explain how existing knowledge, practices, standards etc. can be linked to new or different situation Use information to determine outcomes/conclusions/recommendations
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement

Clarify	Explain the information in a clear, concise way showing depth and understanding
Collaborate	Work jointly with
Communicate	Convey, receive or exchange spoken or written information
Compare	Examine the subject in detail looking at similarities and differences
Compare and contrast	Examine the subjects in detail, identify similarities and differences, consider these from different perspectives
Conduct	Carry out
Critically analyse	This is a development of 'analyse' which explores limitations as well as positive aspects of the main ideas in order to form a reasoned opinion
Critically evaluate	This is a development of 'evaluate'. Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and difference; consider the evidence and discuss the validity of evidence from opposing views; produce a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgment
Define	State or show clearly and accurately
Demonstrate	Apply skills in a practical situation and/or show an understanding of the topic
Describe	Provide an extended range of detailed factual information about the topic or item in a logical way
Develop	Identify, build and extend a topic, plan or idea
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Distinguish between	Discuss identified differences between more than one item, product, object or activity
Enable	Supply with the means, knowledge, or opportunity; make able
Encourage	Give support to enable actions, ideas, processes
Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Explain	Apply reasoning to account for how something is or to show understanding of underpinning concepts (responses could include examples to support the reasons)
Explore	Investigate or examine a range of issues from different perspectives
Facilitate	Make easier; assist the progress of
Formulate	Draw together; put together in a logical way; express in systematic terms or concepts

Give constructive feedback	Provide commentary which serves to improve or advance; be helpful
Identify	Ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of
Implement	Put into practical effect; carry out
Initiate	Originate/start a process
Intervene effectively	Change an outcome
Investigate	Detailed examination or study; enquire systematically
Justify	Give a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for actions and/or decisions; provide a clear rationale behind the thinking especially with regard to risk and any possible consequences /validate how cause and effect work for a particular scenario
Mentor	Serve as a trusted counsellor or teach to another person; help others succeed
Monitor	Maintain regular surveillance
Negotiate	Discuss with a view to finding an agreed settlement
Outline	Identify accurately and describe clearly – the main points
Promote	Encourage the use of or the development of practice, knowledge, theory
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject
Recognise	Acknowledge or agree the validity of Use own knowledge to accept a view, idea, principle
Recommend	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward; revisit and judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Reflect on	Consult with oneself, recognising implications of current practice with a view to changing future practice
Represent views of...	Acts as an Advocate; speak, please or argue in favour of
Research	A detailed study of a subject to discover new information or reach a new understanding
Resolve	Solve; settle; explain
Review	Revisit and consider the merit of
Review and revise	Revisit, judge the merit of and make recommendations for change
Secure	Make safe; obtain (information or evidence)
Select and apply	Make informed choices and link to specific situations
Set objectives	Identify the outcomes required
Summarise	Select the main ideas, arguments or facts and present in a precise, concise way
Support	Strengthen, support or encourage; corroborate, give greater credibility to
Triangulate	Identify three aspects to ensure validity
Work in partnership	Work in association with two or more persons (this may include stakeholders, service users and/or carers)

Designing assessments

This section provides guidance on designing assessments and is aimed at the Tutor, Assessor and Internal Verifier (IV) in supporting the learner to provide evidence to meet the standards of components.

Principles of assessment

All assessment must be:

- a) **valid:** the assessment evidence meets all standards and additional requirements;
- b) **authentic:** the work is the learner's own work;
- c) **reliable:** assessment evidence is consistent and generates outcomes that would be replicated where the assessment is repeated;
- d) **current:** up-to-date evidence is used;
- e) **sufficient:** enough work is available to enable a consistent and reliable judgement about the learner's achievement;
- f) **comparable:** assessment evidence is comparable in standard between assessments within a component/qualification and between learners of the same level;
- g) **manageable:** the assessment(s) places reasonable demands on learners;
- h) **fair and minimise bias:** assessments are fair to all learners irrespective of their characteristics (e.g. age, gender, etc.).

Types of assessment

There are two main types of assessment: formative and summative.

Formative assessment: is designed to provide learners with feedback on progress and inform development.

Summative assessment: is designed to provide a measure of achievement in respect of a learner's performance in relation to the intended outcomes. It contributes to the overall result of the qualification.

Designing assessments

Where AIM Awards do not set assessments for the component/qualification, centres will implement a range of assessment methods which will enable learners to provide the evidence of the standards set. The key areas to consider when designing assessments are:

- appropriate assessment methods;
- available resources;
- staff expertise;
- facilities;
- timetabling;
- how and when assessment fits into a scheme of work;
- planning assessment deadlines to ensure that learners are not overworked at certain times.

Learners must be assessed in English in England, English or Welsh in Wales and English or Irish in Northern Ireland (unless the qualification is specifically about learning a foreign language).

It is not necessary for centres to design assessment tasks to assess each standard separately. An assessment task can be used to meet more than one standard. Each assessment task must be mapped to the standards which will allow centres to monitor that all outcomes of the component are being met. This mapping must also be provided at internal and external verification.

Assessment tasks must be internally verified by the centre's Internal Verifier prior to use, to ensure they are fit for purpose. Evidence of this must be available at external verification and sample forms to support this are available on our website.

Recording achievement

Assessors must make it clear to the Internal and External Verifiers where achievement of each standard has been evidenced. We provide Learner Record of Achievement forms for each component/qualification, or centres may devise their own. These must be provided at internal and external verification.

Feedback

We expect Assessors to provide both formative and summative feedback to learners. Any verbal feedback must also be documented.

Tips for written feedback:

- always write positive as well as constructive comments
- make sure you write in plain simple English
- indicate how the learner can improve/develop their evidence
- never make personal comments
- be clear about the standard of work you expect
- clearly identify gaps in evidence and explain how they may be met
- explain strengths as well as areas for developing by qualifying praise

Collating learner evidence

All completed learner work must be mapped against the standards of the component(s) and internal verification documentation must be collated into a portfolio of evidence to present to the External Verifier. A completed portfolio of evidence must include:

- A statement of authenticity
- Learner evidence, mapped against the standards of the component(s)
- Formative feedback
- Summative feedback

Examples of assessment methods

Assessment Method	Suitable for Assessing Skills/ Competence	Suitable for Assessing Knowledge
Written tasks/questions and answers	✓	✓
Written assignments/essays	✓	✓
Observation of learner practical ability	✓	✓
Expert witness evidence	✓	✓
Oral questions and answers	✓	✓
Group discussion	✓	✓
Learner's own products	✓	✓
Professional discussion	✓	✓
Learner log or reflective journal	✓	✓
Written or pictorial information	x	✓
Report	✓	✓
Case study or scenario	x	✓
Project	✓	✓
Role-Play/Simulation	✓	✓

Written tasks/questions and answers

Description

This is the consideration of a particular subject, situation or example selected by the Tutor/ Assessor or by learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations and to present them in a written format. The language of the written task must be based on assessment verbs relevant to the level of the component (see previous section).

This also refers to the use of specific open and closed questions for immediate response. These can range from formal exams and tests, to a quick fun way of finding out where the learners are up to, e.g. a quiz. It allows response and questioning from individual learners and feedback from the Tutor/Assessor. On-line assessment may be used.

Evidence requirements

Where the tasks require learners to produce written work, this may be handwritten or typed.

Written assignments/essays

Description

The written assignments/essays should be written in a formal style appropriate to the task with:

- an introduction
- the main body of text (which may include discussion, analysis, illustration where indicated and some evaluation of the information used as references)
- a conclusion
- a list of references (the Harvard referencing system is suggested)

It is good practice for Tutors/Assessors to look at any draft written work and provide learners with formative feedback about the work in progress.

A suggested writing approach to follow is to:

- Prepare
- Research
- Plan the content
- Find suitable quotations, if relevant
- Write the main body
- Write the conclusion and introduction
- Complete the reference list

Evidence requirements

The evidence must include the learner's written responses and Tutor/Assessor feedback.

Observation of learner practical ability

Description

This is a practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the Tutor/Assessor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge.

Evidence requirements

Centres must provide evidence of the learners individually and actively completing tasks that demonstrate achievement of the standard(s). Evidence may be assessed by direct observation of performance and centres must provide the time and date of observation.

Evidence must consist of at least one of the following:

- annotated photographs and witness statements
- detailed witness statements
- video (with narration or written log)
- learner log/evaluation
- peer observation report

N.B where photographs/videos are used, each individual learner must be clearly identified.

Expert Witness evidence

Description

This is a record written by an Expert Witness, such as a qualified professional, who has the opportunity to see the learner working in situations where it would not be possible for a Tutor/Assessor to observe the learner's practice.

Evidence requirements

The expert witness must be approved by the centre and the evidence provided by the Expert Witness will be assessed against the standards by the Assessor.

Oral questions and answers

Description

This is the use of specific, open or closed questions for immediate response. They can range from formal questions, e.g. an oral test to a quick fun way of finding out where learners are up to e.g. a quiz. This allows response and questioning from learners and immediate feedback from the Tutor.

Evidence requirements

Evidence must include the questions asked as well as a transcript of the learner's exact responses. This could be written or an audio or video recording.

Group discussion

Description

This is a discussion of a topic or situation selected by the Tutor/Assessor or by learners, to enable learners to share knowledge and thoughts and to assess their learning.

Evidence requirements

Details of the topic/tasks must be set and provided. Evidence of each learner achieving the standard covered by the group discussion task(s) must be provided. Evidence must include at least two of the following:

- transcript or video of learners' responses
- learner log/evaluation
- peer observation report
- detailed witness statement explaining what each learner contributed and how they behaved during the discussion(s).

Tutors/Assessors must provide constructive useful feedback to learners on their contributions.

Learner's own products

Description

This is the production of a relevant product or artefact selected by the Tutor/Assessor or by learners, which enables learners to demonstrate skills and to apply knowledge.

Evidence requirements

Where the component requires learners to produce an artefact or product, this must be provided for the Internal and External Verifier unless this is impractical (for example if the product is consumable), in which case several photographs, audio or video recordings is acceptable evidence.

Learner evidence must include:

- details of the tasks set for the learners to complete, mapped against the standards of the components addressed
- a learner declaration that all work produced is their own
- summative learner generated assessment evidence – teaching materials must not be included as evidence

Professional discussion

Description

A professional discussion is usually a pre-planned and in-depth discussion between the learner and Assessor to evidence knowledge and understanding and/or competence in relation to standards. The professional discussion is formally recorded by the Assessor.

Evidence requirements

A record of the discussion should be produced to show how the points (relating to the standards of the component) have been covered. There are various options for recording professional discussion; audio or video taping or paper based logging. If using an audio/video tape, it is important to agree this with the learner first to ensure they are comfortable with this method of recording.

Whatever recording method selected, the Assessor needs to ensure that the evidence resulting from the discussion is clearly referenced to the standards.

Learner log or reflective journal

Description

The learner log/reflective journal is a piece of work where learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of these in order to suggest significant developments for future action, learning or practice.

Written and pictorial information

Description

This is a combination of written and pictorial information produced by the learner to meet a particular user need. This could include information cards, posters, leaflets, charts, information board etc.

Evidence requirements

Evidence must include a learner declaration that all work produced is their own. The evidence must have a clear title and be clearly labelled when appropriate. Information from other sources must be identified and attributed.

Report

Description

A report is a record of an activity and/or a summary of research which presents information in a structured way; this does not include opinion but may include analysis or evaluation.

Evidence requirements

Reports may be presented in written or oral form.

Case study or scenario

Description

A case study or scenario is a consideration of a particular, relevant situation or example selected by the Tutor/Assessor or learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations. This may be used as a collective/group activity and discussed in a group of learners or by an individual learner. It may also be used with individual learners as a written activity through case study materials and learner responses.

Evidence requirements

Evidence could include Tutor/Assessor observation, summary of discussion, written work and audio/video records.

Project

Description

A project is a specific task involving private study and research for individuals or groups. It usually involved selection of a topic, planning, finding information and presenting results orally or in writing. This may be assessed by the Tutor/Assessor, learners or peers during and at the end of the process.

Evidence requirements

Evidence may include learner notes, logs, plans, reports and audio and video records.

Role-Play/Simulation

Description

This is the use of a situation selected by the Tutor/Assessor or by learners, to enable learners to practice and apply skills and to explore attitudes.

Evidence requirements

Evidence may include Tutor/Assessor records of observation of session, learner notes, lesson plans, learner log and audio or video records.



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