

Welcome to the second edition of our **Compliance Update** which works hand in hand with our **Compliance Forums**, launched in October 2023. These forums delve deeper into compliance topics, and offer in-depth discussions and guidance and a focus on specific AIM Qualification and Assessment Group policies.

Dates for your diary:

- **15 February 2024** - our next Compliance Forum of the Winter term.
- **April 2024** - Compliance Update Issue 3

Stay Connected: Update your centre contact details

Could you please take a moment to check and update your contact details on the [Quartz Portal](#) so that all the important messages find their way to you and your colleagues.

We're excited about the new year and have plans for a short video to help you navigate the Quartz portal's "Contact Manager" function for updating your information.

Annual declaration process

Following the successful launch of our annual declaration process in October 2023, the quality team are now in the process of reviewing all submissions.

If you have not yet submitted your annual declaration, please do so as a matter of urgency. If you are a centre that has been selected for sampling, please ensure you have uploaded the requested supporting documentation. If you have any questions or require support, please contact the quality team on quality@aimgroup.org.uk.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The issue of AI and how it can be safely embedded in education (to enhance practice, support education professionals and learners) and mitigate against the risks of malpractice/misuse, continues. The DfE has published their approach to tackling this issue in their *Education Hub*, [Artificial intelligence in schools – everything you need to know - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

The DfE has also published their research on the impact of AI on UK jobs and training, thus the potential impact on education and how the sector potentially needs to review training requirements to meet the changing skills and knowledge required for careers/employment with higher levels of AI exposure. [GOV.UK Impact of AI on UK jobs and training \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

MIS system (Quartz)

The compliance teams are actively transitioning processes and forms to the Quartz portal. Our aim is to launch the Centre Recognition and Qualification Application forms and processes on Quartz by March 2024. We'll keep you posted on the launch date and provide guidance documents and schedules for drop-

in training sessions.

Policies

As a leading awarding organisation, we're always striving to make things better. As we work towards constant improvement, we make sure our policies stay current and align with the ever-evolving education scene.

Please ensure that your colleagues are informed about these policies and encourage them to incorporate the outlined responsibilities into their daily practices. You can easily access all our policies on our website www.aimgroup.org.uk/qualifications/centres/policies-and-procedures Thank you for your cooperation.

Ofqual update

Ofqual have released an update to their initial review of operational parity for VTQs. Follow the link for the full document. [Operational Parity for Vocational and Technical Qualifications \(VTQs\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118444/Operational_Parity_for_Vocational_and_Technical_Qualifications_VTQs_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

External assessment

Thank you to everyone who has attended the mandatory 'Preparation for Examinations' training. If you didn't manage to join the last session, there are further opportunities on 24th January and 24th April. [Book your place here](#). These sessions are for examination officers and provide guidance on AIM's requirements for conducting exams.

The January counselling exam series is just around the corner and we hope all centres and learners have a smooth and successful experience. Results will be released on August 8th. Please be aware that a representative from AIM might visit your center for an examination monitoring assessment.

Later this year we will be publishing our new *Instructions for Conducting Exams (ICE)* handbook which will provide detailed guidance on conducting AIM Qualifications and Assessment group examinations.

For centres conducting the next AIM Level 3 Diploma and Extended Diploma in Games, Animation and VFX Skills examinations, please make a note of the following important dates.

Schedule by: 9 February 2024

Reasonable Adjustment approval deadline: 13 February 2024

Exam date: 19 March 2024 and 20 March 2024

Results date: 9 May

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustment applications are now completed and submitted through Quartz.

Reasonable adjustments for paper-based external assessments must be submitted no later than 25 working days before the date of the exam and for online exams, 10 working days. All adjustments must be applied for, this includes use of word processors, supervised rest breaks and separate rooms.

The centre guide for completing reasonable adjustments can be found [here](#).

We can provide online training on how to complete the reasonable adjustment application, please contact externalassessment@aimgroup.org.uk to book your training.

During the next compliance forum there will be a focused discussion around reasonable adjustments and special considerations and will be sharing good practice on how the policy should be applied within your centre.

EQA

Requesting EQA monitoring

A reminder that, if you are ready to claim certificates for low and medium risk qualification which haven't had EQA monitoring this academic year, you will need to submit an EQA monitoring request by completing the form [External Quality Assurance \(EQA\) - AIM \(aimgroup.org.uk\)](#) (as outlined in our CASS strategy).

Interim EQA monitoring for very high-risk qualifications

We have started contacting centres who deliver very high-risk qualifications to arrange EQA monitoring. All interim EQA monitoring must be completed by Friday 16th February so please ensure you provide the samples requested by the date agreed for your EQA monitoring to take place.

CASS

For any centres who are new to CASS or need a refresher on how we EQA your qualifications, please book onto the CASS Refresher Session running on 31st January [Compliance Refresher - AIM \(aim-group.org.uk\)](#)

Access to HE

Regulatory update from QAA

Since the last Update, the final details for the subject descriptor for Nursing and Health Professions have been confirmed by QAA. The subject descriptor will be part of the changes to the diploma specification and grading scheme which are to be implemented later this year. The subject descriptor will apply to diplomas with the specific titles 'Access to HE Diploma (Nursing)' or 'Access to HE Diploma (Health Professions)', and any diplomas promoting progression to health professions regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) such as physiotherapists and radiographers.

The subject descriptor has three essential requirements as outlined in the following table.

Essential subject content	Minimum credit requirement at Level 3		Minimum credit requirement at Level 2
	Graded	Ungraded	Ungraded
Biology	15		
Numeracy in Health Context			3
Professional Behaviours: Nursing and Health Professions		3	

For a diploma to be compliant with the subject descriptor, the minimum number of credits identified in the table above must be achieved from Biology, Numeracy in Health Context and Professional Behaviours: Nursing and Health Professions. This provides opportunities to deliver additional units in Biology to help support other progression routes such as midwifery, but also to include units from other relevant subjects. QAA has identified Psychology, Context of Health and Sociology as recommended additional subjects with the following recommended maximum credits.

Recommended additional subjects	Recommended maximum credit
Psychology	15
Context of Health	6
Sociology	6
TOTAL	27

Specifications have been provided by QAA for the Numeracy in Health Context and Professional Behaviours units, as well as indicative content and suggested assessment methods which the AVA will adopt.

The introduction of the subject descriptor has many benefits including providing reassurance to students and HEIs that the programme of study will meet minimum entry requirements for progression and still provide flexibility to include other units to support the teaching to cohorts of mixed diplomas. Centres will also be able to include the QAA Subject Descriptor Mark within marketing materials to promote the compliance with the subject descriptor.

Further information regarding the Rules of Combination for the diplomas related to this descriptor will be available in March 2024 following the completion of our review and the revalidation of all diplomas.

Diploma review and revalidation

A full review of our diplomas has been undertaken following the confirmation of QAA's changes to the diploma specification and grading scheme to ensure full implementation from the 1st August 2024. Activity has included analysis of registration and unit usage data, as well as feedback from providers, moderators and subject specialists reviewing ROCS and unit content. The objective of the review activity has been to

ensure that the portfolio of diplomas moving forward is relevant, current, appropriate and adequately supports opportunities to progress into higher education or employment.

Validation panels are planned across January and February 2024. These will involve representatives from centres, higher education institutions and subject experts. Following validation, the full diploma specifications will be available to centres at the end of March to support delivery planning for 2024-25.

A page on our website provides centres with information and updates about the diploma review and revalidation and can be accessed on www.aimgroup.org.uk/access-to-he/revalidation

We have a variety of support activities planned to assist centres with the transition to the new diploma specification and with the implementation of the grade scheme. These include:

- Weekly drop-in support sessions on a Tuesday at 16.00 to 16.45
- Scheduled training sessions to support planning and implementation
- Bespoke meetings
- Mapping documents to help match current provision to the new portfolio for diplomas and units
- New templates for design of assessment briefs, providing feedback and conducting internal moderation
- Exemplar briefs to demonstrate contextualisation, the use of different assessment methods and use of components

We're also excited to announce that we are planning a 'roadshow' to promote the new diplomas in the north, south and in the midlands. This will be a fantastic opportunity for the team to meet you and your colleagues, to introduce our new portfolio and answer questions on any aspect of the new specifications and grading scheme. Watch this space for further information and the opportunity to support the hosting of the roadshow.

Flexible start dates

Access to HE provides the flexibility for different start dates so centres are not restricted to having just one, September cohort. Some centres have recently introduced a January cohort to capture learners who were completing other qualifications (like Functional Skills) or those who missed the September deadline. Our Access to HE team is happy to discuss these options with you and are currently supporting centres to ensure moderation is scheduled accordingly.

More information

If you are considering offering an additional cohort start date and would like to discuss this further, please contact the team at acesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk and a meeting will be arranged.

If you would like to add any additional diplomas to your portfolio, please contact the quality lead team at Quality@aimgroup.org.uk. The full portfolio of our current Access to HE Diplomas can be accessed [here](#).

New member of the team

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce Julie Hebdige who joined our Access to HE team as a coordinator in December. There will be an opportunity for you to meet Julie at the Spring Access to HE Forum on 25th January. Julie's role will be to support centres with the moderation process, final award boards and she will be attending different events throughout the year.

Spring Access to HE Forum

Hopefully, you have already received an invitation to our spring forum, being held on Thursday 25th January, 13.30 to 15.30 via Teams. Places are still available and can be booked on our website: www.aimgroup.org.uk/events. At this forum we will be sharing best practice for supporting learners through the cost-of-living crisis. We look forward to seeing you there.

Training

We have a range of training sessions planned for the next few months for all centres delivering RQF, Bespoke or Quality Mark provision. Please visit our events page to book a place www.aimgroup.org.uk/events

For all centres:

- Monthly Q&A clinics for RQF, Bespoke and Quality Mark provision
- New to AIM
- Compliance Forum (run termly)
- Getting IQA right
- Preparation for examinations

For Access to HE centres:

- Weekly drop-in sessions for Access to HE centres
- Access to HE Forum (run termly)
- Assessment and grading training
- Internal moderation training
- Planning delivery with the new Access to HE Diploma specification
- Implementation of the new Access to HE grading scheme
- New Access to HE coordinator support sessions can be arranged on a one-to-one basis to support centres in a timely fashion

How to contact us

Last year we launched dedicated compliance inboxes to help us to improve our support. Our commitment is to provide a response within two working days.

Quality@aimgroup.org.uk: Queries related to centre and qualification approval, policies, and IQA.

Eqa@aimgroup.org.uk: EQA bookings, samples, EQA reports, second sampling, certification status.

Accesstohe@aimgroup.org.uk: Access to HE delivery, moderation, final awards boards, certification, and late registration.