SafeQual AB

Awarding Body | Guidance. Standards. Support.

Qualification Standards

Specifications, standards, frameworks and level descriptors

This document sets out the standards used to design, level, size and assess every SafeQual AB qualification.

Centres should use it alongside the specification for each qualification they offer.

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The SafeQual AB Qualification Framework

Every SafeQual AB qualification is designed to a common set of standards. Learners, employers and centres can therefore understand the level, size and purpose of a qualification and compare it with others. The framework has three dimensions:

- **Level:** how demanding the qualification is, from Entry Level to Level 7.
- **Size:** how much learning is involved, shown as Total Qualification Time (TQT) and credits.
- **Type:** Award, Certificate or Diploma, based on size.

> The SafeQual AB level structure follows the eight-level model widely used in UK qualification frameworks, so learners and employers can understand the level of demand. A qualification's level describes its difficulty, not how long it takes.

Level Descriptors

Level	Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy	Typical examples
Entry (1-3)	Basic knowledge in everyday contexts.	Follow simple, step-by-step instructions.	Close supervision.	Workplace induction awareness
1	Basic factual knowledge of a work area.	Complete routine tasks using simple tools and procedures.	Supervised, with some guidance.	Awareness awards
2	Factual and procedural knowledge of a work area.	Select and use relevant information and methods to complete defined tasks.	Limited autonomy within defined guidelines.	Operative, banksman and slinger-level knowledge
3	Factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge; able to interpret information.	Use a range of methods to solve problems that are not routine.	Take responsibility for own work and some responsibility for others.	Supervisor and advanced practitioner
4	Broad practical and theoretical knowledge of a specialist field.	Address complex, non-routine problems and evaluate actions.	Manage tasks and the work of others; review effectiveness.	Team leader and technical specialist
5	Practical, theoretical and technical knowledge; aware of different perspectives.	Determine, adapt and use methods to address broadly defined, complex problems.	Lead activities and take responsibility for outcomes.	Manager and senior specialist
6	Advanced knowledge, including current developments in the field.	Critically analyse and design solutions to complex problems.	Lead significant projects; make high-level decisions.	Senior manager and professional practice
7	Highly specialised knowledge at the forefront of a field.	Develop original approaches; critically evaluate research and strategy.	Strategic leadership and accountability.	Strategic and director level

Qualification Size and Type

Measure	Definition
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Time a learner spends being taught or supervised by a tutor, assessor or invigilator. Includes face-to-face, live online and supervised assessment.
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	GLH plus the estimated time for self-study, research, practice and preparing evidence.
Credit	One credit equals 10 hours of TQT. Credit value = TQT / 10, rounded to the nearest whole number.

Type	Size	Typical use
Award	1 to 12 credits (up to 120 hours TQT)	Short, focused qualifications for a specific skill or topic.
Certificate	13 to 36 credits (130 to 360 hours TQT)	Broader qualifications covering a role or function.
Diploma	37 credits or more (370+ hours TQT)	Substantial qualifications for occupational or professional competence.

Sectors

Sector	Scope
Health & Safety	Workplace safety, risk assessment, safety management systems, lifting operations, working at height, permit to work.
Occupational Health	Health surveillance, hygiene, ergonomics, wellbeing and first aid.
Environmental	Environmental management, waste, sustainability and compliance.
Management	Leadership, supervision, quality management and auditing.
Construction	Site safety, supervision, plant and lifting operations.
All Sectors	Cross-sector, transferable and professional development qualifications.

Qualification Specification Standard

Every SafeQual AB qualification is published with a specification that contains:

Section	Content
1. Overview	Title, qualification number, level, type, GLH, TQT, credits, operational start and review dates.
2. Purpose	Who the qualification is for, what it prepares learners for, and progression routes.
3. Entry requirements	Minimum age, prior learning, language level and any occupational prerequisites.
4. Structure	Mandatory and optional units, rules of combination, and credit per unit.
5. Units	For each unit: title, level, GLH, credit, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and indicative content.
6. Assessment	Assessment methods, conditions, pass marks, grading and resubmission rules.
7. Centre requirements	Tutor, assessor and IQA qualifications and experience; required resources and facilities.
8. Quality assurance	IQA and EQA arrangements, and record retention.

Unit Standard

Learning outcomes state what a learner *will* know, understand or be able to do. Assessment criteria state what the learner must show to prove each outcome has been achieved. Criteria use command verbs that match the unit level:

Level	Typical command verbs
Entry to 2	State, list, identify, describe, outline, demonstrate
3 to 4	Explain, apply, compare, interpret, assess, carry out
5 to 7	Analyse, evaluate, critically review, justify, design, synthesise

Assessment Standards

- **Valid:** assessment measures what the learning outcomes require.
- **Authentic:** the work is the learner's own.
- **Reliable:** the same performance gets the same result, whoever the assessor is.
- **Current:** evidence reflects up-to-date competence and practice.
- **Sufficient:** there is enough evidence to cover all assessment criteria.
- **Fair:** no learner is disadvantaged by the method or conditions.

Method	Used for
Multiple-choice examination	Knowledge at Entry to Level 3, usually under invigilated conditions.
Written examination / short answer	Understanding and application.
Assignment / project	Applying knowledge to real or realistic workplace situations (Level 3+).
Practical observation	Demonstrating skills in the workplace or a realistic environment.
Professional discussion / oral questioning	Confirming understanding and supporting other evidence.
Portfolio of evidence	Showing occupational competence over time.

Grade	Meaning
Pass	All assessment criteria met / pass mark achieved.
Merit / Distinction (where specified)	Higher-level performance against published grading criteria.
Not yet achieved	Criteria not met. Resubmission is allowed as set out in the specification.

Glossary of Awarding Terms

Term	Meaning
Awarding body / awarding organisation	An organisation that designs, develops, delivers and awards qualifications and quality assures the centres that offer them.
Approved centre	An organisation approved by SafeQual AB to deliver, assess and claim certificates for specified qualifications.
Head of Centre	The senior person accountable for the centre's compliance with the Centre Agreement.
Quality Nominee	The centre's main contact with SafeQual AB, responsible for day-to-day quality and administration.
Qualification specification	The definitive document setting out a qualification's purpose, structure, units, assessment and centre requirements.
Rules of combination	The rules showing which mandatory and optional units must be achieved to gain the qualification.
GLH / TQT / Credit	Guided Learning Hours; Total Qualification Time; one credit = 10 hours of TQT.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Centre-led sampling and standardisation of assessment decisions.
External Quality Assurance (EQA)	SafeQual AB monitoring of centres, including sampling of learner work and records.
Standardisation	Activity making sure assessors and quality assurers apply the standards consistently.
Direct Claims Status (DCS)	Permission for a centre to claim certificates without prior EQA sampling, based on its risk rating.
Access arrangements	Pre-assessment arrangements that allow learners with particular needs to access assessment without changing its demands.
Reasonable adjustment	An adjustment for a disabled learner to reduce substantial disadvantage, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
Special consideration	A post-assessment adjustment for a learner affected by temporary illness, injury or other circumstances at the time of assessment.
Enquiry about Results (EAR)	A request for a clerical re-check or review of marking or moderation.
Malpractice / maladministration	Deliberate wrongdoing / failure to follow procedures that compromises assessment or certification.
Adverse effect	An act, omission or event that could prejudice learners or undermine confidence in qualifications.
Statement of achievement	A certificate listing the units achieved where the full qualification has not been completed.