



Regulated Qualifications Unit and Assessment Specification

Unit title	Principles of Project Management
Regulator unit code	A/601/7652
SQA unit code	H84H 70
SSC Ref	TC 3-5

History of changes

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Version number	Date	Description	Authorised by
02	October 2017	Unit Specification updated to reflect current Ofqual terminology.	Qualifications Officer

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Regulated qualifications unit specification

Title	Principles of Project Management		
Level	3		
Credit value	2		
Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Unit amplification	
The learner will:	The learner can:		
1 Know the difference between routine work and taking part in a project.	1.1 Describe the difference between routine work and taking part in a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Features of a project: one-off undertaking; activities designed to meet the defined objectives of the project; client or sponsor; work carried out by project team members; managed through a project team with project team leader; team members selected in accordance with requirements of project; team members may be drawn from different work teams; predetermined start and end dates; work completed within specified constraints ◆ Features of routine work: repeating; carried out in accordance with laid down procedures; part of established job roles; contributes to providing products or services on an on-going basis; managed through line management structure; continues indefinitely into the future ◆ Differences between routine and project work: uncertain activities and processes; different colleagues and team leader; opportunities to help to decide how to achieve objectives; temporary role 	

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
The learner will:	The learner can:	
<p>2 Understand how to prepare for and plan a project.</p>	<p>2.1 Explain why it is important to agree the purpose, scope, timescale, resource requirements, budget, aims and objectives of a project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Agreeing purpose, aims and objectives of project: identifying stakeholders (employing organisation, sponsor, funding organisation, project team, customers); identifying sponsor (person or organisation funding, supporting and/or initiating project); aims and objectives of sponsors, identifying the aim (what the project is designed to achieve); objectives (specific ways in which the project is to achieve the aim expressed in terms that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) ◆ Importance of agreeing purpose, aims and objectives: to make sure project is planned to meet sponsors' needs; to ensure that stakeholders' needs are taken into consideration; to set appropriate and clear priorities; to identify risks of project not meeting sponsors' needs at an early stage; to enable sound decisions as to whether project goes ahead or not ◆ Agreeing scope: precise definition of parameters of project (deliverables, objectives, data to be used in research project, products/services/processes/sections of organisation to be included, whether peripherals such as training in new systems are included, quality standards in terms of accuracy, presentation, adherence to organisational quality standards) ◆ Importance of agreeing scope: to enable realistic budgeting and resourcing decisions; to check that budget and resources are adequate to meet objectives; to avoid project creeping into areas not agreed; to enable budget deliverables to be on-time and on-cost

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	
The learner will:	The learner can:	Unit amplification
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Timescale: definition; milestones as points of partial completion; deliverables at each milestone ◆ Importance of agreeing timescales: satisfy sponsors' needs; enable accurate resource planning; enable project progress to be monitored against delivery at milestones; secure most important deliverable at earliest possible stage; ensure that priorities are clear to all ◆ Resource planning for a project: identifying human resource requirements (skills, experience, any necessary qualifications, amount of time, number of people, timing of human resource requirements); identifying physical resource requirements (accommodation, equipment, furniture, stationery); identifying financial requirements (amount and timing of financial requirements); identifying communications requirements (telephones, email addresses, meeting space, teleconferencing); contingency planning (allowing extra resources to be used in case of unforeseen changes) ◆ Budget: amount and timing of income and expenditure; need to be clear about constraints such as timing of expenditure and limits to what purchases are allowed; need to agree on resources which may or may not need to be met from project budget (accommodation, equipment, telephones, salaries of project team); need to agree processes for drawing from budget and recording expenditure

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
The learner will:	The learner can:	
	<p>2.2 Describe how to identify and plan for project issues and risks in an area of work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Importance of agreeing budget: to check that it is possible to meet objectives within budget; to enable project planning to take place ◆ Project plan: activity list; allocation of resources to activities; estimation of times and costs; prioritising of activities; setting of milestones for all team members; production of Gantt chart showing activities against estimated time needed and time allowed ◆ Project issues and risks: activities creep beyond original scope of project; unforeseen activities needed to enable objectives to be achieved; activities take longer than estimated; members of project team not available as planned; equipment not available as planned; equipment failure; stationery or other resources not available as planned; members of project team make mistakes or underperform; budget not available when needed ◆ Identifying and planning for project issues and risks: all team members identify risks; assess each risk in terms of likelihood and consequences; identify warning signs or triggers for each risk; identify preventative actions (check understanding of scope, check activity list, check estimates of time needed, confirm availability of team members and equipment, test equipment, plan project team meetings and communications carefully, check skills of team members, provide training if needed); identify contingency plan for highly rated risks (identify other people with appropriate skills who could join team if needed, identify sources of equipment that could be

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:	Unit amplification
		used if needed, allow extra time where there is little experience); allocate individual to monitor for each risk identified
3 Understand how to monitor a project.	<p>3.1 Identify methods that can be used to monitor the progress of a project.</p> <p>3.2 Explain the purpose of reporting progress during a project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Monitoring a project: progress reports from team members on predetermined dates; project team meetings; comparison of delivery with milestones; collection of data (quantity, quality measures); benchmarking with similar projects; use of Gantt chart; use of project management software; critical path analysis (identification of activities which are critical to on-time completion); budget monitoring (identification of variances from planned income and expenditure); probing of any bottlenecks leading to early changes to project plan to enable objectives to be met ◆ Purpose of meeting agreed targets within a project: to enable some deliverables to be used at an early stage; to confirm that plan is likely to work; to gain access to project resources for subsequent stages of project; to highlight shortcomings and identify remedial actions needed if targets are not met ◆ Reporting progress on project: purposes (to ensure that project is on track to achieve objectives, to take preventative actions if project is not on track, to inform planning for future related projects, to enable scope, objectives or resources to be adjusted to meet changing priorities)

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
The learner will:	The learner can:	
	3.3 Explain the purpose of meeting agreed targets within a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Purpose of meeting agreed targets within a project: to enable some deliverables to be used at an early stage; to confirm that plan is likely to work; to gain access to project resources for subsequent stages of project; to highlight shortcomings and identify remedial actions needed if targets are not met
4 Understand the purpose of evaluating a project and ways of doing so.	4.1 Explain the purpose of evaluating a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluating a project: purposes (learn from successes or shortcomings, develop project working skills within team members, develop project management skills, develop improved organisational project management systems, contribute to building good working relationships, identify need for further project work in same or related area)
	4.2 Identify ways of evaluating a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ways of evaluating a project: collect information on achievements and compare with objectives; employ independent evaluator; hold evaluation meeting (note achievements, discuss what went well, what could have been done better), obtain feedback from stakeholders; probe reasons where plan and actions differed ◆ Evaluation report: quantify and evaluate achievements of project, compare plans with what happened; analyse data on quality of deliverables against agreed quality standards; final financial accounting and explanation of any variances; identification of practices that worked well and those that did not work well

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	Unit amplification
The learner will:	The learner can:	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Evaluation of performance of project manager and team members: information is confidential; evaluation of performance and scope for development; integration of evaluation of project work into organisational appraisal and career development systems

Additional information about the unit
Unit purpose and aim(s)
This unit is about the background knowledge and understanding needed to take part in or run a project in a business environment.
Unit start date
01/11/14
Details of the relationship between the unit and relevant national occupational standards (if appropriate)
N/A
Details of the relationship between the unit and other standards or curricula (if appropriate)
N/A
Assessment requirements specified by a sector or regulatory body (if appropriate)
Creative and cultural skills overarching assessment principles
Endorsement of the unit by a sector or other appropriate body (if required)
N/A
Location of the unit within the subject/sector classification system
15.2 Administration
Name of the organisation submitting the unit
CfA
Guided Learning Hours
16

Regulated qualifications assessment specification

Assessment (evidence) requirements

Assessors must ensure that learners provide evidence to cover all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

This unit is designed to assess the skills of learners in the workplace. Evidence of occupational competence should be generated and collected through performance in workplace conditions. This includes the knowledge-based learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the competence units.

These conditions would be those typical to the learner's normal place of work. The evidence collected under these conditions should also be as naturally occurring as possible. It is accepted that not all employees have identical workplace conditions and therefore there cannot be assessment conditions that are identical for all learners. However, assessors must ensure that, as far as possible, the conditions for assessment should be those under which the learner usually works.

Collection of evidence of performance can be used to substantiate, support and expand the evidence base for competent performance. This may include:

- ◆ Observation
- ◆ Product and photographic evidence
- ◆ Relevant active documentation, reports, presentations

Performance evidence: Observation

Observation of performance at work. Assessors must provide information about the context of the assessment.

Performance evidence: Products

Work products (such as reports, letters, memos, printouts, presentations, etc) are valuable items of performance evidence. Assessors are encouraged to assess work products and record the location of evidence within their assessment records. Assessment centres using 'paperless portfolios' should first discuss their approach to assessment with their awarding body.

Guidance on methods/instruments of assessment

This unit is designed to assess the knowledge of learners in the workplace. Learning outcomes may be assessed by a work-based assessment or by observation/product evidence/witness testimony. Online assessment may also be used. The collection of supplementary evidence of performance can be used to further substantiate, support and expand the evidence base for competent performance where this is necessary. This may be required depending on the size of the organisation in which the learner is working.

Supplementary evidence may include:

- ◆ Questioning
- ◆ Professional discussion
- ◆ Witness testimony
- ◆ Other valid evidence which relates directly to learner performance

Guidance on methods/instruments of assessment (cont)

Supporting evidence: Questioning

Assessment by observation and examination of work products usually results in inferred knowledge. As a result, questions should only be asked to fill gaps where knowledge is not explicit. This style of assessment still requires the assessor to confirm how knowledge and understanding has been addressed but avoids over assessment of the learner.

Questioning includes: verbal and written questioning, questionnaires, work-based tasks, reflective accounts, case studies, professional discussion and feedback reports.

Supporting evidence: Professional discussion

Professional discussion is a single, or series of structured, planned and in-depth discussions which can be recorded electronically or manually in paper, computer, audio or video files. Professional discussions can be used to support observation reports, examination of work products and knowledge questionnaires. It is more usually used to fill in gaps in existing performance and knowledge evidence. It can be used formatively and summatively, and using it enhances the assessment process for both learners and assessors.

Professional discussion is used in holistic assessment, which is rigorous, informative and cost-effective, provided the learner is competent in their job role and ready to be assessed. If these conditions are met, assessors can plan to assess naturally-occurring 'evidence-rich' opportunities at work by observation, examination of work products, professional discussion and questioning knowledge within one assessment session. It is also possible for assessors to obtain witness testimonies at the same assessment session. Such a comprehensive activity is likely to focus on major work activities that demonstrate learner competence.

Supporting evidence: Witness testimony

Witness testimony can provide valuable evidence of learner competence. In line with established principles it must be:

- ◆ a clear, authentic statement indicating how the learner carries out their job
- ◆ dated, signed and include the job title of the witness

Supporting evidence: Other qualifications

Other qualifications can be used as supporting evidence in a learner's portfolio. The qualification must be current and be benchmarked to one or more of the national occupational standards. However, it will only be supporting evidence, as assessors must still make judgements about how the learner demonstrates competence at work.

SQA's guide to assessment provides information on appropriate instruments of assessment. This guide is designed to provide support for everyone who assesses for SQA qualifications. It looks at the principles of assessment, and brings together information on assessment in general as well as on best practice in assessment.

The *guide to assessment* can be downloaded free from SQA's website **www.sqa.org.uk**.

Creative and cultural skills overarching assessment principles also supports the assessment of this unit.