XSQA

Group Award Specification for:

Professional Development Award (PDA) in Operations and Management of Visitor Attractions at SCQF level 8

Group Award Code: GT13 48

This Group Award Specification was developed by City of Glasgow College

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Contents

1   Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

♦ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
♦ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
♦ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and Higher Education Institutions of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
♦ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

The Professional Development Award (PDA) in Operations and Management of Visitor Attractions is an SCQF level 8 qualification and is designed to meet the needs of those who wish to develop as managers through their own experience in the workplace. It is targeted at those who want to follow a work-based path to a management qualification for the Visitor Attraction sector. The course has been deliberately designed to be delivered as a part-time, stand-alone award.

The PDA was developed in conjunction with representatives from industry and education and relevant national bodies.

The title of the PDA reflects its focus on both the operations and management of visitor attractions.

Learners who achieve this PDA will develop their managerial knowledge, understanding and skills through development within the context of their current/aspirational employment. In this way, they should be able to work more effectively as managers to the benefit of themselves and to the organisations for which they work.

If already working in the visitor attraction sector the PDA will support continuing professional development. It also provides progression opportunities onto relevant HNC/D and degree programmes.

2   Qualification structure

Learners require 5 SQA credits (40 SCQF points) in total to achieve the PDA in Operations and Management of Visitor Attractions: 4 mandatory SQA credits (32 SCQF credit points) and a further 1 SQA credit (8 SCQF credit points) from the options.

The following framework details the and SQA credit value and SCQF level rating for each unit:

2.1 Structure

Mandatory — Learners must complete **all** mandatory units

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J1F5	35	Managing People	2	16	8
H1F0	34	Creating a Culture of Customer Care	1	8	7
DJ9L	35	Visitor Attraction Management	1	8	8

Optional — Learners must select **one** of the following units

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
F86P	34	Digital Culture: Online Communication	1	8	7
DK04	35	Marketing Planning in Travel & Tourism	1	8	8

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of this qualification is to provide both the theoretical knowledge and vocational skills necessary to fulfil management roles with the Visitor Attraction sector.

The PDA is designed to allow flexibility in delivery. Whilst the course is designed to be delivered to those currently working in the sector, it may also be appropriate for those individuals who wish to gain employment within the Visitor Attraction sector.

The PDA will:

♦ Target employees in the sector
♦ Target those who wish to seek employment in the sector
♦ Satisfy the needs of those who wish to use it to progress to a related HNC/HND qualification

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The PDA will:

1 Provide the basis for future career development.
2 Develop transferrable skills.
3 Develop problem solving skills.
4 Develop organisational, research and investigative skills.
5 Develop critical and evaluative thinking looking at key issues and problems from a managerial perspective.
6 Develop communication skills.
7 Support progression within the SCQF.
8 Meet the needs of relevant industries.
9 Enhance learners' employment opportunities.
10 Develop generic skills in ICT and communication.
11 Provide opportunity to develop collaboration skills and working with others.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

12 To prepare for promotion or prepare for employment in the visitor attraction sector.
13 Develop the knowledge and skills to manage people effectively in the workplace.
14 Allow learners to recognise and evaluate effective customer care within a relevant work environment.
15 Develop skills involved in the management aspects of a visitor attraction (including green/conservation issues and approaches to the retail offering of visitor attractions).

And depending on the option selected:

16 Develop digital skills in online communication.
17 Develop marketing planning skills.

4   Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team as guidance only.

The PDA is designed to be undertaken on a part-time basis and may support the learner's role (or the role they aspire to) within Visitor Attraction organisations. Learners will typically come from employers from within the Visitor Attraction sector. It is recommended that Learners undertaking this course possess good communication skills to a level equivalent to at least SCQF level 6. The following recommendations are for guidance only. Examples of appropriate entry qualifications are specified below.

♦ a minimum of two SQA Highers (SCQF level 6) pass at grade C, along with three SCQF level 5 qualifications (including English) at C or above
♦ appropriate HNC (such as Travel and Tourism).
♦ relevant work experience.

4.1   Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	6	Report writing.
Numeracy	5	Developing Graphs, stock costing.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Creation of website, use of blog, wiki, use of Microsoft/Google applications.
Problem Solving	6	Evaluate and improve performances, dealing with customer care problems, suggest options for continuous improvement, plan operations in a dynamic environment.
Working with Others	5	Collaboration in assessment where prescribed.

5   Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
J1F5 35	Managing People	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
H1F0 34	Creating a Culture of Customer Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			
DJ9L 35	Visitor Attraction Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		
F86P 34	Digital Culture: Online Communication	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
DK04 35	Marketing Planning in Travel and Tourism	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X					X

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS)

National Occupational Standards (NOS) describe the performance required of an individual for an occupation in the workplace. They are developed for employers by employers through the relevant standards setting body. NOS have different uses, and for example, employers can use them to develop job specifications or in house training programmes. One of the main applications of NOS is to inform the development and content of qualifications.

Although there is not a dedicated suite of National Occupational Standards for the Visitor Attraction sector there are some relevant NOS identified below. Whilst not every point within each individual NOS standard applies, some aspects can be covered in the units within the PDA:

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard
J1F5 35	Managing People	M&LBA6 Develop strategic business plans M&LDA2 Recruit, select and retain people M&LDA3 Induct individuals into their roles M&LDB1 Build teams M&LDB4 Manage people's performance at work M&LDC2 Support individuals' learning and development M&LDC3 Mentor individuals M&LDC4 Coach individuals
H1F0 34	Creating a Culture of Customer Care	CFABAC121 Deliver, monitor and evaluate customer service to internal and/or external customers PPL2FOH11 Provide tourism information services to customers

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard
DJ9L 35	Visitor Attraction Management	PPL2FOH11 Provide tourism information services to customers PPLTT13 Sell tourism-related products and services. PPL4FOH45 Manage front of house and guest relation services
DK04 35	Marketing Planning in Travel and Tourism	PPLTT13 Sell tourism-related products and services.

5.3   Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

There are opportunities to develop the following core skills (below values are SCQF levels).

E = embedded within the unit, which means learners who achieve the unit will automatically have their Core Skills profile updated on their certificate. S = signposted, which means learners will be developing aspects of Core Skills through teaching and learning approaches but not enough to attract automatic certification.

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
J1F5 35	Managing People	S6	S6	S6			S6	S6	E6		S6	S6	S6
H1F0 34	Creating a Culture of Customer Care	S6	S6	S6					S6		S6		
DJ9L 35	Visitor Attraction Management				S		S	S			S		
F86P 34	Digital Culture: Online Communication												
DK04 35	Marketing Planning in Travel and Tourism				S	S			S	S	S		

5.4   Assessment strategy for the qualification

The table below summarises the suggested assessment methods for the mandatory units across the PDA in Operations and Management of Visitor Attractions.

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Managing People	Written and/or oral evidence (PowerPoint Presentation). Open-book.	Report covering Outcome 2/3/4. Open-book.			
Creating a Culture of Customer Care	Case study with restricted response questions. Open-book.	Report. Open-book.			
Visitor Attraction Management	Report. Open-book.	Report. Open-book.	Report. Open-book.		
Digital Culture: Online Communication	Learners must be able to demonstrate that they can respond to topics proposed by the tutor in an online forum. Open-book.	Learners must produce performance evidence to demonstrate that they can communicate using online collaboration tools. Open-book.	Learners must produce performance evidence to demonstrate that they can communicate using social networking tools. Open-book.	Learners must produce performance evidence to demonstrate that they can use relevant Web 2.0 applications to publish text, images and videos online.	Learners must produce performance evidence to demonstrate that they can establish and maintain contact with other users in an online environment.
Marketing Planning in Travel and Tourism	Research report. Open-book.	Covering both Outcome 2 and Outcome 3. Marketing Plan. Open-book.			

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The PDA Operations and Management of Visitor Attractions is designed for learners who have positions in the Visitor Attractions (VA) sector at an operational or supervisory level. The award places a heavy focus on developing learners' practical skills and their ability to apply their knowledge to the relevant environment.

The award has been developed to ensure that there is a balance of both theoretical and practical units within the framework. However, it is important to note that all units included on the course are suitable for contextualisation to suit the needs of the learner. Moreover, learners should be given the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in realistic and practical settings.

For example, they may use their employer as the subject for assessments or look at competitor offerings to draw comparison. The makeup of both theory as well as practical elements will underpin the individual's personal development within their current or aspirational role.

The PDA also aims to prepare learners for progression to a range of programmes of study either in higher education or workplace qualifications including SVQ routes.

Delivery and assessment

It is expected that all units will be delivered in the context of the Visitor Attraction sector and be appropriate to the purpose of the PDA. The choice of optional units is significant. It is recommended that learners discuss this with their employer (where one exists) to determine the most appropriate unit.

A holistic approach to assessment is encouraged with evidence generated across outcomes/units where possible and practicable.

The unit specifications detail the specific evidence requirements and recommended assessment procedures. Assessment support packs are available for some Units from the SQA secure site. Some assessments are also available via the SQA SOLAR online assessment system. Assessments within SOLAR are pre-verified and may assist centres when aiming to meet digital first policies.

Integration between units

There are possibilities of integrating assessments within units, including:

♦ Managing People and Visitor Attraction Management
♦ Digital Culture: Online Communication and a range of assessments across the PDA

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

Sequencing is at the discretion of centres although, it would be beneficial to run *Managing People* (Outcome 3) concurrently with *Visitor Attraction Management* (Outcome 1) as an opportunity for integration may be available. All units are standalone and can be delivered independently or simultaneously as required.

Digital Culture can be integrated to some extent with any unit on this course. It is recommended that centres check unit specifications to ensure integration is valid and does not affect the integrity of assessments.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

♦ HN Graded Units
♦ Course and/or external assessments
♦ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
♦ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
♦ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
♦ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
♦ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
♦ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk**.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

The award will allow learners to progress towards an HNC/HND in Travel and Tourism and then if interested the learner can articulate on to a suitable degree programme at university. If a learner is already in possession of an HNC/D in Travel and Tourism, they may have achieved some of units on this course.

6.2.2 Professional recognition

The qualification is not designed to provide professional recognition.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

Centres are now adapting to post-Covid ways of working and these may include digital first approaches. The SQA SOLAR assessment system contains digital assessments which cover some of the course content. Virtual Learning Environments can be developed to allow for either a blended, online or physical classroom-based learning. All these options are possible given the open-book nature of assessments.

6.4 Support materials

A **list of existing ASPs** is available to view on SQA's website.

6.5   Resource requirements

No specialist resources are required to deliver these awards.

7   General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* **(www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment)**.

8   Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

♦   learners may not be entered for the group award
♦   the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

♦   the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
♦   the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
♦   no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
♦   centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at **www.scqf.org.uk**.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

♦ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
♦ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version number	Description	Date
02	The Developer has been updated and some typos have been corrected.	30/09/2021

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of this qualification.

9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This course will aim to develop your managerial skills, developing competencies in managing people, planning the operations of your Visitor Attraction (including retail and option dependent marketing activities). You will have the opportunity to contextualise a number of your assessments thus, tailoring the award to suit the needs of you and/or your employer.

The Visitor Attraction sector is an important part of the wider Travel and Tourism industry. Welcoming millions of visitors a year, the industry is at the forefront of the Scottish tourism product and is well known for its historical offering of heritage and culture.

The sector includes:

♦ Natural attractions such as parks, beaches, mountains and forests
♦ Purpose built attractions such as museums and theme parks
♦ Man-made attractions such as castles and monuments
♦ Sporting attractions such as football stadiums

The sector is often (collectively) a major employer in urban areas and it is likely that you are working for a Visitor Attraction or, that you have a keen interest in the sector.

During the course, you will learn about the management of people (topics such as workforce planning, line management, performance improvement), engage with and apply theories of good customer care, you will also look at the running of Visitor Attractions (taking account of issues around sustainability) and will study either marketing or digital communications.

The assessments in the award are varied with much project work, investigative activity and practical activity involved. You can expect to write academic reports and essays, as well as write and deliver presentations for the mandatory units of the award. For the optional units, you can expect to write questionnaires then write up your findings or, you may learn about digital communication which includes creating a website and using social media.

If you are already working in the visitor attraction sector the PDA will support your continuing professional development. It also provides progression opportunities to a relevant HNC/D programmes and thereafter, degrees.