

# Qualification Specification

Focus Awards Level 2 Certificate in  
Understanding the Safe Handling of  
Medicines (RQF)

601/6201/6



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## Focus Awards Level 2 Certificate in Understanding the Safe Handling of Medicines (RQF)

### Qualification details

QAN: 601/6201/6  
 GLH: 110  
 TQT: 130  
 Credit: 13

### Qualification purpose

The Focus Awards Level 2 Certificate in Understanding the Safe Handling of Medicines (RQF) is aimed at health care staff whose duties may bring them into contact with medication.

The Focus Awards Level 2 Certificate in Understanding the Safe Handling of Medicines (RQF) will provide learners with the an understanding of the principles and practices of working with medicines and develop an understanding of their responsibilities and the procedures they should follow when handling medicines.

### Qualification structure/Rules of combination

Learners must achieve a total of 13 credits from the 4 mandatory units.

Unit Title	Unit Ref	Level	Credit	GLH
<b>Mandatory unit</b>				
Understand Medication and Prescriptions	Y/601/9571	2	3	23
Supply, storage and disposal of medication	K/601/9574	2	3	24
Understand the requirements for the safe administration of Medication	T/601/9576	2	4	39
Record-Keeping and audit processes for medication, administration and storage	F/601/9578	2	3	24

## **Learner entry requirements**

There are no specific entry requirements for this qualification. Focus Awards does not set any other entry requirements but training providers or colleges may have their own guidelines.

## **Age ranges**

This qualification is accredited for learners aged a minimum of 18

## **Geographical coverage**

This qualification is available in England and Northern Ireland.

## **Reasonable adjustments and special considerations**

Please refer to the Focus Awards 'Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy'.

## **Assessment methods**

Focus Awards have decided that all learners are required to create a Portfolio of Evidence that demonstrates all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. This section also includes the types of evidence that are permitted to be included within the portfolio, which include:

- Assessor observation – completed observational checklists on related action plans;
- Witness testimony;
- Learner product;
- Worksheets;
- Assignments/projects/reports;
- Record of oral and written questioning;
- Learner and peer reports;
- Recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Evidence may be drawn from actual or simulated situations where appropriate and where permitted by the relevant Sector Skills Council or Sector Skills Body.

## Progression routes

Learners wishing to progress from this qualification can undertake the following qualifications:

- Level 2 or Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) for England (QCF)
- Level 3 Certificate in the Principles of End of Life Care (QCF)
- Level 3 Certificate in Understanding Working in Mental Health (QCF)

## Useful websites and supporting materials

- [www.focusawards.org.uk/supportingmaterials](http://www.focusawards.org.uk/supportingmaterials)
- [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk)
- [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/)

## Links to National Occupational Standards

This unit maps to Skills for Health National Occupational Standards

QCF UNIT TITLE	LINK TO NOS
Understand medication and prescriptions	CHS1, CHS2, CHS3 and units HSC 24, HSC221 and HSC236.
Supply, storage and disposal of medication	CHS1, CHS2, CHS3 and units HSC 24, HSC221 and HSC236.
Understand the requirements for the safe administration of medication	CHS2, CHS3 and units HSC21, HSC 24, HSC221 and HSC236.
Record-keeping and audit processes for medication administration and storage	CHS1, CHS2, CHS3 and units HSC21, HSC 24, HSC221 and HSC236.

## Appendix A: Units

<b>Unit Title:</b>	Understand medication and prescriptions		
<b>Unit No:</b>	Y/601/9571		
<b>Level:</b>	2		
<b>GLH:</b>	23		
<b>Credit:</b>	3		
<b>Unit details:</b> This unit aims to develop the knowledge and skills a learner requires when understanding the use of different types of medication, how they are classified and legislation and guidelines related to medication.			
<b>Learning Outcome</b> <b>The learner will:</b>		<b>Assessment Criterion</b> <b>The learner can:</b>	
1	Understand the use of different types of medication	1.1	Identify the different types of medicines available and why they are used
		1.2	Describe the different routes by which medicines can be administered
2	Understand how medicines are classified	2.1	Describe the following classifications of medicine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ General sales list (gsl)</li> <li>➤ Pharmacy (p)</li> <li>➤ Prescription only medicines (pom)</li> <li>➤ Controlled drugs</li> </ul>
3	Understand legislation and guidelines related to medication	3.1	Outline the key points of current legislation and guidance relating to medication
		3.2	Outline the consequences of not following relevant legislation and guidance
4	Understand the roles of self and others in the medication process	4.1	Outline the roles of self and others in the process of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prescribing medication</li> <li>➤ Dispensing medication</li> <li>➤ Obtaining and receiving medication</li> <li>➤ Administering</li> <li>➤ Medication</li> </ul>
		4.2	Identify the limitations of own role in relation to the medication process
		4.3	Identify ways to get support and information in the workplace related to medication

5	Know how to access information about medication	5.1	Identify the key approved national sources of information about medication
		5.2	Describe the information which should be supplied with medication
		5.3	Describe why it is important to seek information from the individual about their medication and condition

<b>Unit Title:</b>	Supply, storage and disposal of medication		
<b>Unit No:</b>	K/601/9574		
<b>Level:</b>	2		
<b>GLH:</b>	24		
<b>Credit:</b>	3		
<b>Unit details:</b> This unit aims to develop the knowledge and skills a learner requires when understanding how medicines are supplied and obtained. This unit also covers the requirements for storing medication and the safe disposal of medication.			
<b>Learning Outcome The learner will:</b>		<b>Assessment Criterion The learner can:</b>	
1	Understand how medicines are supplied and obtained	1.1	Identify the purpose of a prescription
		1.2	List the information that has to be checked and recorded once medication has been received
		1.3	Describe the procedure for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transferring medication from one setting to another</li> <li>➤ Obtaining medication in an emergency situation</li> <li>➤ Obtaining medication 'as and when required (prn)'</li> <li>➤ Renewal of prescription</li> </ul>
2	Know the requirements for storing medication	2.1	Describe the requirements of medication storage within the following settings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clinical settings</li> <li>➤ Residential care</li> <li>➤ Day services</li> <li>➤ Domiciliary care</li> <li>➤ Non care settings</li> </ul>
		2.2	Explain how controlled drugs should be stored within the settings listed in 2.1
		2.3	Outline how to support individuals to store medication securely for self-administration
		2.4	Give examples of the types of medication that have specific storage requirements
3	Understand the requirements for the safe disposal of medication	3.1	Give examples of why drugs might need to be disposed of
		3.2	Outline the procedures for the safe and secure disposal of



			<p>medication and equipment for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Nursing care settings</li> <li>➤ Care settings</li> <li>➤ Domiciliary care settings</li> <li>➤ Controlled drugs</li> </ul>
		3.3	<p>Explain why it is important to dispose of medication and equipment in line with agreed procedures</p>

<b>Unit Title:</b>	Understand the requirements for the safe administration of medication		
<b>Unit No:</b>	T/601/9576		
<b>Level:</b>	2		
<b>GLH:</b>	39		
<b>Credit:</b>	4		
<b>Unit details:</b> This unit aims to develop the knowledge and skills a learner requires when understanding the preparations prior to administering medication and administering medication in a safe way that meets the individual's needs. The learners will also understand how to support individuals in administering their own medication, procedures to follow when there are problems and how the effects of medication are monitored.			
<b>Learning Outcome</b> <b>The learner will:</b>		<b>Assessment Criterion</b> <b>The learner can:</b>	
1	Understand the preparations to be taken prior to administering medication	1.1	Describe the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Supporting individuals to take medication</li> <li>➤ Administering medication</li> <li>➤ Using specialised techniques to administer medication</li> </ul>
		1.2	Explain why it is important to follow instructions on the preparation and use of medication and the method of administration from the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ individual</li> <li>➤ manufacturer</li> <li>➤ pharmacist</li> <li>➤ organisation</li> </ul>
		1.3	Explain why it is important to gain the individual's consent prior to administering medication
		1.4	Identify the information that should be given to individuals to enable them to give valid consent
		1.5	Explain why it is important to agree with the individual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The medication to be taken</li> <li>➤ The support to be provided in relation to their own needs and preferences</li> </ul>

		1.6	Describe how and why the following should be checked prior to administering medication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identity of individual</li> <li>➤ Medication administration record (mar)</li> <li>➤ Medication</li> <li>➤ Equipment</li> <li>➤ Environment</li> </ul>
		1.7	Describe the hygiene precautions that should be taken when preparing to administer medication in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The individual receiving medication</li> <li>➤ Self and others who may be affected</li> </ul>
		1.8	Explain why it is important to ensure that the correct dose, of the correct medication, is given to the correct person at the correct time, by the correct route or method
2	Understand how medication is administered safely and in a way that meets individual needs	2.1	Describe a range of aids and equipment available for administering medicine
		2.2	Give positive and negative points of using drug administration systems
		2.3	Give examples of special instructions that might need to be followed when giving medication
		2.4	Describe how to support individuals to take medication whilst promoting privacy, dignity, hygiene, safety and active participation
		2.5	Explain how to record the outcomes following administration of medication
		2.6	Give examples of when it may be necessary to seek additional

			support and guidance and who should provide it
		2.7	Identify the key requirements of legislation and guidance in relation to the administration of medicine
3	Understand how to support individuals to administer their own medication	3.1	Explain why it is important to support an individual to administer their own medication
		3.2	Identify key aspects of legislation and guidelines related to self-administration of medication
		3.3	Explain how to carry out a risk assessment for an individual who prefers to administer their own medication
		3.4	Outline the conditions that must be in place when a client self-medicates
		3.5	Describe the records that must be kept in relation to self-medication
4	Understand the procedures to follow when there are problems with the administration of medication	4.1	Describe the actions to be taken in line with agreed ways of working in relation to the following situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Errors administering medication</li> <li>➤ Individual declines prescribed medication</li> <li>➤ Medication is compromised</li> <li>➤ Discrepancies in records</li> <li>➤ Administering controlled drugs</li> </ul>
		4.2	Outline how to support an individual who has difficulty taking medication in the form it has been prescribed
		4.3	Explain how to support the best interests of individuals who are unable to consent to prescribed medication
5	Understand how the effects of medication are monitored	5.1	Describe how to monitor the effects of medication on the individual and the condition it has been prescribed for

	5.2	Identify common side effects of widely used medicines
	5.3	Explain what is meant by an adverse reaction
	5.4	Describe the actions to be taken if side effects or an adverse reaction to medication are suspected
	5.5	Outline how medication reviews should be carried out in line with national guidelines
	5.6	Explain how the outcomes of monitoring should be recorded and reported

<b>Unit Title:</b>	Record-keeping and audit processes for medication administration and storage		
<b>Unit No:</b>	F/601/9578		
<b>Level:</b>	2		
<b>GLH:</b>	24		
<b>Credit:</b>	3		
<b>Unit details:</b> This unit aims to develop the knowledge and skills a learner requires when understanding the audit process in relation to medication transactions and stock levels, how information is recorded and confidentiality maintained and own role in relation in accountability and responsibility.			
<b>Learning Outcome The learner will:</b>		<b>Assessment Criterion The learner can:</b>	
1	Understand the audit process in relation to medication transactions and stock levels	1.1	Describe the requirements for medication transactions and stock levels in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The role of the pharmacist</li> <li>➤ Manufacturer's instructions</li> <li>➤ Organisational policies</li> <li>➤ Inspection and external audit</li> <li>➤ Legal requirements</li> </ul>
		1.2	Explain how medication is recorded on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Receipt</li> <li>➤ Administration</li> <li>➤ Disposal</li> </ul>
2	Understand how information is recorded and confidentiality maintained	2.1	Describe the key aspects of record keeping in an environment where medicine is used in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Documentation</li> <li>➤ Correct recording</li> <li>➤ Signatures</li> </ul>
		2.2	Outline the requirements of the regulatory authorities in relation to medication record keeping
		2.3	Identify what information needs to be recorded when compiling a medicine profile for a client
		2.4	Explain why all records relating to medicines must be kept up-to-date
		2.5	Outline the key points of legislation relating to confidentiality in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Who records what, where</li> </ul>

			<p>and when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Who has access to records</li> <li>➤ Individual rights</li> <li>➤ Maintaining confidentiality</li> </ul>
		2.6	Identify own role in maintaining confidentiality and keeping information secure
3	Understand own role in relation to accountability and responsibility	3.1	Define the terms 'accountability' and 'responsibility'
		3.2	Explain the importance of accountability in relation to medication
		3.3	Describe the responsibilities of different people involved with storage or administration of medication
		3.4	Outline the potential consequences of not following agreed ways of working as set out by an employer

## Appendix B: Assessment strategy

### Assessment Guidance for Skills for Care and Development

Competence based units must include direct observation in the workplace as the primary source of observation. Expert witnesses can be used for direct observation where they have occupational expertise for specialist areas or the observation is of a particularly sensitive nature. The use of expert witnesses should be determined and agreed by the assessor.

Where an expert witness is used, they must meet the following criteria:

- Have a working knowledge of the QCF units on which their expertise is based;
- Be occupationally competent in their area of expertise;
- Have EITHER a qualification in assessment of workplace performance OR a professional role work role which involves evaluating the everyday practice of staff.

### Guidance for Tutors, Assessors and IQA's

In order to offer any of Focus Awards regulated qualifications your Centre will need to ensure that it has the following:

- Tutor(s)
- Assessor(s)
- Internal Quality Assurers(s)

### Requirements for Tutors:

Tutors should hold, or be working towards a teaching qualification. The following are acceptable:

- Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS);
- Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS);
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTTLS);
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training;
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training;
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.



Focus Awards will consider other teaching qualifications upon submission.

Tutors must also be able to show the following:

- Relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to teach.

### **Requirements for assessors:**

#### **Assessors should hold or be working towards the following:**

- D32/D33;
- A1 qualification;
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocational Achievement;
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment;
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement;
- Show relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to assess.

Please note – trainee assessors will require their decisions to be countersigned by a suitably qualified assessor.

### **Requirements for Internal Quality Assurers (IQA):**

IQAs should hold or be working towards either of the following:

- D34;
- V1 qualification;
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice;
- Show relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to verify.

Please note – trainee IQAs will require their decisions to be countersigned by a suitably qualified IQA.

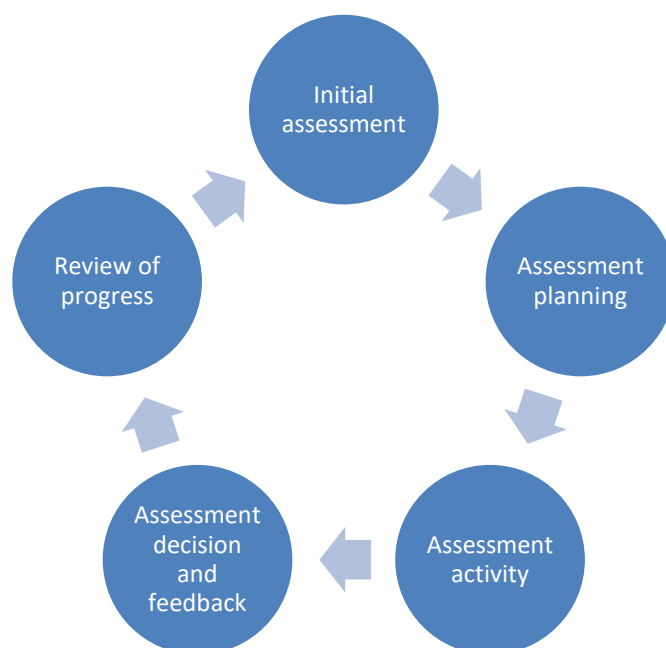
## Appendix C: Assessment best practice

### The assessment process

The assessment process is a systematic procedure which should be followed to give learners a positive experience. This can be achieved by following the assessment cycle. The cycle will continue until all aspects of the qualification have been achieved by your learner(s).

Throughout the cycle, standardisation of assessment practice between assessors should take place; this will ensure consistency and fairness of decisions and that all assessors interpret the requirements in the same way. Internal Quality Assurance will also take place throughout the cycle as part of your Centre's internal quality assurance arrangements.

### The assessment cycle



### Initial assessment

The assessor must ascertain if the learner has any previous knowledge and/or experience of the subject/topic/unit to be assessed. This information can be obtained through application forms, interviews or professional discussions. The results of the initial assessment will give you vital information regarding your learners which you may be able to use within the assessment process for example claiming exemptions, equivalences, credit transfer or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). It will also give you vital information if your learner requires further training

or any additional support they may need. This process might not always be carried out by the assessor, but the information obtained must be passed onto the assessor in order for them to effectively move onto the next stage of the assessment cycle and plan the learner assessment. Initial assessment is known as assessment for learning, as it helps prepare learners for assessment and identifies their potential.

### **Assessment planning**

Assessment planning should be short and medium/long term, to allow for both formative and summative assessment to take place. Inclusion of your learner(s) in the planning process will help identify what they have learnt, how and when they will be assessed and will allow for communication to take place to clarify any points or concerns.

### **Assessment activity**

The assessor must use relevant methods, approaches and activities for example observation, questioning, assignments or gathering appropriate evidence of competence. Assessment can be formative (usually ongoing and to check progress) and summative (usually at the end, that fully achieves the assessment criteria and fully concludes the assessment cycle).

### **Assessment decision and feedback**

The assessor makes a judgement of success or otherwise, giving constructive feedback and agreeing further action that may be necessary. Records of what was assessed and the decisions made should always be maintained.

### **Review of progress**

The assessor reviews the progress and achievement with the learner, discussing any other issues that may be relevant to the learning and assessment process. Within this session, the assessor will naturally start the assessment cycle again, by identifying what is the next stage in the assessment of the qualification, how the learner will achieve this and then planning the assessment.

Records should be maintained throughout all aspects of the assessment cycle and internal quality assurance activities should take place on an ongoing basis.

## Exemptions, equivalences, credit transfer and RPL

Learners are able to avoid duplication of learning and assessment through exemptions or equivalences as follows:

- It is possible to transfer credit (equivalence) for achievements within the RQF
- Exemption from the requirement to achieve credits for designated units can be claimed by individuals with certificated achievements outside the RQF
- Where the unit has previously been achieved by the learner through a different awarding organisation, this will be regarded as a credit transfer.

Due to the learner already having their achievement recognised, and having received a certificate to confirm this, in all of these instances their recognised achievement concerning this specific qualification **MUST** be shown as an exemption, equivalence or credit transfer and credit achievement **MUST NOT** be allocated.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning. Therefore the learner is either awarded the unit or can progress straight to assessment without the need for delivery. This will show as a unit achievement on the certificate. For any learner who has previously achieved units that have been approved as Exemptions, Equivalences, and Credit Transfer or will be achieved through RPL it is your responsibility to inform Focus Awards at registration, through the use of the registration excel spread sheet.

The claim must first of all be made to your Centre and it is your responsibility to make the initial consideration – if you are in any doubt you should request advice/clarification from Focus Awards. Upon authorising the request, you must ensure that appropriate evidence and documentation is reviewed, maintained and made available to Focus Awards staff as required.

### Guidance for Tutors, Assessors and IQA's

All Tutor's, Assessors and IQA' should:

Possess a discipline specific qualification equivalent to the Level 2 NVQ in Active Leisure, Learning and Well-Being Operational Services (QCF)

Have knowledge of and a commitment to the Exercise and Fitness Code of Ethical Practice  
 Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry relevant Continued Professional Development during the last two years

### **Desirable Criteria**

- All Assessors and IQA's should be registered with the Register of Exercise Professionals

### **Requirements for Tutors:**

Tutors should hold, or be working towards a teaching qualification. The following are acceptable:

- Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS);
- Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS);
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTTLS);
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training;
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training;
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.

Focus Awards will consider other teaching qualifications upon submission.

Tutors must also be able to show the following:

- Relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to teach.

### **Requirements for assessors:**

Assessors should hold or be working towards the following:

- D32/D33;
- A1 qualification;
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocational Achievement;
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment;
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement;
- Show relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to assess.

Please note – trainee assessors will require their decisions to be countersigned by a suitably qualified assessor.

## **Requirements for Internal Quality Assurers (IQA):**

IQAs should hold or be working towards either of the following:

- D34;
- V1 qualification;
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment

Processes and Practice;

- Show relevant technical/occupational competency in the disciplines/units they wish to verify.

Please note – trainee IQAs will require their decisions to be countersigned by a suitably qualified IQA.

## **Guided learning hours**

The guided learning hours figure gives the minimum amount of time required to 'deliver' the programme, and includes all times when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards learning aims/outcomes, as well as other structured learning time such as directed assignments, supported individual study or practice and assessments. It does not include time spent on learner-initiated work; or time spent by tutors marking assignments where the learner is not present.

## **Assessment**

Assessment practices must reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Focus Awards and reasonable adjustments may be required for individual learners to enable them to undertake assessments fairly. Please see our guidance and the procedures for applying reasonable adjustments.

Assessment must meet fully all learning outcomes and assessment criteria as described in the qualification specification / assessment strategy; although the method of assessment may sometimes be adjusted to cater for learners requiring alternative assessment methods. The qualification assessment strategy provides detailed assessment and evidence requirements.

## **Consistency of assessment decisions**

The consistency of assessment decisions, across learners, sites and assessors, is of primary importance in assuring the quality of assessment

within a Centre. Focus Awards ensures that the following mechanisms are in place to assist this:

- Assessors are qualified or working towards current assessor standards;
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocational Achievement or Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment. Note: D32/33 and A1 is also acceptable;
- Assessors have relevant subject competency in the units that they wish to assess;
- Assessors are observed assessing by qualified IQAs at least once per year;
- Standardisation exercises are carried out within the Centre;
- Focus Awards issue 'Assessment Guidance' documentation for each qualification;
- Centre training days run by Focus Awards include assessment best practice;
- External quality assurance is carried out at least twice per year in each Centre by trained and qualified EQAs.

### **Judging authenticity**

- Assessors must ensure that the evidence provided by learners is valid, current, sufficient, reliable and authentic;
- Trainers/assessors should ensure that learners sign a declaration that their work is authentic i.e. their 'own unaided work';
- You must implement a Record of Achievement document to record how the learning outcomes and assessment criteria has been sufficiently covered. By 'signing off' learners' evidence using this document the assessors and IQAs are confirming that the assessment evidence submitted by the learner is authentic and their own unaided work and it is sufficient to meet the stated learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Where there is suspicion that the work may not be authentic, the assessor should carry out checks to ascertain its authenticity. For example, oral questioning to check that the learner's knowledge matches the evidence provided.
- Evidence which is deemed to be inauthentic should not be accepted.

## Guidance on re-submission of learner assessment

- There is no limit to the number of times that work may be resubmitted by the learner for assessment;
- However, you may wish to operate your own systems and policies for additional support/advice which may be given to learners who have been unsuccessful on a number of occasions;
- There is no limit to the number of times that assessments may be redrafted by the learner prior to assessment;
- Assessors/tutors may offer some assistance to learners in completing written work, such as explaining what the questions mean or offering additional guidance when they have previously answered questions incorrectly, however, assessors/tutors must not give learners, or lead them to, the correct answers;
- Assessors/tutors should not add to learners' answers in worksheets, etc... where they do not fully meet the required standard. Rather the learner should be asked to add to their answers themselves until they demonstrate competence.

## Use of language and stimulus materials

It is your responsibility as a Centre to provide your learners with suitable resources and assessment materials to support them in their learning journey. Resources and assessment materials and the language used within these should be suitable and appropriate to their needs. They are only appropriate if they:

- Enable learners to demonstrate their level of attainment;
- Require knowledge, skills and understanding which are required for the qualification;
- Are clear and unambiguous (unless ambiguity forms part of the assessment) and
- Are not likely to cause unnecessary offence to learners.

The use of these materials will be reviewed during Centre EQA monitoring visits and in considering whether language and stimulus materials for learning and assessment are appropriate, an EQA will take into account the following:

- The age of learners who may reasonably be expected to take the qualification;
- The level of the qualification;



- The objective of the qualification;
- The knowledge, skills and understanding assessed for the qualification;
- It contains language or content which could lead a group of learners who share a common attribute or circumstance to experience – because of that attribute or circumstance – an unreasonable disadvantage in the level of attainment that they are able to demonstrate in the assessment.

Please note that for the creation of manuals or text books, you must show how each of the learning outcomes has been covered and for assessment materials you must adopt an evidence referencing system to show how each of the assessment criteria has been covered.

## Appendix D: Guidance on observed assessments

### Assessment briefing

When carrying out a planned observed assessment, it is essential that the assessor carries out a briefing prior to the assessment. The assessment briefing should cover the following information:

- Where the assessment will take place;
- How the assessment will be conducted;
- What the student is expected to present in terms of performance evidence;
- Any documentation which forms part of the assessment;
- When questioning and feedback will take place;
- What to do if there is a disagreement with the assessment decision (appeals procedure);
- The assessor should also use this time to let students ask questions or seek clarification on anything relating to the planned assessment. Others involved in the assessment process should be part of the assessment briefing.

The assessment briefing is usually carried out in a group situation and then the assessor will briefly confirm the process with each individual before the assessment commences.

### Observing the learner

Observation is the main method of assessing practical competence and involves the assessor watching the student carry out the planned tasks. When carrying out an observed assessment, the assessor should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Involve the student;
- Complete an adequate briefing;
- Use an assessment checklist;
- Ensure good observational position enabling you to see/hear appropriately;
- Avoid becoming involved in the assessment process except in instances of health or safety or when 'moving on';
- When 'moving on', stick to the phrase 'thank you, can you move onto the next exercise please'. Avoid using phrases such as 'that's great' or 'well done' – this could give an indication of performance;
- Ensure sufficient time is planned to give immediate feedback after the assessment;
- Use a method of recording the observation that is as unobtrusive as possible. Rustling papers can prove disruptive in a quiet

environment where people are concentrating on what is being assessed;

- Be seen to be observing, never eat, talk to other people, text on a mobile phone or any other such action which will distract from your observation;
- Avoid using positive/negative body language – this could give an indication of performance.

## **Suggested stages of an observation for Focus Awards Level 2 Certificate in Understanding the Safe Handling of Medicines (RQF)**

- **Step 1**  
Initial Learner briefing
- **Step 2**  
Direct Observation
- **Step 3**  
Learner/Client Feedback
- **Step 4**  
Learner Evaluation with client (15 minutes minimum)
- **Step 5**  
Assessor Questions (open and non-leading)
- **Step 6**  
Assessor Decision (pass/refer)
- **Step 7**  
Assessor Feedback (constructive, concise and relevant to performance criteria, written and verbal)

## **Questioning to Assess Knowledge and Understanding**

- It is easy to infer a level of understanding by what we see during observation and so it is essential that we question learners if we are ever in doubt about underpinning knowledge;
- However, a question should not be asked if the assessor does not see a particular PC.
- Questions can be divided into two categories:
  - Open questions start with the words, 'How?', 'What?', 'When?', 'Where?', 'Why?' and 'Who?' - these words act as prompts to give the students the opportunity to respond fully in their own words.

- Closed questions enable the students to respond with a simple 'Yes' or 'No' response. For example, "Is it important for expectant mothers to understand that preparations for birth may reduce the risk of postnatal depression?"
- Assessors should always use open questions when assessing underpinning knowledge
- It is a Focus Awards requirement that all questions asked during assessment are recorded together with learner responses. These must be written out in full and signed and dated by both the learner and assessor.
- It is unacceptable to write next to a question "learner answered correctly". If there was an appeal against your assessment decision, then there should be a clearly auditable trail of evidence which shows the question that was asked and the learner response.

### **Non-Leading Questions**

Assessors should be careful not to use questions that could lead the learners by giving him or her a clue to the right answer. They should also be aware of any preferences or opinions they might hold that could affect the way they ask questions. It is just as easy to lead the learner by the tone or inflection of the voice or by some facial expression or body movement.

Examples of leading questions would be:

- *"It is considered that media coverage may cause fear and misunderstanding with regard to schizophrenia, do you think this is why many people who are diagnosed with schizophrenia do not share their diagnosis with others?"*
- *"Internal and external demands in life are both factors which may result in stress, would financial worries be considered an external factor?"*

## Feedback

*'Structured information that one person offers to another, about the impact of their actions or behaviour'.*

- Feedback following assessment should relate specifically to what has been assessed and how the evidence presented meets, or does not fully meet the criteria being assessed.
- Feedback should not include your opinion nor should it be a criticism.
- Criticism is one person's judgement of another person, or their work. Criticism is likely to make someone feel devalued or angry; and does nothing to boost self-confidence. It does not help a person to solve the problem. It shows that you dismiss, reject or disapprove, and is unlikely to lead to the result you intended. You will get a result - but it may be a worse situation or a backlash.
- Effective feedback should be a two way process, involving the learner at all times.

## Appendix E: Assessment plan

### Assessor Question Sheet

Qualification:

Unit:

Assessor question	Learner response	Assessment criteria covered

Assessor signature:		Date:	
Learner signature:		Date:	
Internal quality assurer signature:		Date:	

## Professional Discussion

<b>Learner name:</b>	
<b>Assessor name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Assessment criteria / topic of discussion:</b>	<b>Learner response:</b>

<b>Assessor signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Learners signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Internal quality assurer signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

## Assessor Feedback Sheet

Qualification:

Unit(s):

Performance criteria / assessment criteria	Assessor feedback

<b>Assessor signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Learner signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Internal quality assurer signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	



### Learner Assessment Record

Evidence	Date Achieved	Assessor signature	Learner Signature

