

February 2017

Awarding organisations process for approval of RQF qualifications against Skills for Care specifications 2017-18¹

Skills for Care is pleased to work in collaboration with awarding organisations to develop new qualifications needed in the care sector and to facilitate the transition from QCF to RQF for qualifications that are high quality, consistent and well understood.

This document sets out the process for approval of RQF qualifications against specifications developed by us in consultation with employers and other stakeholders in adult care.

If an awarding organisation requires clarification regarding specification criteria; would like to discuss the details and how they apply to their qualification development; or feels that a specification does not allow them to be responsive to sector feedback effectively, please contact Skills for Care.

Stage 1: Intention to proceed

We will make specifications available to awarding organisations (AOs) by email or through [our website](#).

Specifications for RQF qualifications designed to replace QCF versions will be made available to all AOs at the same time to ensure a co-ordinated transition period and launch.

Specifications for new qualifications will be placed in the public domain 12 months after release to AOs in any initial development group.

In both cases, each AO wishing to develop a qualification using our specification must notify us of their 'Intention to proceed' in good time² by emailing slqa@skillsforcare.org.uk and giving the following details:

- qualification title
- contact details for qualification development within the AO
- estimated date when the qualification will be ready for submission to us
- invoicing details (where applicable): PO number, accounts contact name and email address

Please note that advance purchase of qualification review and approval will not be considered an 'intention to proceed'. This information should be submitted separately.

¹ 2017/18 refers to 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 inclusive.

² By 'good time' we would expect an 'intention to proceed' to be received at least eight weeks prior to submission to ensure we have the resources in place to review the qualification within the 15 day window. Where an 'intention to proceed' is received less than eight weeks prior to submission, we will always attempt to review the qualification with 15 working days, but cannot guarantee this.

AOs may be asked to confirm or revise their estimated submission date during the development period.

Stage 2: Advice and guidance

Included in the price of the review and approval process is advice and guidance. This includes feedback by us on one set of sample materials early in the development period of the AO's qualification. This is designed to highlight any issues at an early point and so maximise the efficiency of the final review process.

Stage 3: Submission for review

When submitting a qualification for review and approval against our specifications please complete a Skills for Care 'mapping template' (available upon request). The following information must be included to ensure a fair, consistent and prompt review process:

1. Full details of the mandatory units for the qualification.
2. A clear mapping to show how the mandatory units meet the content in the specification, including links to national occupational standards (NOS) and existing QCF units and where additional content has been added.
3. Full details of the optional units for the qualification (where applicable)
4. A brief explanation of how the content of optional units was developed. This should include a mapping against authoritative sources where used (e.g. Learning Disability and Mental Health frameworks; NOS; existing QCF units); or a list of participants if the content has been developed from employer input
5. The Rules of Combination for the qualification and a statement of how these meet the requirements of the specification
6. Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours figures for the qualification and a statement of how these have been calculated
7. Assessment arrangements and how these relate to Skills for Care and Development Assessment Principles (revised 2016)
8. Any arrangements for Accreditation of Prior Learning and/or credit transfer
9. A brief explanation of how assessment centres will be supported to prepare for and deliver the qualification to a high standard
10. Whether the qualification is intended for inclusion in the relevant Apprenticeship framework and/or standard
11. Expected launch date for the AO's qualification (this must not precede any general 'Go Live' date agreed between AOs and us)

Please note that where qualifications will be used in both care and health settings, we will alert Skills for Health to the submission of the qualification and the decision to approve or reject the qualification.

Stage 4: Review and decision

We will review the qualification and issue a decision no later than 15 working days from receipt of all documentation listed above and providing the 'Intention to proceed' was received in good time.

Our response will be either:

- a) Confirmation that the qualification has been approved as meeting the requirements of our specification. Approval includes agreement to supply a letter of support to Ofqual for the qualification and permission to use our logo on qualification documents, subject to guidelines. Approved qualifications will be promoted by us in relevant literature, web pages etc.

Or

- b) Notification that the qualification does not yet meet the requirements of our specification. An action plan will be supplied indicating areas where further work will be required before the qualification can be re-submitted for approval. An additional charge may be made for review of re-submitted qualifications depending on the estimated extent of work required by us. Payment for a first review must be made before any further review can be undertaken.

In accepting our approval for a qualification and using our logo, the AO will notify us of any changes they make to the qualification over time in response to feedback from centres, learners, Ofqual or other sources.

We reserve the right to withdraw approval if changes mean the qualification is no longer compliant with the specification.

Pricing structure 2017/2018

	Full cost	Advance Purchase Cost	Prince for re-submission
Diploma³	£1,000 + VAT	£800 + VAT	Dependent on extent of changes needed
Certificate⁴	£800 + VAT	£600 + VAT	Dependent on extent of changes needed
Award	TBC	TBC	Dependent on extent of changes needed

AOs submitting Request Forms prior to 5pm 14th April 2017 will be eligible for the Advance Purchase cost. AOs submitting Request Forms after this date will be subject to the Full Cost.

³ Level 2 Diploma in Care, Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care, Level 4 Diploma in Adult Care, Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Adult Care

⁴ Level 4 Certificate in Principles of Leadership and Management in Adult Care, Level 5 Certificate in Fundamental Knowledge in Commissioning for Wellbeing

Enquiries

We welcome enquiries about specifications, the approval process, working arrangements and our strategic approach to qualification development. Enquiries should be addressed in the first instance to the Standards, Learning, Qualifications and Apprenticeships Team slqa@skillsforcare.org.uk.