



Qualification Specification

**GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal
Behaviour and Training**

610/2910/5

This qualification is subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny and General Moderation policy.

Section 1: Qualifications Overview

1.1 Introduction: About this Qualification

Gatehouse Awards (GA) qualifications are designed to give candidates the skills to be active in the modern labour market and progress in their career and/or into higher level study.

This specification covers the GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training.

This document provides centre staff, candidates and employers with an overview of the qualification content as well as the assessment and quality assurance requirements for this qualification.

This qualification is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) in England and is part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). All versions of this qualification are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is operated by Ofqual at <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

This qualification is not designed to replace an existing qualification.

1.2 Qualification Title, Qualification Number and Important Dates

Qualification Title and Level	Qualification Number	Operational Start Date	Operational Review Date
GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training	610/2910/5	27/06/2023	June 2028

1.3 Qualification Aims and Objectives

The aim of this qualification is to enhance candidates' job prospects and provide the underpinning knowledge for a successful career in animal behaviour and training, animal care or related career.

The objectives of the GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training are for learners to:

- explore animal behaviour and develop a comprehensive understanding of animal behaviour principles and concepts, focusing on companion animals.

- develop an understanding of the assessment of animal needs, focussing on the physical, psychological, and social needs of companion animals.
- explore effective and ethical animal training and the fundamental concepts of animal learning theory and its application to the training and behaviour modification of companion animals.
- develop an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks relevant to the care, training, and welfare of companion animals.

This GA qualification can be relied upon by employers to indicate that an individual has the knowledge and understanding to undertake a specific role in the workplace.

1.4 Qualification Structure and Overview: Units, GLH, TQT, Level and Credit Value

The structure of this qualification is as follows:

GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training (610/2910/5)				
Mandatory Units	Unit Reference	Credits	GLH*	Study Time**
1. Animal Behaviour	F/650/7614	8	60	80
2. Assessment of Animal Needs	H/650/7615	12	100	120
3. Animal Training	J/650/7616	12	100	120
4. Animal Learning Theory	K/650/7617	7	50	70
5. Animal Legislation	L/650/7618	11	100	110
		Total Credits 50	Total GLH* 410	TQT** 500

*Guided Learning Hours (GLH): Definition

The activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

****Total Qualification Time (TQT): Definition**

The number of Guided Learning Hours assigned, plus an estimate of the number of study hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

The number of study hours a learner is expected to undertake in order to complete each unit is expressed in the **'Study Time'** above. This, including the GLH, provides the Total Qualification Time, or TQT, and represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of this qualification.

The estimates for Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time above have been produced with due regard to information gathered from those with experience in education and training and is in line with guidance published by Ofqual on the allocation and expression of Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours.

Level

The qualification within this specification is designated at Level 3 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) according to the Level Descriptors for knowledge and understanding, which build on those used within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This means that this qualification is considered by GA to lead to the outcome as follows:

Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas, and reflects an awareness of the nature of the area of study or work and different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

1.5 Rules of Combination

This qualification consists of five mandatory units. There are no optional units.

The mandatory units within the qualification are detailed in Section 1.4 above. Candidates must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the mandatory units.

The learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit are provided in Section 4 below.

There are no further rules of combination.

1.6 Intended Audience, Age and Entry Requirements

This qualification is ideal for individuals who have a keen interest in working with companion animals, such as dogs, cats, and other household pets, and who wish to develop a comprehensive understanding of animal behaviour, needs, and training techniques.

The qualification is suitable for those who aspire to pursue a career or further education in fields related to animal training, behaviour consultancy, pet services, or animal welfare.

The qualification may be suitable for individuals who are:

- seeking to start or enhance their career in animal training and behaviour, such as aspiring dog trainers, pet behaviourists, or animal welfare professionals.
- already working in roles involving companion animal care, training, or welfare and wish to deepen their knowledge and skills.
- interested in starting their own pet training or behaviour consultancy business.
- considering further education or specialisation in related fields, such as veterinary science, animal psychology, or animal behaviour research.

This qualification is intended for learners aged 16 and above.

There are other no formal entry requirements for this qualification; however, due to the nature of the qualification content, those undertaking the qualification must have a proficient level of spoken and written English (e.g., GCSE Grade C / Grade 4 or above) or equivalent).

It is recommended that prior to commencing a programme of study leading to this qualification, candidates receive detailed advice and guidance from the training provider in order to ensure the programme and qualification will meet their needs.

1.7 Recognition of Prior Learning and Transfer of Credits

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessing whether a learner's previous experience and achievements meet the standard requirements of a GA Unit or Units prior to the candidate taking the assessment for the qualification, or part of the qualification, they are registered for.

Any prior learning must be relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and GA will subsequently amend the requirements which a candidate must have satisfied before they are assessed as eligible to be awarded the qualification.

Where there is evidence that the candidate's knowledge and skills are current, valid and sufficient the use of RPL may be acceptable for recognising achievement of assessment criteria, learning outcome or unit(s). The requirement for RPL in such instances must also include a consideration of the currency of the knowledge gained by the candidate at the time they undertook the prior learning. RPL cannot be guaranteed in instances where industry practice or legislation has significantly changed in the time since the prior learning was undertaken / a previous award was issued.

No transfer of credits is permitted.

1.8 Relationship to Other Qualifications & Progression Opportunities

The GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training is an ideal qualification from which a learner might progress onto higher level study, practical occupational training or a related career.

Careers and higher-level training opportunities in this sector include working as an animal trainer, an animal training instructor, an animal behaviour technician, an accredited animal behaviourist, clinical animal behaviourist, or as a veterinary behaviourist.

1.9 Language of Assessment

This qualification is offered in English.

Further information concerning the provision of qualification and assessment materials in other languages may be obtained from GA.

1.10 Grading

All learning outcomes and assessment requirements must be met before a learner can be considered having achieved this qualification.

This qualification is not graded on a scale. Learners are assessed as Pass or Fail. Learners who aren't successful can resubmit work within the registration period.

1.11 Qualification Availability

This qualification is available via GA Approved Centres in the UK and internationally. If you would like further information on offering this qualification, please contact us.

Our contact details appear on our website: www.gatehouseawards.org

Section 2 – Qualification Delivery, Assessment Model and Certification

2.1 Teaching and Learning Requirements

Courses leading to this qualification may consist of e-learning courses or classroom-based courses, or a blended option.

Learners can therefore undertake learning and assessment on a flexible basis.

Candidates must have suitable access to teaching and assessment staff as well as technical support. Specialist staff, high quality learning materials and access to assessment opportunities are essential for all centres.

Further details and guidance on the content of teaching and learning for each unit can be found in the Unit Specifications in Section 4 below.

2.2 Assessment and Quality Assurance Model

This qualification is delivered in-centre, where learners' work is internally assessed and internally moderated by centre staff to clearly show where learners have achieved the learning outcomes and qualification requirements. There is no requirement for external assessment.

Assessment, internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and quality assurance conducted by GA. Centres operating this model are subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny (CASS) and General Moderation Policy.

2.3 Registering Candidates & Unique Learner Numbers

Candidates must be registered through the Ark, the GA online Learner Management System.

Owing to the Total Qualification Time of this qualification, the validity period of registrations made will be 2 years. Should a candidate not have achieved in the timescale, a new registration is required.

Each approved GA centre is provided with a user account to allow approved staff access to the online system.

Where the Unique Learner Number (ULN) of a candidate is known, this should be provided at the point of registration in order for GA to issue updates to the Learner Record Service.

2.4 ID Requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to confirm each learner's identity.

Learners are required to declare that all work submitted for assessment is their own work.

2.5 Record Keeping

Records of learner's details, their work and any records of Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and records containing learners' personal details must be kept by the centre in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR and all relevant privacy regulations) for a minimum of 2 years.

The centre must operate a safe and effective system of care and comply with clinical and information governance requirements, with appropriate policies and procedures in place to maintain confidentiality related to clients, staff and learners.

All records must be easily retrievable and made available to GA or the Regulator upon request.

Portfolios must be retained until the following External Quality Assurance visit to allow them to be sampled. Following external moderation and the award of a qualification by GA, centres may return portfolios to learners.

Records of all internal quality assurance and moderation activity undertaken must be kept and made available to GA upon request.

Section 3 – Centre Requirements: Assessment & Quality Assurance

Course providers offering these GA qualifications must ensure that they have the following resources in place.

3.1 Staff

The knowledge and experience of all staff involved in the teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification will be considered during the approval and re-approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

The course provider must ensure that they hold up-to-date and detailed information about the staff involved with the delivery and quality assurance of this qualification and must make records available to GA upon request. The information GA expects the course provider to hold for each member of staff includes, as a minimum:

- current up to date CV
- copies of relevant qualification certificates
- relevant and up to date CPD (Continuous Professional Development) records

The course provider must also ensure that they have the management and administrative arrangements in place which are suitable to support the registration of candidates and the qualification delivery.

Requirements for Teachers and Assessors

Those delivering and assessing this qualification must hold relevant qualifications.

Teachers and Assessors must hold relevant qualifications and have relevant expertise and experience.

GA recommends that Assessors hold relevant teaching or assessing qualifications suitable to support the making of appropriate and consistent assessment decisions.

Suitable teaching and assessing qualifications may include:

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- Level 3 or 4 PTLLS, or above (i.e. CTLLS or DTLLS)
- Level 3 or 4 Award/Certificate in Education and Training, Cert. Ed or PGCE
- Degree in Education
- Level 3 or 4 NVQ in Training and/or Learning & Development.

Assessors may be working towards a relevant equivalent teaching/assessing qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified, experienced Assessor and their Internal Verifier.

Where a Teacher or Assessor does not hold teaching or assessing qualifications, they must ensure that they are able to demonstrate that they have delivered a minimum of 30 hours of teaching or assessing.

All staff involved with the delivery and assessment of this qualification must also be able to demonstrate ongoing professional development relevant to the sector subject area.

Requirements for Internal Moderators (also referred to as an Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs)

Assessors may have one or several appointed Internal Moderators.

This qualification is assessed by an Assessor and internally moderated and quality assured by an Internal Moderator to ensure standardisation, reliability, validity and sufficiency of the Assessor's assessment decisions.

Internal Moderators therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as sufficient technical understanding related to the qualifications that they are internally quality assuring. It is the centre's responsibility to select and appoint Internal Moderators.

To be able to perform the internal moderation and quality assurance role, an Internal Moderator must:

- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of the specific occupational field
- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance
- hold one of the following Assessor qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
 - Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
 - Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
 - A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods
 - D32 Assess candidate performance and D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence
- hold one of the following internal quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:

- Level 4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process
 - D34 Internally verify the assessment process
- show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.
 - In addition, Internal Moderators must be familiar with GA's qualification requirements.

Internal Moderators may be working towards a relevant equivalent quality assurance qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Internal Moderator.

The Internal Moderator must have relevant occupational experience and hold relevant qualifications in the particular subject area being assessed. They must hold a regulated qualification at least at the level of the qualification they are assessing.

The knowledge and experience of Teachers, Assessors and Internal Moderators will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

External Moderation (also referred to as External Quality Assurance or EQA)

Assessment and internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and wider scrutiny and centre controls as per GA's quality assurance arrangements for centre-assessed qualifications.

3.2 Assessment of Candidates

The centre must ensure that Assessors meet the requirements listed in Section 3.1 above in order to make assessment decisions leading to the award of this GA qualification.

Candidates are assessed on the evidence contained within their portfolio.

3.3 Portfolio Requirements

Learners are expected to build a portfolio of evidence, clearly demonstrating where they have met the learning outcomes and qualification requirements.

Various types of evidence may be used, for example:

- essays/assignments
- short questions and answers
- workbooks
- professional discussions
- observations of performance in the workplace
- product evidence
- reflective accounts
- witness testimony
- records of questioning

Evidence in the portfolio should be mapped against the learning outcomes, reflect the type of evidence supplied and indicate its location within the portfolio. By using portfolio reference numbers, it will enable the learner, assessor, IQA and EQA to quickly locate the evidence submitted.

All evidence must meet CRAVES requirements.

3.4 CRAVES Requirements

Assessors must ensure that all evidence within the learner's portfolio judged to meet GA's 'CRAVES' requirements is:

- **current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **authentic:** the work is the candidate's own work
- **valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner
- **sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.5 Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Internal Moderators (also known as Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs) ensure that Assessors are assessing to the same standards, i.e. consistently and reliably, and that assessment decisions are correct. IQA activities will include:

- ensuring Assessors are suitably experienced and qualified in line with the qualification requirements
- sampling assessments and assessment decisions
- ensuring that assessment decisions meet the GA 'CRAVES' requirements (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- conducting standardisation and moderation of assessment decisions
- providing Assessors with clear and constructive feedback
- supporting Assessors and providing training and development where appropriate
- ensuring any stimulus or materials used for the purposes of assessment are fit for purpose.

Sampling of assessment will be planned and carried out in line with a clear IQA and moderation strategy, which incorporates the number of learners, number of Assessors, and the experience and competency of Assessors.

Centre IQAs may wish to refer to the guidance documents provided by GA to approved centres (available on the Ark) in order to formulate an appropriate Sampling Strategy.

3.6 External Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

All GA Approved Centres are entitled to two EQA visits per year. Additional visits can be requested, for which there may be an additional charge.

EQA activities will focus on the centre's continuing adherence to and maintenance of the GA *Centre Approval Criteria* and the criteria and requirements for the specific qualifications for which it holds approval. These include:

- checking that the management of the centre and the management arrangements relating to the qualification are sufficient
- checking that resources to support the delivery of the qualifications, including physical resources and staffing, are in place and sufficient
- ensuring that the centre has appropriate policies and procedures in place relevant to the organisation and to the delivery and quality assurance of the qualifications
- the use of assessment materials and the arrangements in place to ensure that evidence for assessment is 'CRAVES' (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- sampling assessment decisions against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- the internal moderation and quality assurance arrangements
- sampling internal moderation records against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- administrative arrangements

- ensuring that any actions from moderation and wider quality assurance activity have been carried out by the centre
- confirming any claims for RPL, reasonable adjustments or special considerations

Through discussions with centre staff, examining learner's work, moderation of assessment, talking to learners and reviewing documentation and systems, the GA EQA will provide the centre with full support, advice and guidance as necessary.

3.7 Venue Requirements

When training premises are used in the delivery of teaching and assessment of this qualification, centres should, wherever possible, provide suitable access in line with Disability Discrimination, Diversity & Equality law and regulations and any other regulations which apply.

3.8 Equipment

Centres must ensure that all products and equipment used in the delivery and assessment of this qualification must be authorised by GA and confirmed as fit for purpose and compliant with current Health and Safety legislation and any other relevant regulations. This will be considered at approval and during the on-going monitoring of centres.

Where specific products and equipment are required for the delivery and assessment of a GA qualification, the suitability of the products and equipment at the centre will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

3.9 Teaching and Learning Resources

GA does not prescribe the use of set course books, workbooks or other materials but expects that centres providing such courses should use relevant and up-to-date, high quality teaching and learning materials which allow candidates to adequately prepare for assessment.

All delivery and assessment resources should be inclusive of the principles of equality and diversity and the safeguarding of candidates.

Please note, any references to books, journals, websites or other third-party materials and publications made by GA does not infer that GA's accepts responsibility for the content of such materials or any opinions expressed within them.

3.10 Results

Centres may make claims for certification via the Ark when learners complete and the Assessor and Internal Moderator have confirmed achievement. Such claims for certification are subject to successful external moderation (EQA). Following the External Moderator's confirmation of a learner's achievement, GA will authorise claims for the certification of learners, details of which will be visible to the centre in the centre's Ark account. Certificates are usually issued within 10 working days of the award of the qualification.

3.11 Certificates

The qualification certificate will indicate both the title and the level at which the qualification is achieved.

Certificates will only be issued to learners who have achieved sufficient credits and met the rules of combination for the qualification they are registered for. If a learner has not achieved sufficient credits or failed to meet the rules of combination, the qualification certificate will not be issued.

Replacement certificates are available upon request.

Amendments to certificates are available upon request but may require the centre to provide evidence of the need for any amendment (e.g., learner proof of identification) and will involve the return of the original certificate. Replacements and amendments may incur an additional charge.

3.12 Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claims Status is not available for this qualification.

3.13 Appeals and Enquiries

GA has an appeals procedure in accordance with the arrangements for regulated qualifications.

General enquiries can be made at any time and should be directed to a GA Centre Administrator.

3.14 Ongoing Support

There are a number of documents on the GA website that centres and candidates may find useful: www.gatehouseawards.org

The website is updated regularly with news, information about all GA qualifications, sample materials, updates on regulations and other important notices.

Within the centre, a named Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that all information and documents provided to centre staff and candidates are correct and up to date.

GA must be kept up to date with contact details of all changes of personnel so centres can be provided with the best level of support and guidance.

At the time of approval, centres are assigned a designated Centre Administrator who is their primary point of contact for all aspects of service or support.

Learners should always speak to a member of staff at the centre for information relating to GA and our qualifications prior to approaching GA directly.

Contact details for GA can be found on the GA website www.gatehouseawards.org.

Section 4: Unit Specifications

4.1 GA Level 3 Diploma in Companion Animal Behaviour and Training (610/2910/5)

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
1	Animal Behaviour	60	8	F/650/7614
<p>In this unit, the learner will develop their understanding of natural behaviour patterns, social behaviour, foraging behaviour, abnormal behaviour identification, body language, and communication in companion animals. They will explore the diverse range of natural behaviours displayed by companion animals, including social behaviours such as affiliative and agonistic behaviours. The learner will also delve into foraging behaviours and the identification of abnormal behaviour. Recognising different types of body language and understanding its importance in communication will be emphasised, along with exploring common communication signals and potential problems that can arise.</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance and Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Requirements: Range</p> <p>Companion animals from the range: cat, dog, small mammal, equine, bird.</p>				
<p>Indicative Content</p> <p>LO1: Natural behaviour patterns in companion animals, including territorial marking, grooming, hunting, playing, and reproductive behaviours; adaptive functions and variations across different animal species. Differentiate between types of social behaviour in companion animals, such as affiliative behaviours (e.g., grooming, play), agonistic behaviours (e.g., aggression, submission), and reproductive behaviours (e.g., courtship); roles in social bonds, hierarchies, and cooperation; foraging behaviours in companion animals, including scavenging, hunting, and food-searching behaviours; their influence from instincts, environmental factors, and food availability, considering species-specific variations; identifying abnormal behaviour by recognising deviations from species-typical patterns, intensity, duration, or frequency; context, individual differences, and potential underlying causes; the impact of abnormal behaviour on welfare, health, and quality of life; signs, e.g., excessive aggression, fearfulness, compulsive behaviours, or abnormal vocalisations.</p> <p>LO2: Various forms of body language, e.g., postures, facial expressions, tail movements, ear positions, and vocalisations, displayed by different animals; how body language can</p>				

vary across species and within individuals of the same species, considering factors such as breed, age, and social context; examples of body language signals associated with emotions, such as fear, aggression, relaxation, submission, playfulness, or curiosity; how understanding and interpreting body language is essential for effective communication and interaction with companion animals, the significance of recognising body language in assessing an animal's emotional state, comfort level, stress, and overall well-being, and the role of body language in identifying potential signs of fear, aggression, anxiety, or pain, which can inform appropriate handling, training, and behaviour modification strategies.

LO 3: How communication serves as a means for animals to convey information, express emotions, establish social bonds, and coordinate behaviours; communication in facilitating cooperation, survival, and reproduction within animal species; how effective communication enhances understanding between humans and companion animals, leading to improved relationships and interactions; common communication signals utilised by companion animals, e.g., olfactory (scent-based), visual (body postures, facial expressions), and auditory (vocalisations) modes of communication, giving examples of specific signals within each animal type from the range; the role of each in conveying messages, expressing emotions, or indicating intentions in various contexts; potential challenges or breakdowns in communication between humans and companion animals, including misinterpretation of signals, lack of understanding, or conflicting signals; how factors such as environmental conditions, individual differences, or previous experiences can impact communication effectiveness; the implications of communication problems on the well-being, training, and behaviour of companion animals, the need for clear, consistent, and respectful communication approaches.

Learning Outcomes The learner will be able to	Assessment Criteria The learner can
1 Understand natural behaviour patterns of companion animals	1.1 Explain natural behaviour patterns found in companion animals
	1.2 Differentiate between different types of social behaviour found in companion animals
	1.3 Explain different types of foraging behaviour found in companion animals
	1.4 Assess how to identify abnormal behaviour
2 Understand the body language of companion animals	2.1 Differentiate different types of body language in a range of companion animals
	2.2 Explain the importance of recognising body language expressed by companion animals
3 Understand communication methods used by companion animals	3.1 Explain the purpose of communication
	3.2 Describe common communication signals found in companion animals (smell, visual, sound)
	3.3 Describe problems that can occur in communication

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
2	Assessment of Animal Needs	100	12	H/650/7615
<p>In this unit, the learner will develop their understanding of assessing and meeting the comprehensive needs of companion animals. They will explore a range of assessment criteria, enabling them to ensure the well-being and welfare of these animals. The learner will develop their understanding of routine healthcare, including the importance of regular check-ups and monitoring the health of companion animals. They will also explore ways to promote companion animals' health and prevent disease. Additionally, the learner will develop their knowledge of how medical issues and pain can impact the behaviour of companion animals. They will explore the effects of pain on behavioural responses and learn to recognise if training is in the best interests of the animals, assessing appropriateness for their well-being. The learner will also explore the equipment used in training companion animals and the principles of safe and force-free animal handling. They will also delve into recognising indicators of stress and strategies to reduce it, as well as understanding how stress can escalate into aggression.</p>				
Assessment Guidance and Indicative Content				
Assessment Requirements: Range				
Companion animals from the range: cat, dog, small mammal, equine, bird.				
Indicative Content				
<p>LO1: Routine healthcare including vaccinations, deworming, flea and tick prevention, regular veterinary check-ups; the purpose and benefits of preventive measures in maintaining the overall health and well-being of animals; common routine healthcare procedures and their contribution to preventing diseases and promoting longevity; checks needed to monitor the health of animals, such as regular physical examinations, observing changes in behaviour or appetite, and monitoring of vital signs (temperature, pulse, respiration); early warning signs of potential health issues; the role of proactive monitoring in identifying and addressing health concerns promptly; involving a veterinarian in routine health monitoring; ways to keep companion animals healthy and free from disease: strategies and practices for promoting animal health and disease prevention, e.g. providing a balanced diet, maintaining proper hygiene and sanitation, offering regular exercise and mental stimulation, and ensuring a safe and enriched environment; appropriate socialisation, behaviour training, and stress reduction techniques in supporting the overall health and well-being of animals; the importance of responsible ownership: providing</p>				

adequate shelter, meeting nutritional needs, adhering to recommended vaccination and parasite control protocols.

LO2: How medical issues can affect behaviour and the link between physical health and behaviour in companion animals, how underlying medical conditions can influence their behaviour; how certain medical issues, such as hormonal imbalances, neurological disorders, or pain, can manifest as changes in behaviour; the importance of considering medical factors when assessing and addressing behavioural problems in companion animals; the effects of pain on behavioural responses: how pain can significantly impact the behaviour of companion animals, leading to alterations in their normal responses, activity levels, or social interactions; common signs and manifestations of pain in companion animals, including changes in posture, vocalisations, appetite, or aggression; recognising and addressing pain-related behavioural responses through appropriate veterinary care, pain management strategies, and modifications to the animal's environment or routine.

LO3: Equipment that can be used when training companion animals such as clickers, treats, leashes, harnesses, and training aids; the functions and purposes of the items in training companion animals; how to decide which equipment is most suitable to train companion animals considering factors such as size, breed, age, temperament, and training objectives; prioritising positive reinforcement-based methods and the animal's welfare; using training equipment correctly by follow manufacturers' guidelines and best practices for safety and effectiveness; maintaining clear communication, timing, and reinforcement; the impact incorrect use of training equipment could have on companion animals: the potential negative consequences, including physical harm, fear, anxiety, and learned helplessness; the long-term effects and ethical implications on animal welfare; safe, force-free animal handling using gentle restraint, positive reinforcement, and gradual desensitisation techniques; trust-building, a calm environment, and respecting animal boundaries.

LO4: How training can impact on companion animal welfare: the influence of training on companion animal welfare, including physical, mental, and emotional aspects; the benefits of positive reinforcement-based methods in promoting cooperation and a positive human-animal bond; potential negative impacts of training, such as stress, fear, anxiety, or physical harm when aversive techniques are used; how to recognise if training is in the best interests of the companion animal: signs of positive engagement, willingness, and enthusiasm during training sessions, monitoring of the animal's behaviour, body language, and overall well-being; seeking professional advice if signs of distress, avoidance, or disinterest are observed; when training might not be appropriate: scenarios like illness, injury, or significant stress where training may be unsuitable; factors such as age, health conditions, or specific behavioural issues requiring specialised interventions; consulting

with other professionals to determine the appropriateness of training in specific circumstances.

LO5: Indicators of stress in companion animals such as changes in appetite, behaviour, body language, vocalisation, and elimination patterns; physical indicators e.g., increased heart rate, panting, trembling, or excessive grooming; how stress can manifest differently in different species or individuals; to reduce stress in companion animals: strategies and environmental modifications that can help alleviate stress, e.g., providing a safe and enriched environment, ensuring proper socialisation, offering mental stimulation, and maintaining consistent routines; the importance of positive reinforcement-based training methods and the use of calming techniques, such as desensitisation and counterconditioning; recognising individual animal needs and consulting with professionals for tailored stress reduction approaches; the relationship between stress and aggressive behaviour in companion animals, how prolonged or intense stress can trigger defensive or reactive responses leading to aggression; the importance of identifying and addressing stressors to prevent the escalation of stress into aggressive behaviours.

Learning Outcomes The learner will be able to	Assessment Criteria The learner can
1 Understand signs of ill health and disease in animals	1.1 Explain routine healthcare for companion animals
	1.2 Summarise checks that are needed to monitor the health of companion animals
	1.3 Explain ways to keep companion animals healthy and free from disease
2 Understand the relationship between animal health and behaviour	2.1 Explain how medical issues can affect behaviour
	2.2 Describe the effects of pain on behavioural responses
3 Understand the importance of providing safe training methods for companion animals	3.1 Describe the equipment that can be used when training companion animals
	3.2 Explain how to select equipment suitable to train companion animals
	3.3 Explain the importance of using training equipment correctly
	3.4 Explain the impact incorrect use of training equipment could have on companion animals.
	3.5 Explain the principles of safe, force-free animal handling
4 Understand how training impacts on companion animals	4.1 Explain how training can impact on companion animal welfare
	4.2 Explain how to recognise if training is in the best interests of the companion animal
	4.3 Assess when training might not be appropriate

5 Understand the indicators of stress in companion animals	5.1 Describe the indicators of stress in companion animals
	5.2 Assess strategies to reduce stress in companion animals
	5.3 Describe how stress can escalate into aggression

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
3	Animal Training	100	12	J/650/7616
<p>In the Animal Training unit, learners will develop their understanding of effective training techniques and strategies for companion animals. They will explore the process of establishing goals and objectives for training and learn to set SMART targets to ensure specificity and measurable outcomes. The learner will also explore assessing the training needs of companion animals and consider factors when devising training plans. They will understand the role of motivation in learning and evaluate how to mitigate factors that can affect training progress. Additionally, learners will gain insights into the importance of ongoing review, self-reflection, and revision of training plans. They will also recognise the significance of establishing and maintaining training records to track progress and communicate effectively.</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance and Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Requirements: Range</p> <p>Companion animals from the range: cat, dog, small mammal, equine, bird.</p> <p>LO2 AC 2.4 requires the learner to produce a training plan for at least one companion animal, from the range stipulated above. The centre may provide a scenario for this assessment activity in order to provide assessment opportunity for learners who are not actively involved in animal training. A template for the training plan may also be provided.</p>				
<p>Indicative Content</p> <p>LO1: Setting clear and specific goals in companion animal training, such as obedience, agility, or behavioural modification; consideration of the individual characteristics, abilities, and needs of the companion animal when establishing goals; methods such as assessing the current behaviour, identifying areas for improvement, and consulting with professionals to develop appropriate training goals; SMART target concept (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) targets in training to ensure effective training outcomes; examples of SMART targets in companion animal training, such as teaching a specific command within a set time frame or achieving a certain level of performance in a training task.</p> <p>LO2: Conducting a thorough assessment of the companion animal's current skills, behaviours, and specific training requirements; factors such as age, breed, temperament, and previous training experiences that may influence the training needs; the owner's</p>				

goals, lifestyle, and available resources to ensure realistic and achievable training plans; importance of setting clear and specific objectives based on the assessment of the companion animal's needs; considerations of the individual animal's learning style, preferences, and motivational factors when devising a training plan; incorporating appropriate training techniques, reinforcement strategies, and gradual progression to achieve desired training outcomes; training methods, resources and approaches, e.g., positive reinforcement, clicker training, or shaping; methods suitable for the animal's temperament, learning style, and specific training goals; the use of various training resources, such as treats, toys, or target sticks, and how they can enhance the training process.

LO3: Factors that can influence training progress, e.g., animal's age, breed, health, and previous training experiences; environmental factors, e.g., distractions, noise levels, and the training setting, which can impact the animal's focus and learning; the significance of the trainer's skills, knowledge, consistency, and ability to communicate effectively with the companion animal; understanding the companion animal's motivation and what reinforces their behaviour; how motivation can influence the animal's engagement, attention, and willingness to learn during training sessions; the benefits of using positive reinforcement techniques and finding motivating rewards to enhance the training process; strategies to address and mitigate factors that may hinder training progress; techniques for managing distractions, creating a suitable training environment, and adapting training methods to meet the individual needs of the companion animal; the importance of patience, consistency, and ongoing evaluation and adjustment of the training plan to overcome obstacles and ensure successful training outcomes.

LO4: The dynamic nature of training and the importance of adapting training plans to meet the evolving needs of the companion animal; ongoing review and self-reflection to assess the effectiveness of the training plan and identify areas for improvement; adjusting training methods, techniques, and reinforcement strategies to ensure continued progress towards the training objectives; the process of revising a training plan, starting with a comprehensive evaluation of the companion animal's progress and the effectiveness of the current plan; identifying any challenges, setbacks, or changes in circumstances that may require plan modifications; setting new goals, redefining objectives, adjusting techniques, and introducing new exercises or approaches to address specific areas of improvement.

LO5: Documenting training activities, progress, and outcomes for companion animals; the role of training records in tracking the animal's development, identifying areas of improvement, and evaluating the effectiveness of training methods; the importance of providing a historical record that can be referred to for future training sessions or when working with different trainers or handlers; the benefits of maintaining up-to-date and accurate training records for companion animals; the role of training records in facilitating

effective communication between trainers, handlers, and owners; preserving a record of the companion animal's achievements, behaviours, and training history to inform future training plans and monitor long-term progress.

Learning Outcomes The learner will be able to	Assessment Criteria The learner can
1 Understand how to establish measurable goals and objectives for the training of companion animals	1.1 Explain how to establish goals and objectives for training
	1.2 Understand how to set SMART targets for companion animal training
2 Understand how to formulate training plans	2.1 Assess the training needs of companion animals
	2.2 Explain what to consider when devising a training plan
	2.3 Explain how to select the most appropriate training methods and resources
	2.4 Produce a training plan for a companion animal
3 Understand what factors can affect the progress and success of training	3.1 Explain the factors that can affect training
	3.2 Understand the role of motivation in learning
	3.3 Assess how to mitigate the factors that affect training
4 Understand the importance of reviewing and revising training plans to meet the objectives	4.1 Explain why training plans need ongoing review, self-reflection and revision
	4.2 Describe how to revise a training plan
5 Understand the importance of establishing and maintaining training records	5.1 Explain the importance of establishing training records
	5.2 Explain the importance of maintaining training records

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
4	Animal Learning Theory	50	7	K/650/7617
<p>In the Animal Learning Theory unit, the learner will develop their understanding of the principles and concepts behind how animals learn. They will explore the four quadrants of learning, which encompass classical conditioning and operant conditioning. The learner will assess the impact of these learning quadrants on the welfare of companion animals. They will also examine classical conditioning, its appropriate applications, and its practical effects on the learning and behaviour of companion animals. Additionally, the unit will cover the unintentional effects of classical and operant conditioning, leading to undesired behaviours. The learner will explore the concepts of positive and negative reinforcement in companion animal training and evaluate their influence on animal welfare. They will also develop their understanding of behaviour reinforcement schedules and their evaluation. Through this unit, learners will gain a comprehensive understanding of animal learning theories and their practical implications in training companion animals.</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance and Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Requirements: Range</p> <p>Companion animals from the range: cat, dog, small mammal, equine, bird.</p>				
<p>Indicative Content</p> <p>LO1: The four learning quadrants; how each shapes animal behaviour through stimuli and consequences; examples of practical application in training and behaviour modification; ethical considerations associated with each quadrant and the effect on animal well-being; how the use of different quadrants can influence emotional states, stress levels, and overall welfare; the balance between aversive techniques and positive reinforcement-based approaches for training companion animals; classical conditioning and its principles, including conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and responses, with examples e.g., associating a clicker sound with receiving a reward; involuntary responses and associations in animals; situations for classical conditioning, relevance in addressing fear, phobias, and anxiety-related behaviours in animals; timing, consistency, and proper implementation; modification of behaviour patterns and new skill development; the limitations and challenges of classical conditioning; monitoring responses and adjusting the conditioning process as needed; instances of unintentional conditioning and its influence on animal behaviour; the negative effects of unintentional conditioning on developing undesirable behaviours; recognising and addressing unintentional conditioning to promote desired behaviours and prevent or modify problematic ones.</p>				

LO2: Positive reinforcement, where desirable stimuli are presented to strengthen desired behaviours, and negative reinforcement, involving the removal of aversive stimuli to reinforce desired behaviours; examples of how reinforcement are applied effectively in companion animal training; the ethical implications of using reinforcement techniques in animal training; potential effects of reinforcement on the emotional well-being and overall welfare of companion animals; the balance between reinforcement-based training methods and other approaches to promote animal welfare; different reinforcement schedules, such as continuous reinforcement and intermittent schedules (fixed ratio, variable ratio, fixed interval, variable interval); how reinforcement schedules influence behaviour acquisition and maintenance; the pros and cons of various reinforcement schedules; appropriate scenarios for using reinforcement schedules; how reinforcement schedules can enhance motivation, engagement, and long-term behaviour changes; selecting the right schedule based on the specific training goals and individual animal characteristics; the gradual decrease and eventual cessation of a behaviour due to the removal of reinforcement; spontaneous recovery as the temporary re-emergence of a previously extinct behaviour; the implications of extinction and spontaneous recovery in companion animal training and behaviour modification.

Learning Outcomes The learner will be able to	Assessment Criteria The learner can
1 Understand the theory of how companion animals learn	1.1 Describe the four quadrants of learning
	1.2 Assess the impact of the four quadrants on companion animal welfare
	1.3 Describe classical conditioning
	1.4 Explain when classical conditioning should be used
	1.5 Assess the practical effects and consequences of classical conditioning on companion animal learning and behaviour
	1.6 Explain how unintentional classical and operant conditioning can create undesirable behaviour
2 Understand reinforcement in animal training	2.1 Describe positive and negative reinforcement in companion animal training
	2.2 Assess the impact of reinforcement on animal welfare
	2.3 Evaluate behaviour reinforcement schedules
	2.4 Identify when reinforcement schedules should be used
	2.5 Describe extinction and spontaneous recovery

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
5	Animal Legislation	100	11	L/650/7618
<p>The Animal Legislation unit provides learners with an understanding of relevant legislation and health and safety considerations when working with companion animals. The learner will develop their understanding of various aspects related to animal legislation, analysing the implications of legislation and regulations on animal welfare, care, and training. The learner will also develop an understanding of specific health and safety legislation, identifying its purpose, scope, and the responsibilities of employers and employees in ensuring a safe working environment. The learner will also explore the consequences of non-compliance with health and safety legislation and the importance of conducting risk assessments. They will gain knowledge on identifying potential risks and hazards when working with companion animals, as well as practical techniques for carrying out risk assessments and minimising risks during animal training sessions.</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance and Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Requirements: Range</p> <p>Companion animals from the range: cat, dog, small mammal, equine, bird.</p>				
<p>Indicative Content</p> <p>LO1: Relevant legislation in relation to companion animals, e.g., Dangerous Dogs Act, Animal Welfare Act; key legislation that applies to the welfare, care, and treatment of companion animals; specific laws and regulations that address issues such as animal cruelty, housing and accommodation, transportation, breeding, and ownership rights; the importance of these laws in promoting the well-being and protection of companion animals; how legislation directly impacts the welfare and quality of life of companion animals; how the enforcement and adherence to legislation contribute to preventing animal abuse, neglect, and exploitation; the role of legislation in setting standards for responsible ownership, proper care, and access to veterinary treatment; the effectiveness of legislation in promoting positive welfare outcomes for companion animals; how legislation influences the practices and procedures related to the care and training of companion animals; requirements and restrictions imposed by legislation on areas such as nutrition, health care, exercise, socialization, and training techniques; shaping responsible and ethical approaches to companion animal care and training; the challenges and considerations that arise when balancing legal requirements with the individual needs and characteristics of different companion animal species.</p>				

LO2: Specific laws and regulations that pertain to the health and safety of individuals working with companion animals, relating to aspects such as workplace safety, risk assessment, hazard management, personal protective equipment (PPE), and emergency procedures; the overarching goals of health and safety legislation in safeguarding the well-being of workers and the animals in their care; how legislation is designed to minimise risks, prevent accidents and injuries, and promote a safe working environment; the scope of the legislation, including its application to different work settings, roles, and activities involving companion animals; the specific responsibilities that employers have in ensuring a safe working environment for employees working with companion animals and the obligations of employees in following safety protocols, using appropriate equipment, and reporting any hazards or incidents; the potential legal and financial consequences that organisations and individuals may face for non-compliance with health and safety legislation; the impact that non-compliance can have on the health and welfare of both employees and companion animals.

LO3: Common risks and hazards associated with working with companion animals, e.g., bites, scratches, zoonotic diseases, environmental dangers, and handling-related incidents; the potential risks specific to different species, breeds, and temperaments of companion animals; conducting risk assessments to identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks and hazards; how risk assessments contribute to the creation of safe working environments, prevention of accidents, and protection of the well-being of both humans and animals; the steps involved in conducting a risk assessment, including identifying hazards, assessing the likelihood and severity of risks, and implementing control measures; considering factors such as the layout of the training area, equipment used, animal behaviour, and potential interactions with humans; strategies for minimizing and controlling risks, e.g., proper handling techniques, using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), implementing safe training methods, and maintaining a clean and organised training environment; the concept of dynamic risk assessments, continuously monitoring and evaluating risks during training sessions; how to adapt and modify control measures as needed to address changing circumstances or unexpected risks that may arise.

Learning Outcomes The learner will be able to	Assessment Criteria The learner can
1 Understand relevant legislation applicable to companion animals	1.1 Describe relevant legislation in relation to companion animals
	1.2 Evaluate the implications of legislation on companion animal welfare
	1.3 Analyse the implications of relevant legislation on companion animal care and training
2 Understand health and safety applicable to companion animals	2.1 Identify relevant health and safety legislation relating to working with companion animals
	2.2 Explain the purpose and scope of health and safety legislation relevant to working with companion animals
	2.3 Describe the responsibilities of employers and employees under the relevant health and safety legislation
	2.4 Explain the consequences of non-compliance with health and safety legislation in relation to working with companion animals
3 Understand the process of risk assessments when working with companion animals	3.1 Identify potential risks and hazards when working with companion animals
	3.2 Evaluate the importance of risk assessments in ensuring health and safety when working with companion animals
	3.3 Describe how to carry out a risk assessment for the animal training environment
	3.4 Describe how to minimise and control the potential risks during an animal training session
	3.5 Explain how to undertake dynamic risk assessments throughout training

Appendix 1: Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidance

3.1 Introduction to Internal Moderation

Internal Moderation is a centre's internal system that ensures learner evidence is complete and genuinely meets all the required criteria by which the learner is judged to have met in order to be awarded a qualification. The process involves regularly sampling and evaluating the centre's assessment practices and decisions, and it is the Internal Moderator's responsibility to act on their findings to ensure consistency and fairness.

Ensuring quality standards are maintained and are consistent within and across a centre's provision is the responsibility of the head of centre, who must ensure that suitable staff are in place to act as Internal Moderator(s) and provide full support and standards scrutiny of the centre's Assessment decisions.

3.2 Internal Moderation Processes

Internal Moderation involves three key processes: co-ordination of the assessment process, standardisation of assessment practice, and sampling of assessed work.

These processes are conducted by one Internal Moderator or, if there is more than one, a team of Internal Moderators who are under the direction of a Lead Internal Moderator.

Information about the experience and qualification requirements for Internal Moderators is provided in the *Qualification Specification*.

3.3. Co-ordination of the Assessment Process

Prior to delivery commencing, it is the Internal Moderator who will confirm that assessment tasks are appropriate. This may involve checking that proposed assessment activities, plans for practical assessments, or the briefs of any assignments or reports are fit for purpose. It may also include checking that internal tests or examination materials are fit for purpose.

In order to ensure that the planned assessment activities and materials are fit for purpose, the Internal Moderator will consider and judge whether the activities and materials provide inclusive opportunities for all learners to meet the assessment objectives and generate evidence which is current, reliable, authentic, valid, able to be evaluated and sufficient to meet the requirements of the qualification.

During delivery of assessment, Internal Moderators will work with the Assessment team, ensuring that assessment practices are being carried out correctly. This may involve observing assessment taking place.

3.4 Standardisation of Assessment

The standardisation process helps to ensure that all centre staff involved in the delivery, assessment and quality assurance are consistent and fair to all learners and interpret and follow the requirements of the qualification in the same way.

Internal Moderators are expected to ensure high levels of consistency across Assessors and centre delivery sites through sharing good practice and providing feedback and support, doing so accurately and in good time. The internal Moderator may highlight areas for further CPD or additional training as necessary.

3.5. Sampling Process

When planning and carrying out internal moderation activities, it is important that the Internal Moderator works to a sound sampling strategy to ensure that standardisation of assessment decisions can take place.

A centre's sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of Assessor's judgements, which will include reviewing learner work.

The learner work may be sampled before the learner has completed the full qualification, for example by sampling one or two assignments, topic areas or units, as the learner completes them.

The Internal Moderator should check that planning and reviewing has taken place and feedback is given to learners by the Assessor. The Internal Moderator will also check and confirm the accuracy of the application of any mark schemes, guidance and overall assessment decisions.

The Internal Moderator will therefore be able to evaluate the quality and consistency of the Assessor's assessment decisions and be able to identify any problems at an early stage. It will highlight individual Assessor training and development needs, which in turn can inform the programme of CPD for the assessment team as a whole.

The Internal Moderator must plan their sampling activities as outlined below.

3.6 Establishing a Sampling Strategy

Sampling should enable the Internal Moderator to evaluate how Assessors have reached their decisions. They must be able to follow documentation which clearly shows that Assessors have checked that the evidence presented meets the rules of evidence.

Evidence must be confirmed by Assessors as '**CRAVES**'

- **Current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **Reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **Authentic:** the work is the learner's own work
- **Valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **Evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner resulting in improvements in knowledge or competency leading to the award
- **Sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.7 Planning Sampling Activities

The Internal Moderator should consider the following when considering the volume of work that they should sample:

- the learners' ethnic origin, age and gender to ensure a representative range of learners are sampled
- the Assessors' experience and qualifications, workload and their occupational competence. For example, if Assessors are qualified and experienced it may not be necessary to look at everything in a learner's portfolio. If Assessors have less than 12 months' experience, are new to the centre or a particular qualification, or perhaps have not assessed for a length of time, the Internal Moderator will need to sample substantially more of their decisions for the first 6 - 12 months
- the full range of assessment methods used for any one qualification, for example observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, assignments, products, RPL, simulation, etc and ensure a good, representative range of assessment evidence is sampled
- previous feedback to Assessors regarding good practice and/or involved highlighting development needs, for example If the Internal Moderator has a particular concern regarding the assessment decisions of a particular Assessor they should focus on increasing the volume of work from that Assessor to continue increased monitoring and evaluation of risk
- whether any changes have been implemented relating to the assessment of the qualification or its units, for example if there have been amendments to the

- qualification specification, or instances where industry practice or legislation has changed
- the range of locations where assessments have taken place
 - the sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as '10%.'

3.8 Producing a Sampling Plan

The Internal Moderator must develop a sampling plan at the beginning of the learner's (or cohort's) programme and record, on the plan, which topic areas/assessment methods they plan to sample, and when.

Copies of sampling plans should be made available to other Internal Moderators and the assessment team, and sampling carried out according to the plan.

Where variations are made, these should be recorded on the plan.

3.9 Completing a Sample Record

The Internal Moderator should record the quality assurance sampling activities on a Sample Record. As a minimum, this record must indicate the Assessor's decision, the content of the sample, the Internal Moderator's decision and relevant feedback to the Assessor.

Where the Internal Moderator agrees with the assessment decisions, certification claims can go ahead.

Where the Internal Moderator does not agree with the assessment decisions, full feedback must be given to the Assessor, with action points agreed which relate to the Assessor's areas for improvement and instructions for how the learner can be supported to produce the required evidence of knowledge and skills.

Sampling must take place before any certification claims are made by the centre and all records, including those of standardisation meetings, feedback to Assessors and CPD activity should be made available to the GA-appointed External Moderator (also referred to as the EQA) upon request.

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