

Access to HE Tutor Handbook

Version 2.1 – 2024-2025



learning your way

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Introduction

Welcome to the Access to HE Tutor handbook.

This guide has been designed to provide you with all you need to know to successfully teach and deliver units on the Access to HE Diplomas at your Centre. Use the handy checklist and download the documents and templates to ensure that you are fully prepared and ready for your students.

Gateway Qualifications also provides FREE training for all approved centres. If there is a topic that you would like to know more about, speak to your Access to HE coordinator and book a training session.

Before starting delivery

Decide on the order of delivery

This can play a crucial role in the success and achievements of your students. You may choose to start with ungraded, study skills units to help build confidence in your students and provide them with the key skills to be successful on an Access to HE Diploma, or you may look to start with introductory academic topics that you will then build on throughout the year.

You might consider delivering the ungraded unit, Promoting Wellbeing and Building Resilience, which prepares students to cope with the pressures they face such as supporting mental health, wellbeing and other social issues such as studying, family life and work.

Assessment schedule for the year

This outlines the units to be delivered, as well as hand-out and hand-in deadlines. This should be shared with students to provide a clear understanding of expectations and workload for the year. Ensure that you give sufficient time at the end of the year for any last marking and internal verification before final moderation, grades being submitted, and exam boards.

Tracking and monitoring

Your organisation may already have internal systems in place to monitor student achievement for the grades awarded for each unit. Make sure that you have access to this. It is also good practice to have a central system in place to track and monitor assessment grades (Grading Standards). This will help to inform internal moderation and standardisation activities.

Review reports

It is good practice to review any moderation reports and actions from last academic year to ensure that you are acting on the feedback from your moderator and improving your provision.

Registration deadlines

Ensure that all students on your Access to HE Diploma are registered within 42 days of them starting the course. This is a QAA requirement. Registrations will be checked at the initial moderation.



After registering students within 42 days, centres have a further 6 weeks to ensure all units are selected and registered. This is also a QAA requirement.

Templates and guidance

A lot of the information to help support you to deliver an Access to HE Diploma can be found on our website, including all the forms and templates that you might need throughout the academic year.

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You will also find guidance on grading, assessment methods and the adaptations you can make, the provider handbook, administration tasks, webinars and much more. Make sure you are familiar with the pages and where to find support.

Home > Centre Support > Quality Assurance > Information for Access to HE Centres

Information for Access to HE Centres

Extensive, free support resources

Most are in the public domain but others are password protected. If you are prompted for a password you should use your current Access username and password. Please contact your Centre's Access to HE Coordinator if you do not know your Centre's password.

We have recently reworked our Access Quality Manual to try and provide more information in the topic groupings below. If you are struggling to find any documents or guidance, please don't hesitate to contact us and ask.

“
Gateway Qualifications is amazing in providing the support needed to their Centres.
”

Blessing Oloruntoba, Vocational Lead, MI ComputSolutions

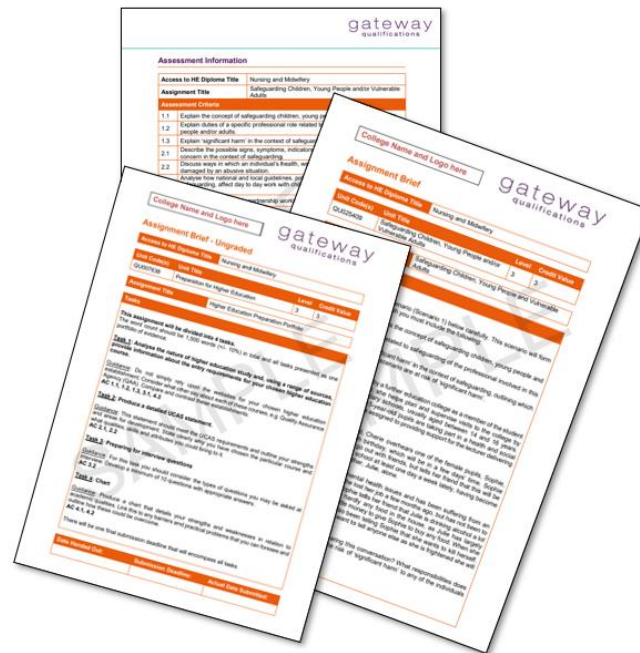
- Access to HE Forms and Templates**
A hub for forms, templates and guidance needed by Access to HE centres
More
- Access to HE Modification Process**
The modification process for making changes to Access to HE Diplomas
More
- Grading**
Information about how the Access to HE Diploma is graded.
More
- Quick Guides**
A series of handy guides covering all the main areas of delivering the Access to HE Diploma.
More

Registration, Awards Recognition of Prior Suspected Malpractice

- **Forms and templates page** - this will provide you with all the templates you might need for various activities this year: [Access to HE Forms and Templates](#)
- **Quick guides page** – this will provide further details on some of the more detailed requirements of running a successful Access to HE Diploma and provide answers to the most commonly asked questions. [Quick Guides](#)
- **Grading page** – this will provide further details on the grading scheme as well as links to a guide and QAA documentation. [Grading For Access Centres](#)

Assignment briefs

There are over 120 assignment briefs that have been written which you are free to use and adapt as you see fit to meet the needs of your students. Speak to your coordinator to get access to the folder where these are stored.



At the beginning of the year you should review the units and assessment methods used last year, reflecting on what worked well and what could be improved. Where appropriate, use the assessment guidance and equivalence tables to choose comparative methods to assess students whilst maintaining the integrity of the diploma. [Link to guidance on our website](#). All assignment briefs must be internally verified before being handed out to students

Creating assignment briefs

Start by downloading the diploma guide from the website and finding the unit specification. This will contain all the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for the unit.

Key definitions:

- **Tasks** are the activities students must complete to meet the assessment criteria and learning outcomes
- The **assignment brief** shows the tasks students must complete, the assessment criteria and grading standards students are being marked against as well as the submission deadline.
- An assignment brief can have multiple tasks.

Grading standards

There are three grading standards for Access to HE units:

- Grading Standard 1: Knowledge and Understanding
- Grading Standard 2: Subject Specific Skills
- Grading Standard 3: Transferable Skills

All three grading standards are used with every graded unit and across every assignment within a graded unit.

- For units with more than one assignment it is not permitted to award grades for each assignment; grading only takes place at unit level
- For units with more than one assignment it is not permitted to use individual assignments to grade individual grading standards
- Decide how to use the grading standards and their components for the unit – understand the rules before you start writing your brief. The choice of sub-components within each grading standard, should be appropriate to cover the range of activities and tasks for the unit.
- Component choices must be consistent across merit and distinction
- The wording of the grading standards must not be altered
- Providing additional guidance or ‘amplification’ to contextualise the wording of the grading standards will help learners to understand what is expected of them to meet the requirements for merit and distinction

For further guidance on how to use the grading standards, visit our dedicated [grading page](#) on our website, to find a handy guide and support.

Numerical marking:

- this is not permitted on any Access to HE Diploma.
- please read our [useful guide](#) to help you understand how to grade units that would traditionally require numerical marking.

Drafts:

- only use if one is specifically identified on the assessment brief. A draft cannot be retrospectively introduced.
- only use a draft where it has been decided in advance that this is appropriate.

Once you have written your assignment briefs, make sure that they are internally verified by a competent practitioner. Briefs must be internally verified, and any actions completed before being handed out to students.

Assignment Brief Checklist

Check List		Completed
1	Accurate diploma and unit details shown	
2	Hand out date clearly identified	
3	Submission date clearly identified	
4	Targeted learning outcomes accurately listed	
5	Targeted assessment criteria accurately listed	
6	Tasks are mapped against the relevant assessment criteria	
7	Assessment methods and volumes are clearly listed and align with the rules of combination in the diploma specification (* see point 8)	
8	*Alternative assessment methods identified via Microsoft Form. Requested changes submitted to Access to HE team and approved by A2HE Quality manager. (only where changes are required).	
9	Tasks are appropriate and enable the targeted criteria to be met in full	
10	Clear, contextualised guidance is provided for the learner on how to complete the tasks	
11	It is clear what evidence the learner needs to generate	
Grading Standards		Completed
12	All 3 grading standards listed on the brief	
13	Grading standard 1 & 2: a minimum of 2 sub-components have been selected from component (b)	
14	Grading standard 3: have 2 components been selected (a, b, c)	
15	Grading standard 3: where component (a) and/or (b) have been used a minimum of 2 sub-components are selected	
16	The choice of components and sub-components are appropriate for the tasks	
17	Contextualised guidance on how to meet the grading standards is provided	
18	The language and presentation is appropriate and inclusive	
19	There is an appropriate timescale set for the assignment	

Submission, resubmission and referral

Students should hand work in by the deadline set.

Submission:

- This is the first submission date.
- If a student has a legitimate reason for a late hand-in, an extension must be applied for and granted by the tutor. A new submission date must be set, and the student should hand work in by this date.
- A student who has an extension in place and hands their work in by the new deadline **MUST NOT** have their work capped at Pass – it must be assessed and graded as usual if all assessment criteria have been met.
- Where work is submitted after the deadline, no extension has been granted, and no extenuating circumstances have been met, all grade indicators for that unit must be capped at pass. If the unit is assessed using more than one assignment, if just one of the assignments is submitted late, the grade indicators for the whole unit are capped at a pass.
- Where an assignment is submitted after the deadline without an extension being granted and the work does not meet the learning outcomes, there is no opportunity for resubmission, and the referral process would need to be followed.

Resubmission:

- If a student submits work on time but one or more learning outcomes have not been achieved, a second deadline is set to address the assessment criteria and learning outcomes not achieved.
- A student who was granted an extension to the first submission may also be given a resubmission for the assessment criteria not met. However, the resubmission date may need to be extended as a result of the extension to the first submission deadline.
- The first submission should be marked but not graded. The student should receive feedback on which learning outcomes and assessment criteria are not met and what needs to be resubmitted. Completed resubmissions can be awarded a grade if handed in by the set resubmission deadline on the assignment brief.
- The resubmission should only be for the learning outcomes not met, it is not permitted for a student to revise or update assessment criteria already met.
- If, after the resubmission, the student's work still does not meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria, a third attempt may still be able to achieve the assessment with the request of a referral.

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Referral:

A referral is a moderator-approved additional attempt to complete an assessment. A referral can only be granted if:

- A student originally handed in work on time and resubmitted but has still not met all the assessment criteria and learning outcomes.
- A student with a legitimate extension to a submission deadline, but failed to meet the assessment criteria and learning outcomes on submission and resubmission.
- A student whose original submission was late without an agreed extension and has not met all the assessment criteria and learning outcomes. In this situation, the student will not be granted a resubmission and will go straight to the referral process.
- Students may be granted up to 15 credits in referred work.
- If a referred submission is successful and all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are achieved and confirmed, approval can be given for the award of credit. Where there have been no previous late submissions for the unit, grading can take place, and the unit grade is not capped.
- If the referred submission is successful but results from a late submission without an agreed extension or extenuating circumstances, the unit grade will be capped at pass.
- If a referred submission is unsuccessful, where all learning outcomes and assessment criteria have not been met, no credits or grades for the unit can be awarded.

Calculating the final unit grade

Once the grades for each grading standard has been determined a grade profile can be created and used to find the final unit grade.

Grades awarded		
GS1	GS2	GS3
M	P	M

To create the Grade Profile, the grades are placed in order, from lowest to highest:

Grade Profile		
P	M	M

The final grade for the unit is arrived at by establishing the midpoint of grades in the unit grade profile.

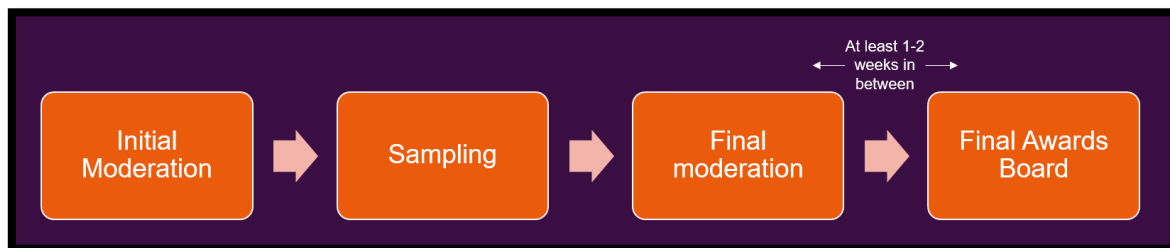
Grade Profile			Unit Grade
P	M	M	M

Using the table below, a student who has been awarded, for example, two pass grade indicators and one distinction indicator, irrespective of which grading standard each of these indicators is attached to, will be awarded a unit grade of pass; a student who has been awarded, for example, two distinction grade indicators and one pass indicator, irrespective of which grading standard each of these indicators is attached to, will be awarded a unit grade of distinction.

Unit Grade Profiles			Unit Grade
P	P	P	P
P	P	M	P
P	P	D	P
P	M	M	M
P	M	D	M
M	M	M	M
M	M	D	M
P	D	D	D
M	D	D	D
D	D	D	D

Moderation activities

Moderators will contact the Access to HE Coordinator to arrange initial moderation activities. Our moderators are allocated a maximum of three diplomas at a centre, meaning larger centres offering a range of diplomas will have more than one moderator. They are closely aligned with diplomas in their subject specialism and complete all moderation duties within the centre.



Initial Moderation

Use [our checklist](#) to help gather all relevant documentation. The initial moderation will take place within 12 weeks of the start of the course, and once all registrations have been made.

Sampling

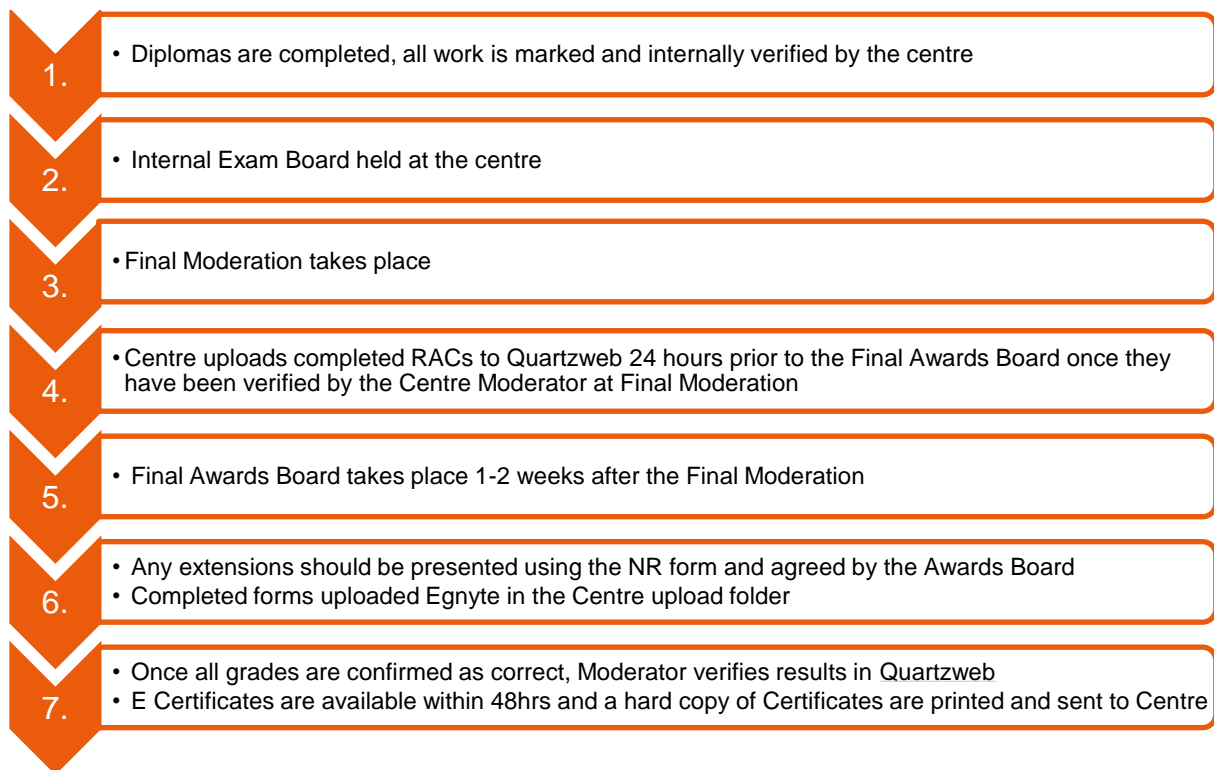
For Access to HE Diplomas with September / October start dates, sampling will take place between January and February. Samples will have been agreed for each diploma at initial moderation. The expectation is that all graded units, available at this point of the year, for each Diploma, are moderated to check for consistency and that standards are adhered to. Where multiple tutors are delivering a unit, the moderator will be required to sample learner work from each tutor.

Sampling may take place either onsite or electronically. For electronic moderation please ensure that all agreed samples are uploaded to Gateway Qualifications Egnyte file storage system, or that your designated moderator has access to your centre's online system, to review learners' work.

Final Moderation and Final Awards Board

A second round of sampling will take place towards the end of the course to cover units not already reviewed.

Below provides an outline of the key end of year activities that all centres need to prepare for, in order to award and certificate all Access to HE students in a timely manner.



Further details about these activities can be found in the [provider handbook](#) on our website.

Celebrating students and tutors

Each year, Gateway Qualifications proudly represents Access to HE students at the Keith Fletcher Memorial Prize. Tutors and centres nominate their students at the end of the academic year. These nominations are then evaluated, with one student put forward for each of the categories to the national awards; Outstanding Academic Achievement and Outstanding Commitment to Study – these two students each receive a congratulatory £100 voucher from Gateway Qualifications.

Gateway Qualifications also holds an annual tutors award, where students vote for their tutors, highlighting the real impact and support that their tutors provide during their Access to HE Diploma.

Check list for successful delivery

Use the checklist below to help you prepare for key activities throughout the year.

Activities		Yes/No
1.	I have copies of all internal verification documents and templates that I need	
2.	I have the diploma guide and/or the unit specifications for the units I am delivering	
3.	I have reviewed the units and assessment methods for the units I am delivering	
4.	For the units I am delivering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) assessment methods and grading standard components have been reviewed b) assignment briefs have been written c) assignment briefs have been internally verified d) actions and issues from internal verification have been resolved 	
5.	I have downloaded the assignment briefs and support materials (where available) to help me deliver the units I am delivering	
6.	I have set an assessment schedule for the units I am delivering and shared these dates with students	
7.	I have a tracking system to use, to record assessment grades (grading standards) and unit grades as well as resubmissions and referrals	
8.	I know who the moderator is and when they will conduct their moderation activities	
9.	I have a clear plan of which students will have their work internally verified and when this will take place	
10.	I understand the rules around submission, resubmission and referrals	
11.	I understand how to calculate the final unit grade	
12.	I have booked to attend standardisation sessions in my subject area	
13.	I have nominated students for the Keith Fletcher Awards	

Contact details

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this handbook and/or have a related query, please contact the Access to HE quality support team by:

Telephone: 01206 911 211

Email: access@gatewayqualifications.org.uk

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