

Command Words and Assessment Task Design Guidance

1.0

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learning your way

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Introduction

This guidance document supports assessors and those involved in assessment development to select command words that elicit the intended evidence of learning at the appropriate level of demand for the qualification. The guidance also provides a structured process to ensure that command word selection is aligned with the wider design of assessment task, so that the overall evidence produced is at the appropriate level of demand and complexity.

In this document, the term 'assessment task' refers to any activity or question used to generate evidence of learner performance. 'Themes' describe the type of evidence. 'RQF levels' describe the complexity of that evidence. A theme does not imply a level.

For qualifications regulated by Ofqual, this guidance aligns assessment task expectations with the knowledge and skills descriptors in the RQF level descriptors. For non-regulated qualifications, the same principles should be applied to maintain consistency in command word use and progression across levels.

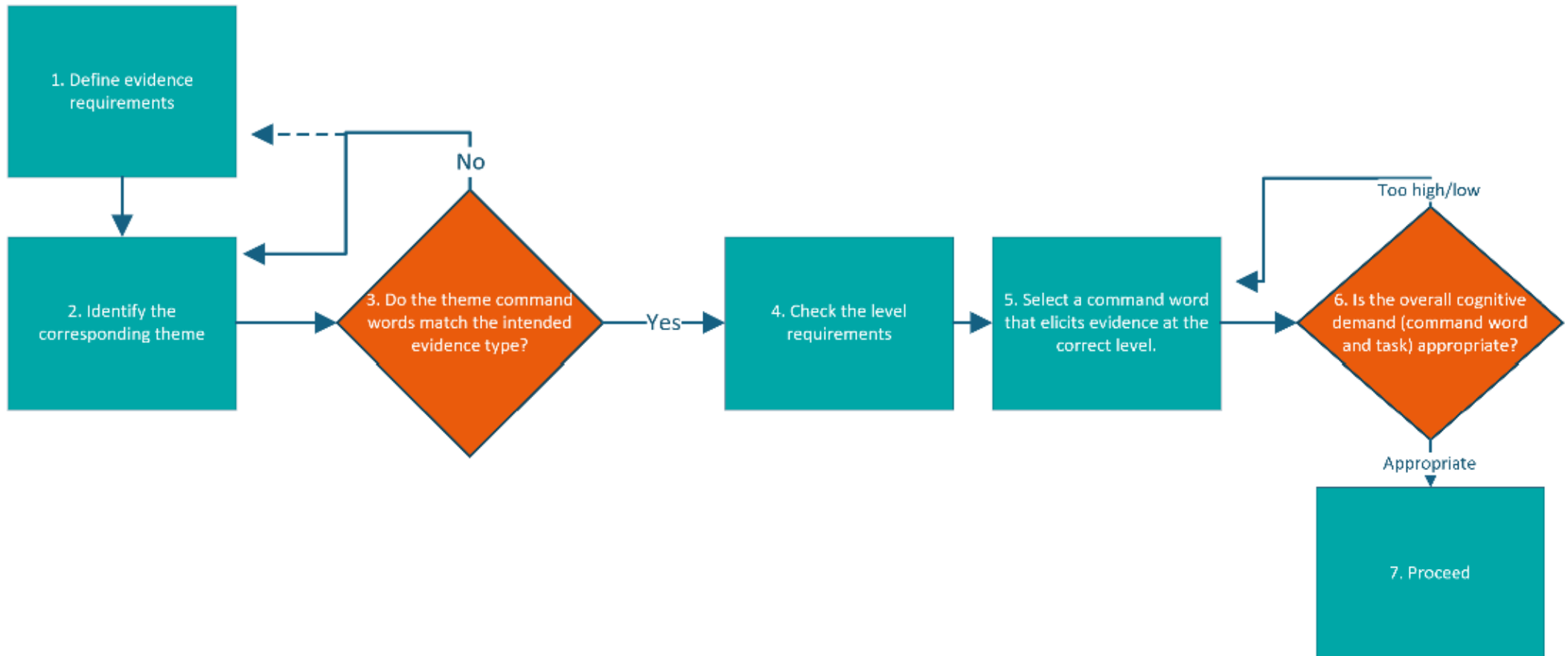
To support clarity, this document uses internally developed cognitive themes (e.g. Communication & Expression) to group assessment command words by types of thinking or actions they require from the learner. By mapping internal themes against level expectations, this guidance enables assessors and those involved in assessment development to:

- identify the type of evidence required (theme)
- determine the appropriate level of demand (level descriptors)
- select an appropriate assessment command word to elicit the correct evidence

This approach avoids prescribing specific command words to levels, and ensures that the overall assessment task design (not solely the command word) determines the level of demand.

However, it is important to remember that some assessment command words have specific cognitive processes attached to their meaning. Although the command word alone does not determine the overall level of complexity of an assessment task, its use can imply a higher or lower level of thinking or response. Therefore, command words must be used carefully to avoid unintentionally changing the cognitive demand of an assessment ta

Selecting command words and aligning assessment tasks (process)



Step 1 - Define evidence requirements

At this stage it is important to be clear what observable learner performance you need your assessment task to provide evidence of. For example: understanding of knowledge, practical demonstration of skills, communication of information.

Step 2 - Identify the corresponding theme

Once you know what type of evidence you need to elicit, you should then choose a corresponding theme from the assessment command words document. Themes group common assessment command words according to the type of actions learners must perform, which in turn shapes the type of evidence generated:

Theme	Type of actions	Typical evidence
Communication & Expression	Interacting with others, or expressing ideas and information	discussion, oral and written responses
Thinking, Understanding & Reasoning	Processing information to demonstrate understanding, logical thinking or judgment	identification, explanation, analysis, evaluation
Creation & Production	Creating, assembling or improving something by combining parts or ideas	design and planning, creation, assembly
Operational & Practical	Carrying out tasks, following procedures or taking practical steps to achieve an outcome	demonstrations, practical tasks
Numeracy & Data Processing	Working with numbers, measurements or numerical information to interpret, find an answer or solve problems	numerical problem solving, measurement, use of graphs/tables, interpretation of data
Technical	Performing subject-specific (or specialist) actions to complete a task	use of specialist tools/equipment and procedures, applied technical skills

See Appendix 1 - Assessment Command Words, Definitions and Evidence Themes

Step 3 - Review the command words in the selected theme and consider if the actions they require align with the type of evidence you need learners to demonstrate.

- If they do, then proceed to the next step.
- If they do not, this suggests that there is a mismatch between the type of evidence you wish to elicit and the types of actions the command words in this theme typically require. In this case you should revisit your theme choice and select a more closely aligned theme. This may require returning to Step 1 to refine your understanding of the evidence needed, or returning to Step 2 to select a more suitable theme that better reflects the nature of the learner performance you wish to capture.

See Appendix 1 - Assessment Command Words, Definitions and Evidence Themes

Step 4 - Check the level requirements

You should now consider what the expected learner response should look like at the intended level of demand. It is recommended that you use Ofqual's RQF level descriptors in conjunction with the guidance given for each theme. This supports you to judge how complex an assessment task should be, as well as understand how much learner independence and precision is appropriate. Please note, although the RQF level descriptors separate knowledge and skills descriptors, the process of responding to an assessment item often blends between these elements. Cognitive demand should be judged holistically.

See Appendix 2 – Typical Learner Actions by Theme Across Levels of Demand

Step 5 - Select a command word from the chosen theme that elicits evidence at the correct level

Once you have identified the appropriate theme and considered the level-appropriate requirements for the evidence, you should now choose a specific command word from within that theme. The selected command word must align with both:

- **the intended evidence type**, and
- **the level-appropriate complexity of that evidence**.

At this stage, your task is to determine which command word most accurately reflects the level of cognitive demand, independence, detail, or precision required. For example, within the theme Thinking, Understanding & Reasoning, command words such as *identify*, *describe*, *explain*, or *analyse* typically represent increasingly complex forms of evidence. Choosing the correct command word ensures that the assessment task prompts learners to demonstrate the intended performance in a way that is fully aligned with the qualification level.

When making your selection, you should consider the following:

- **What action must the learner perform to provide the required evidence?** (e.g., name/identify for recall, describe for detail, explain for cause/why, analyse for a breakdown of information).
- **Within the theme, which command word best matches the required level of demand?** You should choose the least demanding command word that still elicits sufficient evidence to demonstrate the intended assessment outcome.

Step 6 - Check the overall cognitive demand

the cognitive demand of an assessment task is determined not only by the command word selected, but also by how the task is worded and how the response format is structured. You should therefore review the interaction between the command word, task wording and response structure to ensure that the intended level of demand is maintained.

Command Word Alignment:

- Does the command word accurately match the type of evidence required?
- Does the command word retain its intended meaning within the context of the task wording?
- Does it imply cognitive processes (e.g. reasoning, comparison) that the task actually requires learners to demonstrate?

Task Wording:

- Is the task phrased in a way that maintains the intended level of complexity?
- Are there any additional words/phrases that could unintentionally raise or lower demand?
- Does the task wording support (rather than distort) the meaning of the command word?

Response Structure:

- Does the response format allow learners to demonstrate the required action? (e.g. a table layout may limit explanation; long prose boxes may be unnecessary for simple 'identify/name' responses)
- Does the layout avoid forcing a different cognitive process? (e.g. bullet points implying a listing response)
- Does the response format broadly match the intended level of demand? (e.g. short spaces for identify/describe, extended spaces for analyse/evaluate).

Overall coherence:

- Does the combination of command word + task wording + response structure elicit one clear type of evidence?
- Could two assessors independently identify the same evidence required for a valid response?
- Does the task avoid drift into another level of demand (e.g. explain vs. evaluate, identify vs. analyse)

If all three elements (command word, task wording and response structure) align to the same evidence type and level of demand, then the assessment task is likely to elicit the intended response.

Common pitfalls and how to avoid them

The following examples illustrate common ways in which the cognitive demand of an assessment task can unintentionally change during its design, along with suggested revisions to maintain alignment between the command word and the intended evidence.

Shift in cognitive demand caused by using multiple command words in one instruction.

For example:

- **Evidence requirement:** Learners must show understanding of each stage in a given process.
- **Chosen command word:** Describe (say what something is like using words or examples to make it clear)
- **Task wording:** “Describe the process and explain each stage”
- **Issue:** Inclusion of ‘explain’ introduced an additional requirement beyond description. This changes expected evidence from describing what happens at each stage to learners also potentially explaining why/how it happens. This demands more complex cognitive processes.
- **Suggested revision:** “Describe the stages of the process”

Shift in command word meaning to another caused by task wording.

For example:

- **Evidence requirement:** Learners need to demonstrate understanding of the given sales data
- **Chosen command word:** Analyse (look at something in detail to understand its aspects/patterns/meaning)
- **Task wording:** “Analyse the sales data and decide which product should receive further promotion”
- **Issue:** The phrase “decide which product should receive further promotion” requires the learner to evaluate (look at something carefully, think about the different points (or sides), and make an informed conclusion). The introduction of this evaluative requirement changes the focus of evidence from analysing patterns in data to making a judgement, which was not part of the original evidence requirement.
- **Suggested revision:** “Analyse the sales data, focusing on patterns in product performance”
 - If the intention is to also require learners to make a decision, then this is best phrased as a separate instruction using an appropriate command word, for example;
 - 1) Analyse the sales data, focusing on patterns in product performance
 - 2) Evaluate which product should receive further promotion

Misalignment of a command word to intended evidence caused by selecting a command word that implies a higher level of thinking/action that the item does not require.

For example:

- **Evidence requirement:** Learners must select which materials they should use from a given list in order to complete a project.
- **Chosen command word:** Assess (Look at something carefully, think about the different points (or sides), and make an informed conclusion)
- **Task wording:** “Assess which materials from the list you need to use for the project”
- **Issue:** If the intention of the assessment task is for learners to demonstrate that they can select suitable materials for a scenario, then using ‘assess’ implies that they should be doing more than that. This introduces a need for reasoning, i.e. why they believe those materials are suitable and others are not.
- **Suggested revision:** “Choose the materials you will need to use for the project from the list provided”.

Lowering of demand in an assessment task caused by adding scaffolding.

For example:

- **Evidence requirement:** Learners must show an understanding of the importance of recycling.
- **Chosen command word:** Explain (Provide further information (for example, details) to make something clear and understood by others)
- **Task wording:** “Explain why recycling is important, giving three reasons”
- **Issue:** Inclusion of the scaffold in this manner may encourage learners to produce three discrete points rather than a coherent explanatory account.
- **Suggested revision:** “Explain why recycling is important”.
 - If the intention is to assess how many different reasons the learner is aware of (breadth of knowledge rather than depth of explanation), a lower-order command word may be more appropriate, e.g. “Give three reasons why recycling is important”.

Appendix 1 - Assessment Command Words, Definitions and Evidence Themes

The tables below show common assessment command words, grouped into themes based on the type of evidence they elicit. These themes are divided into two sections: 'Core' command words, and 'Technical' command words. Core command words are used across a wide range of subjects and contexts. Technical command words describe subject-specific or specialist actions, typically found in assessments for technical qualifications (for example, Bricklaying).

Core Command Words

Communication & Expression

These command words describe actions where learners need to interact with others to share ideas or information.

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Agree		Reach a shared decision together after discussion
Annotate		Add notes to something to show or explain features or ideas
Comment	Express, Discuss	Give your thoughts about something
Communicate	Interact, Convey, Greet	Talk, or share information with another person
Contribute	Participate, Take part, Engage, Share	Be involved in the activity, and add your ideas (or support)
Reference		State where you obtained information from
Request		Ask for something
Respond	Answer	Reply to a question, request or situation
Write	Record, Report	Put information down so it can be shared with others

Thinking, Understanding & Reasoning

These command words describe actions where learners process information or ideas in order to show understanding.

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Analyse	Explore, Investigate, Research	Look at something in detail to understand its aspects, patterns or meaning
Apply		Use something you know (information, a method, a rule, an idea) in order to complete a task or solve a problem
Check	Ensure, Confirm, Acknowledge	Look at something to make sure it is correct or understood
Choose	Select	Pick something from a list or group
Compare		Say what is the same and (or) what is different between things
Connect	Link, Relate	Show how things go together
Describe	Illustrate	Say what something is like, using words or examples to make it clear
Differentiate	Distinguish	Say how things are different from each other
Evaluate	Assess, Judge, Consider, Reflect	Look at something carefully, think about the different points (or sides), and make an informed conclusion
Explain	Clarify	Provide further information (for example, details) to make something clear and understood by others
Extrapolate		Use the information you have to predict (or estimate) what might happen next
Identify	Recognise, Point	Pick out the information (or detail, object) that is needed
Interpret	Draw conclusions, Diagnose	Look at information and work out what it means
Justify		Give reasons or evidence to support a decision (or action)
Name	State, Label, Define, List, Recall	Give the correct word(s) or information for the item (or person, feature, idea)
Observe		Look closely at something to notice details
Order	Sort	Arrange things by following a rule (for example, smallest to largest)

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Organise	Classify, Categorise	Arrange things into groups based on their features
Outline	Summarise	Give the main points about something
Predict		Say what you think will happen in the future based on information or patterns
Review	Establish	Examine information to understand it better, confirm or clarify its meaning
Suggest	Propose, Recommend	Put forward an idea, option or solution

Creation & Production

These command words describe actions where learners make something, put parts or ideas together, or change something to improve it.

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Amend	Edit, Adjust, Refine, Improve	Make a change to something to improve or correct it
Combine	Collate, Compile, Incorporate	Bring different things together
Customise		Change something to suit a given need, want or requirement
Make	Build, Assemble, Construct, Create, Produce, Form, Generate, Develop	Put things (parts or ideas) together to generate what the task asks for
Plan	Design, Devise, Coordinate, Draft	Create (or set out) how something will work or what it will look like

Operational & Practical

These command words describe actions where learners carry out tasks, follow instructions, or take practical steps to achieve an outcome.

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Carry out	Conduct, Undertake, Implement, Complete, Process	Do the task, following any steps or instructions
Collect	Gather, Obtain, Source	Get information (or items) from different places
Deal	Address, Handle	Take action to manage (or solve) a problem or a task
Demonstrate	Show, Indicate	Do (or point out) something so that others can see your thinking or how it works
Distribute	Dispatch, Allocate, Send	Give out (or send) items, tasks or resources to the right people or places
Enable		Provide what is needed to complete a task or action
Find	Locate, Extract	Look for and get the information, detail or object required.
Follow		Do what the instructions tell you to do (in the way or order they say)
Help	Assist, Support, Encourage, Facilitate	Enable someone to do something by giving them what they need
Listen		Pay attention to what someone is saying so you can understand it
Mark		Make clear lines, points or signs to show where something will go
Prepare	Set up, Configure	Get equipment or software ready so it works the way you need it to.
Read		Look at texts or symbols and understand their meaning
Remove	Delete, Dispose	Take something away so it is not there anymore
Restore	Reinstate	Put something back the way it was before
Store	Put, Place, Position	Move (or place) something in a particular position or location

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Use	Access	Do something with information, a tool or a resource

Numeracy & Data Processing

These command words describe actions where learners work with numbers, measurements or numerical information to find answers or solve problems.

Command word	Related Command Words	Meaning
Add	Total	Put numbers or values together to find the full amount
Calculate		Use a formula, rule or operation to work out a numerical answer
Convert		Change a value into a different unit or form
Count		Find how many items are in a group
Divide		Separate something into equal parts
Estimate	Approximate	Give a close (but not exact) number or amount
Measure		Find the size, length, height, weight or amount of something
Multiply		Find a total by adding the same number again and again
Round		Change a number to the nearest whole number or value
Solve	Work out	Find the answer
Subtract		Take one number away from another
Translate		Move a shape (or point) to a new place

Technical Command Words

The example contexts shown below are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent a complete list of qualifications or subject areas in which the associated command words may appear in assessments.

Command word	Example Contexts	Meaning
Apply	Painting & Decorating, Construction, Bricklaying	Put a material or substance onto a surface (for example, paint or mortar)
Backup	Digital Accounting, IT & Computing	Create a copy of data, files or information so it can be restored if needed
Balance	Book-keeping, Accounting	Ensure the totals of debits and credits in an account are equal
Change Control	Digital Accounting, IT & Computing	Manage and record changes so they are reviewed, approved or applied correctly
Charge	Carpentry, Construction	Ensure a tool has power by connecting it to a mains supply or battery
Clean	Painting & Decorating, Construction, Carpentry	Remove dirt or unwanted material from something
Cut	Carpentry	Trim an item to the size or shape needed
Deploy	Leadership & Management	Put something (tool, method, system, resource) into operation in order to complete a task
Disassemble	Construction	Take something (such as a system or component) apart
Draw	Art & Design, Digital Graphics	Show something using a picture, diagram or other visuals
Drill	Carpentry, Construction	Use a tool to make a hole in material
Export	IT & Computing, Digital Graphics	Save (or output) your work in the file format needed for the task
Fit	Construction	Position (or fix) a part according to given instructions, measurements or requirements
Input	Digital Accounting, IT & Computing	Enter data into the correct place using software
Install	Construction	Put materials (or equipment) into place
Line in	Bricklaying	Position bricks or blocks so they are in an accurate line, straight and level.

Command word	Example Contexts	Meaning
Maintain	Construction, Painting & Decorating	Keep something in good working order
Manage	Leadership & Management	Be responsible for carrying out a task (or process) properly
Monitor	Leadership & Management	Watch something over time (progress, performance, behaviour)
Output	Digital Accounting, IT & Computing, Digital Graphics	Generate (or display) information from a system in a certain format
Plane	Carpentry, Construction	Smooth or remove thin layers from the surface of wood
Protect	Painting & Decorating, Construction, Carpentry	Take action to prevent damage or harm to something
Reclaim	Painting & Decorating, Construction, Carpentry	Collect (or recover) unused materials so they can be reused or disposed of
Render	IT & Computing, Digital Graphics	Use a computer program to make a picture or scene using digital shapes, colours or models
Reshape	Digital Graphics	Change the shape, outline or design of something using a tool
Return	Bricklaying	Build a section of a wall that changes direction (such as a corner)
Roll	Bricklaying	Smooth (or shape) a mortar joint using a tool
Sand	Carpentry	Smooth a surface to remove roughness, marks or uneven areas
Saw	Carpentry	Make a cut to wood or another material using a tool
Screw	Construction	Join (or secure) materials by driving screws into them using tools

Command word	Example Contexts	Meaning
Secure	Painting & Decorating, Carpentry,	Fasten (or fix) something firmly into place so it does not move
Set out	Bricklaying, Construction	Mark the positions, lines and levels needed to build something using measurements and guides
Shape	Carpentry	Form a material (such as wood) into the required outline or design using tools
Spread	Bricklaying	Apply and distribute mortar evenly over a surface using a tool
Square	Construction	Set or adjust materials to ensure they are at a right angle (90 degrees).
Style	Hairdressing	Arrange hair into a finished look
Supervise	Leadership & Management	Watch over the work of others to check it is carried out correctly
Test	IT & Computing	Run a program (or code) to see if it works as you expect it to
Transfer	Book-keeping, Accounting	Move money (or information) from one account to another
Write off	Book-keeping, Accounting	Cancel something because it cannot be used, fixed or paid anymore

Appendix 2 – Typical Learner Actions by Theme Across Levels of Demand

The following table presents the typical characterises of learner actions within each theme area, aligned with Ofqual’s RQF level descriptors. It is intended to illustrate the relative complexity expected of assessment tasks at each level. Please note, the examples are indicative rather than exhaustive and do not represent every valid action or behaviour that a learner might demonstrate within each theme area.

Ofqual’s RQF Level Descriptors							
	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2	L3	L4
Knowledge	Progresses along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of knowledge and/or understanding that relate to the subject or immediate environment.	Has basic knowledge or understanding of a subject and/or can carry out simple, familiar tasks; and Knows the steps needed to complete simple activities.	Has basic knowledge and understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts; and Knows and understands the steps needed to complete structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts.	Has basic factual knowledge of a subject and/or knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined routine tasks and address simple problems; and Is aware of aspects of information relevant to the area of study or work.	Has knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures and ideas in an area of study or field of work to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. Can interpret relevant information and ideas. Is aware of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work.	Has 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. Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. Is aware of the nature of the area of study	Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the

						or work. Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.	area of study or work. Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.
Skills	Progress along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of skills that relate to the subject or the immediate environment.	Carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities. Follow instructions or use rehearsed steps to complete tasks and activities.	Carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts. Be aware of the consequences of actions for self and others.	Use basic cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined routine tasks and procedures. Select and use relevant information. Identify whether actions have been effective.	Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems. Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions. Identify how effective actions have been.	Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. Use appropriate investigation to inform actions. Review how effective methods and actions have been.	Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined. Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.

Theme Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks							
	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2	L3	L4
Communication & Expression	<p>Giving very short, highly supported responses</p> <p>Relying heavily on prompts/visual cues</p> <p>Referring only to immediate or concrete information in the present tense.</p>	<p>Giving simple information in short statements in</p> <p>Communicates in past and present tense</p> <p>Working in familiar, highly structured situations</p> <p>Responding to direct questions</p>	<p>Giving simple, connected statements</p> <p>Using increasing detail</p> <p>Communicating in past, present, future tenses</p> <p>Communicating within structured task stages in familiar contexts</p>	<p>Presenting information for well-defined or routine tasks</p> <p>Selecting relevant details</p> <p>Communicating clearly in familiar contexts</p>	<p>Producing structured communication in response to a given situation</p> <p>Conveying key points</p> <p>Adapting tone or form for purpose</p>	<p>Presenting viewpoints or information in a structured form</p> <p>Bringing together points from different sources</p> <p>Communicating coherently in less-defined tasks, organising ideas logically</p>	<p>Responding with extended, well-developed viewpoints</p> <p>Considering multiple perspectives</p> <p>Communicating clearly in complex or non-routine contexts</p>
Illustrative examples (Communication & Expression)	<p>E1 – “Here are some pictures of hobbies people enjoy. Tell me your hobby.”</p> <p>L1 – “Write a short paragraph to describe your hobby for a class noticeboard. Include what your hobby is and why you enjoy it.”</p> <p>L4 – Learner is required to compose a formal written report synthesising different viewpoints about how the organisation should respond to a recurring customer complaint. Include perspectives from customers, staff and management.</p>						
Thinking, Understanding & Reasoning	Recognising / naming very simple information,	Identifying relevant, obvious information	Identifying relevant information within short	Describing straightforward information, ideas or	Interpreting information from texts, data,	Analysing information from multiple sources	Evaluating complex information

Theme								Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks											
	objects or features from a limited set of options	Choosing between simple options based on observations or characteristics	texts, diagrams or instructions	processes using relevant details or examples	diagrams, scenarios	Identifying patterns, relationships or causes	Synthesises multiple perspectives	Responding to prompts or direct questions about familiar information.	Making basic connections (grouping or organising items) according to shared features	Comparing items, ideas or situations to show simple similarities or differences	Explaining simple reasons or causes based on provided information	Explaining relationships between information, ideas, processes	Evaluating options, viewpoints, explanation using available evidence.	Making reasoned judgements or predictions based on evidence	Selecting the correct item or response when prompted (or shown examples)	Explaining basic relationships within familiar contexts	Comparing information with clear similarities and differences	Drawing simple conclusions using available evidence	Explaining implications of decisions
Illustrative examples (Thinking, Understanding & Reasoning)	<p>E1 – “Here are pictures of three animals: a dog, a fish and a bird. Choose the animal that can fly.”</p> <p>L1 – “Look at the diagram showing the water cycle. Describe what happens during the evaporation stage.”</p> <p>L4 - Learner is presented with a case study about two proposals to reduce traffic in the town centre. Accompanying quantitative and qualitative data is provided for each option. Learner is required to evaluate the options and justify which option should be taken to reduce town centre traffic effectively, using evidence.</p>																		
Creation & Production	Producing very simple outputs through single-step or highly	Producing simple, familiar outputs using short	Producing simple outputs for well-defined, routine tasks	Producing outputs to meet straightforward, but less	Producing structured outputs that meet straightforward	Producing more developed products, designs or	Producing technically competent and well-developed outputs to												

Theme								Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks									
	structured tasks	rehearsed sequences	following structured steps	scaffolded requirements	, but less scaffolded requirements	plans that bring together information from different sources	meet complex or non-routine requirements										
	Copying or assembling basic components using direct instruction or visual guidance	Selecting from a limited set of materials, tools, ideas Making small changes when prompted (e.g. add one feature)	Combining basic materials or components to meet a defined requirement Making basic adjustments or improvements using instructions / guidance	Selecting and using basic materials, tools, ideas with some independence Making straightforward improvements to meet clear requirements / criteria	Adapting materials, tools, ideas to suit the purpose of the task Making improvements or modifications based on interesting task requirements or from given feedback	Selecting and applying appropriate techniques or processes to produce more complex or non-routine outputs Refining work by evaluating options and choosing suitable approaches	Integrating multiple ideas, techniques or components to create purposeful solutions Reviewing and refining work through analysis, testing or evaluation, and justifying decisions made during the creation process.										
Illustrative examples (Creation & Production)	<p>E1 - Learner shown a visual instruction of how to place three shapes together to make a simple model. "Use the shapes to copy the model in the picture."</p> <p>L1 – Learner is given a short scenario. "Create a poster to advertise the fair, using one image from the folder to help make it appealing to children."</p> <p>L4 - Learner is required to create a prototype to address a complex problem. To do this they need to gather information about different methods/components that could be used and show they have refined the prototype based on testing and feedback.</p>																

Theme	Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks						
<p>Operational & Practical</p>	<p>Carrying out very simple, single-step actions when shown or directly prompted</p> <p>Following highly supported instructions</p> <p>Using everyday objects or tools in very familiar and obvious ways</p>	<p>Following short, rehearsed sequences of steps to complete familiar and predictable practical tasks.</p> <p>Using basic tools, equipment or materials with guidance.</p>	<p>Carrying out structured practical tasks in familiar contexts using a clear sequence of steps with reduced prompting</p> <p>Demonstrating awareness of basic consequences of practical actions (e.g. handling equipment safely)</p>	<p>Carrying out well-defined, routine tasks using basic tools and equipment with some independence in an appropriate way</p> <p>Selecting and using simple methods, tools and resources to complete tasks with some guidance</p> <p>Checking whether actions or outcomes have been completed correctly based on given guidance</p>	<p>Carrying out well-defined but less routine practical tasks</p> <p>Selecting appropriate tools, methods with some independence.</p> <p>Selecting, and preparing the resources required for a task.</p> <p>Adjusting actions to address straightforward practical problems.</p>	<p>Carrying out more complex, or non-routine practical tasks</p> <p>Choosing the most suitable methods, tools, procedures when multiple options available</p> <p>Investigating or testing different approaches to inform practical decisions with some autonomy</p> <p>Reviewing the effectiveness of actions and adjusting the approach based on results</p>	<p>Manging and carrying out complex or non-routine practical tasks</p> <p>Adapting approaches to meet specific requirements</p> <p>Integrating multiple tools, resources or processes</p> <p>Reviewing outcomes and justifying the effectiveness and suitability of methods, resources or tools used.</p>
<p>Illustrative examples</p>	<p>E1 - Tutor demonstrates how to carry out a simple, single-step task (e.g. attach a USB cable into the correct socket). The learner is asked to repeat the process, attaching the same cable to the same port.</p>						

Theme Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks							
(Operational & Practical)	<p>L1 - Learner is asked to set up a basic workstation for an activity to take place following an instruction sheet. Once set up, the learner compares their workstation with a checklist to make sure all items are present and positioned as required.</p> <p>L4 - Learner is required to plan, prepare and carry out the set-up of a multi-station workshop. This includes gathering information about equipment, materials, room layout requirements, locating the necessary resources, and setting up each workstation according to the plan. After completing the set-up, they review how effective it was and explains why the decisions made during the process were appropriate and how adaptations could be made to be more effective.</p>						
Numeracy & Data Processing	<p>Recognising very simple numbers, shapes, basic measurements</p> <p>Carrying out single-step tasks with prompts or visual instructions / examples</p> <p>Responding to direct questions that rely on obvious, concrete numerical information</p>	<p>Performing simple operations with basic numerical information in highly structured situations</p> <p>Making basic comparisons</p> <p>Ordering on a basic level (e.g. lowest to highest)</p>	<p>Applying routine operations to short, familiar tasks</p> <p>Interpreting straightforward data presented in simple charts, tables, diagrams</p> <p>Identifying basic trends or relationships</p>	<p>Performing calculations for well-defined, routine tasks</p> <p>Interpreting data from tables, charts, graphs set in familiar contexts</p> <p>Selecting numerical information relevant to the tasks (e.g. using the correct figure from a table)</p>	<p>Applying calculations and methods to tasks in less familiar contexts (e.g. multi-step calculations, combining operations) with increasing independence</p> <p>Interpreting multi-step or combined data.</p> <p>Identifying patterns, relationships or trends in data.</p>	<p>Performing multi-step calculations and selecting appropriate methods or strategies needed to do this.</p> <p>Analysing data from multiple sources or formats (e.g. combined datasets)</p> <p>Drawing reasoned conclusions that are supported by data</p>	<p>Applying complex or multi-stage reasoning to solve numerical problems in non-routine contexts</p> <p>Synthesising and analysing multiple datasets (possibly with different structures / types of measurement)</p> <p>Making predictions or recommendations based on</p>

Theme Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks							
					Drawing straightforward conclusions based on evidence		quantitative evidence and justifying interpretations
Illustrative examples (Numeracy & Data Processing)	E1 - Learner is shown an image of two blocks. "Point to the group that has more blocks".						
	L1 - Learner shown a table showing bus ticket prices. "Work out the total cost for one adult and one child to ride the bus."						
	L4 - The learner is given three datasets showing footfall, sales and staffing levels. "Analyse the data and recommend how staffing should be allocated across the week, using supporting evidence."						
Technical	Carrying out single-step, very simple technical actions with close modelling Following direct prompts to operate basic tools or equipment in highly routine, familiar ways	Completing simple, familiar technical tasks using short sequences of steps Handling basic tools or equipment with guidance, following rehearsed routines Carrying out simple technical actions in structured contexts.	Completing structured technical tasks in familiar contexts using a given sequence of steps Making basic adjustments when directed or as shown Using common tools and equipment in predictable, guided procedures	Completing well-defined, routine technical tasks with familiar tools or equipment with increasing independence. Selecting tools, equipment, settings from a limited set for straightforward requirements Carrying out technical processes that	Completing less routine, multi-step technical tasks Selecting appropriate tools and equipment with increasing independence Applying technical procedures in less familiar scenarios (e.g. reconfiguring, modifying, adjusting)	Completing non-routine technical tasks that require choosing appropriate methods, tools or configurations for the situation Integrating multiple tools, equipment or techniques Reviewing technical outcomes and refining	Planning and carrying out complex technical processes involving multiple stages, tools or systems Integrating different methods, components or systems to achieve the required outcome Evaluating and justifying

Theme								Typical Complexity of Learner Actions / Assessment Tasks								
					involve following clear procedures	Addressing straightforward technical problems	approach based on results	technical decisions, including adaptations, troubleshooting steps or optimisations.								
Illustrative examples (Technical)		<p>E1 - Tutor demonstrates how to spread a small amount of mortar onto a brick using a trowel. The learner is required to copy the action on the same surface.</p> <p>L1 - Learner is given illustrated sequenced instructions (spread mortar on a block, position a brick, tap it level using a spirit level). Learner does the action and is required to compare the finished brick position with the guidance on the drawing to check it's correct.</p> <p>L4 - Learner is required to plan and set out a section of wall with varying bond patterns as required by the project specification. This involves the learner needing to Identify materials and tools needed, prepare the work area, lay the brickwork including corners and returns, and make adjustments as required to maintain alignment. They should also evaluate the completed section and explain how the chosen techniques ensured accuracy and structural soundness. Evidence could show refinement based on the results.</p>														

Inputs and Guidance

This document supports compliance with the following regulatory requirements, as shown in the table below:

Regulator	Condition
Ofqual	D1 Fitness for purpose of qualifications E4 Ensuring an assessment is fit for purpose and can be delivered G1 Setting the assessment G3 Use of language and stimulus materials G9 Delivering the assessment
Qualifications Wales	D1 Fitness for purpose of qualifications E4 Designing an assessment G1 Setting the assessment G3 Use of language and stimulus materials G9 Delivering the assessment

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