Level 2 Award in Understanding Communication Security (QCF)

Qualification Specification

Contents

Introduction

The Level 2 Award in Understanding Communication Security is aimed at those working within hostile environments overseas, law enforcement professionals, probation service officers, intelligence staff, or anyone particularly susceptible to exploitation through a breech in communication security.

The awarding organisation for this qualification is ProQual Awarding Body and the regulatory body is the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). The specification for these qualifications has been approved by the Welsh Government for use by centres in Wales and by the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) for use by centres in Northern Ireland.

This qualification has been accredited onto the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

The key features of the QCF are that all qualifications consist of a combination of one or more units, each of which has a level and a credit value. Achievement of units of QCF credit can be banked in a national database and may count towards more than one qualification according to rules of combination.

The level of a qualification is determined by the level of the majority of credit in the units that make it up.

A credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours. A unit may be worth any whole number of credits. A qualification is called an Award if it includes up to 12 credits, a Certificate if it includes 13 - 36 credits and a Diploma if it includes 37 credits or more.

The terms Award, Certificate and Diploma refer only to size of qualification, and have no bearing on the level or contents of the qualification.

Each unit is allocated a number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) which gives an indication of the approximate number of hours when a trainer/tutor/teacher/assessor is available to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being met.

Qualification Profile

Qualification title	**ProQual Level 2 Award in Understanding Communication Security (COMSEC) (QCF)**
Ofqual qualification number	601/5941/8
Level	Level 2
Credit value	2 credits
Guided learning hours	15
Assessment	Pass or fail Assessed and verified by centre staff External quality assurance by ProQual verifiers
Qualification start date	1/04/15
Qualification end date	

Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification.

Centres should carry out an **initial assessment** of candidate skills and knowledge to identify any gaps and help plan the assessment.

Rules of Combination

Candidates must achieve 2 credits by completing the Mandatory unit.

Mandatory Units				
Unit Reference Number	**Unit Title**	**Unit Level**	**Credit Value**	**GLH**
M/507/1262	Understanding Communication Security	2	2	15

Centre Requirements

Centres must be approved to offer this qualification. If your centre is not approved please complete and submit form **ProQual Additional Qualification Approval Application**.

Staff
Staff delivering this qualification must be appropriately qualified and occupationally competent.

Assessors/Internal Quality Assurance
For each competence-based unit centres must be able to provide at least one assessor and one internal quality assurance verifier who are suitably qualified for the specific occupational area. Assessors and internal quality assurance verifiers for competence-based units or qualifications will normally need to hold appropriate QCF assessor or quality assurance verifier qualifications, such as:

- Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (QCF)
- Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement (QCF)
- Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF)
- Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practices (QCF)
- Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practices (QCF)

Support for Candidates

Materials produced by centres to support candidates should:

- enable them to track their achievements as they progress through the learning outcomes and assessment criteria;
- provide information on where ProQual's policies and procedures can be viewed;
- provide a means of enabling Internal and External Quality Assurance staff to authenticate evidence

Assessment

Candidates must demonstrate the level of knowledge described in the unit. Assessment is the process of measuring a candidate's knowledge and understanding against the standards set in the qualification.

Each candidate is required to produce evidence which demonstrates their achievement of all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit.

Evidence can include: -   assignments/projects/reports
- worksheets
- portfolio of evidence
- record of oral and/or written questioning
- candidate test papers

Learning outcomes set out what a candidate is expected to know, understand or be able to do.

Assessment criteria specify the standard a candidate must meet to show the learning outcome has been achieved.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria for this qualification can be found from page 9 onwards.

To achieve this qualification all candidates must produce evidence which demonstrates their achievement of all of the assessment criteria.

There must be valid, authentic and sufficient for all the assessment criteria. However, one piece of evidence may be used to meet the requirements of more than one learning outcome or assessment criterion.

Any combination of the following assessment methods can be used:

- Coursework
- E-assessment
- Portfolio of evidence

Any e-assessment must be approved by ProQual prior to use.

Internal Quality Assurance

An internal quality assurance verifier confirms that assessment decisions made in centres are made by competent and qualified assessors, that they are the result of sound and fair assessment practice and that they are recorded accurately and appropriately.

Adjustments to Assessment

Adjustments to standard assessment arrangements are made on the individual needs of candidates.   ProQual's Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Special Consideration Policy sets out the steps to follow when implementing reasonable adjustments and special considerations and the service that ProQual provides for some of these arrangements.

Centres should contact ProQual for further information or queries about the contents of the policy.

Results Enquiries and Appeals

All enquiries relating to assessment or other decisions should be dealt with by centres, with reference to ProQual's Enquiries and Appeals Procedures.

Certification

Candidates who achieve the required credits for qualifications will be awarded:

- A certificate listing the unit achieved with its related credit value, and
- A certificate giving the full qualification title -

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Claiming certificates

Centres may claim certificates for candidates who have been registered with ProQual and who have successfully achieved the required number of credits for a qualification. All certificates will be issued to the centre for successful candidates.

Replacement certificates

If a replacement certificate is required a request must be made to ProQual in writing. Replacement certificates are labelled as such and are only provided when the claim has been authenticated. Refer to the Fee Schedule for details of charges for replacement certificates.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Unit H/507/1145
Understanding the dangers of using legal highs

Learning Outcome - The learner will:	Assessment Criterion - The learner can:
1 Understand the principles of Communication Security	1.1 Describe what is meant by the term **Communication Security**
	1.2 Describe the principles of Communication Security
2 Understand safe practices relating to the use of mobile devices	2.1 Identify the potential risks to information security when using personal computers and mobile devices
	2.2 Identify mobile communication devices that require users to adhere to Communication Security principles and practices for the safe use of the devices
	2.2 Describe Communication Security considerations applicable for each of the different mobile devices identified
	2.3 Identify what information can be gained through the misuse of mobile devices
3 Understand the security risk of exploitation from the use of social media platforms	3.1 Define the term **social media platform**
	3.2 Describe the risks of accessing social media networks using computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones and other mobile devices
	3.3 Identify what personal information can be obtained from social media platforms
	3.4 Describe how personal information gained from social media can be exploited
4 Understand the principles of safe social media practices	4.1 Describe how Communication Security principles and techniques can be used to protect personal information and online accounts
	4.2 Describe how Communication Security procedures can be applied when using social media platforms
	4.3 Describe how to minimise or mitigate social media exploitation
	4.4 Describe formal and informal conventions which should be observed when communicating online
	4.5 Explain the importance of developing and maintaining safe communication habits when using mobile devices and social media platforms

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