

## Qualification Development and Review Policy

BHS Qualifications (BHSQ) produces valid, reliable and manageable qualifications that meet the needs of the equestrian industry. BHSQ carefully plan the development of qualifications, consulting widely to ensure the required knowledge, skills and behaviours are included to support employment. BHSQ qualifications also provide learners with opportunities for personal growth and development. Qualifications are also regularly reviewed to ensure their currency. BHSQ may withdraw qualifications if there is no demand or consider to be out of date.

It is BHSQ's responsibility to decide what qualifications to award, how to develop and deliver them, and that they are of the right quality and standard. BHSQ is responsible for ensuring that their qualifications, comply with the requirements of the Regulators.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on qualification development and review.

BHSQ will be mindful at all times of its regulatory requirements. If a qualification is to be fit for purpose, each stage in the qualification's development must be right. BHSQ decides on the objectives of its qualifications; how it designs and develops its qualifications; how it delivers assessments and sets standards; and how it evaluates the qualifications and makes changes and improvements where necessary.

All those involved in the process will be appropriately experienced and qualified, asked to declare any conflicts of interest and sign a non-disclosure agreement.

BHSQ focuses on developing and awarding valid, reliable and manageable qualifications. To do this, BHSQ has a multi-stage approach from outlining a new qualification to withdrawal. Throughout this process BHSQ will consult with a broad range of experts in both equine and education. This could include:

- BHSQ centres
- Assessors and internal quality assurers
- BHSQ's External Quality Assurers (EQA)
- The British Horse Society's Qualifications and Training Advisory Committee
- Those on Ofqual Experts' list
- The British Equestrian Federation (BEF)
- BEF Coaching Development Action Team (CDAT)
- Other relevant Awarding Organisations
- The relevant Sector Skills Council(s)
- Regulators
- End users including employers/training providers/learners, etc.

## Qualification development procedure

This procedure will outline the necessary steps BHSQ will follow, with further details outlined below.

1. Outline of qualification
2. Carry out initial market research
3. Establish a Qualification Development Group (QDG) to review and decide if it wants to pursue with qualification
4. Produce a more detailed overview
5. Carry out consultation
6. Produce a project plan
7. Qualification Development Group (QDG) to produce a detailed qualification specification and example assessment materials
8. Carry out consultation
9. The Qualification Development Group (QDG), or representatives of, to make amendments from consultation and to check regulatory requirements are addressed fully
10. OPTIONAL – pilot delivery of the new qualification
11. Make any final amendments and finalise all materials
12. Develop support systems
13. Internal sign off
14. Submit qualification to the Regulator(s)
15. Launch the qualification

### Step 1: Outline of qualification

This document is produced by the proposer and briefly outlines the qualification. It should answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the qualification?
- Who is the qualification for?
- Why does the industry need this qualification?
- Does it fall within the mission and vision of BHSQ and/or BHS and partners?
- Are there any conflicts of interest with other stakeholders or qualifications?
- How many learners would you estimate to be certificated for the qualification over the next 1, 2 and 5 years?
- Are there any financial commitments required for this qualification to be developed and who would be providing this?

BHSQ will ask whomever is proposing the new qualification for clarification as required. At this stage BHSQ may ask for any market research to be included to support the proposal.

### Step 2: Market research

Market research should be obtained to support the development of the qualification. This evidence may be carried out by BHSQ or by the proposer. It should be current (within the last five years). BHSQ may ask the proposer to conduct market research if further clarification/evidence is required.

Market research may contain evidence of support from employers, providers, BEF Member Bodies, learners and other stakeholders. It may also include a competitor analysis if relevant.

Any evidence collated should be added to the outline document in step 1.

## Step 3: Qualification Development Group (QDG) review

The Qualification Development Group (QDG) will include as a minimum members of; BHSQ, a subject expert, and customer, such as an assessor or assessment centre representative. It should be a minimum of three members. A representative from the BHSQ Board of Directors will be informed of initial applications and will have oversight of any proposals, and give approval before pursuing to the next step. This group should be comprised of those who have the skills to understand the value of the proposal. Meetings may take place remotely or face-to-face.

The rationale document (steps 1 and 2) should be put to the QDG. The QDG will review the rationale document and decide whether the development of the qualification should be pursued further. If the decision is yes, then steps 4 onwards are to be continued. If the decision is no, reasons for the proposal being declined will be provided.

## Step 4: Produce a more detailed overview

This step builds on the initial rationale document created in steps 1 and 2. Further consideration and details to be added include and are in addition to the previous information at steps 1-2: if there is no further clarification required then this step may not be needed.

- What is the purpose of the qualification?
- Who is the qualification for? (Who will take this qualification?)
- Why does the industry need this qualification?
- Any other areas that require clarification.

In addition:

- Outline of the assessment
- Size of the qualification
- Outline of content
- Any professional body endorsements if applicable
- Projected candidate registrations including market research over the next 1, 2 and 5 years
- Other aspects as required.

The representative of the BHSQ Board of Directors will also be consulted and give approval before pursuing to the next step.

## Step 5: Consultation

A small group of interested stakeholders are consulted with and the detailed overview document at step 4 is reviewed. All are required to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) and complete a conflict of interest declaration form. The parties give any feedback and recommend if the qualification is worth pursuing. Interested parties could be; employers, customers, learners and other stakeholders. The feedback will be discussed by the QDG and any amendments made if considered appropriate.

## Step 6: Produce a project plan

Produce a project plan for the development of the qualification. Assign tasks and deadlines as appropriate. Internal stakeholders, such as IT, finance, marketing and other departments, to be consulted to ensure the

project plan is realistic. It may be at this stage external expertise is identified, depending on the qualification being developed.

## Step 7: Qualification Development Group (QDG) – phase one

The Qualification Development Group will appoint individuals to complete the project. This is likely to include subject experts, users (assessors), qualification development experts, BHSQ representative, learners and approved centre representatives.

All parties are required to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) and complete a conflict of interest declaration form.

The focus will be to produce a detailed qualification specification including assessment materials. Considerations at this phase include:

- Determining the overall design
- Producing, reviewing and revising content
- Developing assessment and grading model
- Determining Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT)
- For qualifications to be accredited in Scotland – credit rating and levelling for the SCQF
- Entry criteria (Recognition of Prior Learning, pre-requisites, exemptions)
- Progression routes (employment, further training, development, career opportunities)
- Titling
- Any additional resourcing
- Mapping to National Occupational Standards (if applicable)
- Mapping against existing and/or previous qualifications
- Ensuring equality, diversity and accessibility; including completing and implementing an equalities impact analysis
- Review and log any potential reasonable adjustments/special considerations and aspects that will not be considered reasonable adjustments/special considerations
- Researching/resolving funding opportunities/pricing
- Consider adaptations for localities, regions and nations
- Consult with regulators, if applicable
- Check regulatory requirements are met
- Decide fee structures (assessment fees, facility fees, registration fees etc.)
  - Fees should be proportionate to, or commensurate with, the reasonable costs incurred in making the product/service available
  - The development, delivery and award of qualifications should be efficient and effective so that any costs reflected in fees are reasonable.

**Please note:** during the later steps in development parts of the QDG may be reconvened. It is not always the full group that is needed to make decisions.

## Step 8: Consultation

The same process as step 5, using the information from step 7.

The feedback will be discussed by the QDG (step 9) and any amendments made if considered appropriate.

## Step 9: Qualification Development Group (QDG) – phase two

The QDG or part of the QDG, will reconvene and review feedback, making amendments as necessary. Inclusions to add at this point are:

- Developing any rules of combination, if relevant
- Decide if the qualification is to be piloted and what these arrangements are
- Ensure the qualification meets all regulatory conditions
- Develop assessor support documentation (assessor guidelines), if relevant
- Develop centre support documentation
- Assessment materials
- Develop any training and development, if relevant
- Reasonable adjustment matrix for acceptable adjustments
- Adhering to and producing a bespoke assessment strategy
- Develop the Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) strategy for the qualification including referencing minimising and/or mitigating potential malpractice and/or maladministration.

## Step 10: OPTIONAL – Pilot delivery of the new qualification

BHSQ along with the QDG or part of the Group, will make arrangements for a pilot if this is considered beneficial. The pilot will be reviewed by BHSQ, who will make recommendations to the QDG. The QDG will consider and make amendments where agreed (step 11).

## Step 11: Make any final amendments and finalise all materials

Review feedback from Qualification Development Group and the pilot, if necessary.

## Step 12: Develop support systems

Considerations and preparations at this phase may include:

- Internal processes design (for example, registration, centre approval, IT functionality, finance process)
- Staff training (for example, BHS Operations Team, assessors, IQAs, EQAs)
- Internal quality assurance process
- Development of marketing materials and marketing plan, if relevant including changes to the web site
- Communications to centres, assessors, relevant parties and other stakeholders
- Obtaining industry support.

## Step 13: Internal sign-off

The qualification is to be signed off by the BHSQ Responsible Officer and a representative of the BHSQ Board of Directors. The Responsible Officer is to check and ensure that all reasonable steps have been followed in the development of the qualification.

## Step 14: Submit qualification to the Regulator(s)

Each regulator has their own process for the regulation of qualifications. Their individual requirements will be taken into consideration throughout the qualification development process. BHSQ will submit qualifications at the appropriate time depending on the Regulator.

## Ofqual

In order to add the qualification to the Register of Regulated Qualifications for England only, BHSQ will follow the procedure for creating qualifications and units in The Portal.

## CCEA Regulation

Apply for accreditation by CCEA if required, for example if the qualification is to be included in the apprenticeship framework for Northern Ireland, or funding.

Awarding organisations recognised by CCEA Regulation submit a return on a quarterly basis listing the qualifications it intends to upload to the Register. This is outlined in CCEA General Conditions of Recognition E5.2. The quarterly return must list new or significantly amended qualifications BHSQ intends to upload to the Register for offer in Northern Ireland.

For each qualification, the following documentation and information may need to be submitted to CCEA as part of the process:

- specifications, SAMs and associated mark schemes for the qualification
- the rationale and purpose of the qualification
- evidence of sector support for the qualification (at least one item should be from a Northern Ireland company or delivery partner, or one that operates throughout the UK)
- how the content of the qualification was developed.

## ***The Register of Regulated Qualifications website is shared by Ofqual and CCEA Regulation***

## Qualifications Wales

Awarding organisations that are recognised in Wales automatically have all qualifications regulated (except where the scope of recognition has been surrendered). However only those qualifications that are approved or designated will be available for funding. The process for designation to be followed where funding is to be available for providers based in Wales. Alternatively follow the process for adding regulated qualifications to the database of regulated qualifications in Wales - QiW.

## SQA Accreditation

SQA Accreditation have a process by which it decides whether the awarding organisation satisfies their regulatory requirements for qualifications to be 'accredited' in Scotland. BHSQ will engage with the appointed accreditation manager at all stages of the development process prior to submitting an application for qualification accreditation. Applications are considered by the Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG)

## **Step 15: Launch the qualification**

Once a qualification has been fully developed it then moves to launch. BHSQ will consider how best to do this and produce an action plan. This is likely to include:

- types of media to maximise impact
- the specific message to be conveyed
- timeframes
- areas of responsibility.

## Qualification review

The review activity for existing qualifications will adhere to the same principles as for qualification development, to ensure validity and that qualifications remain 'fit for purpose'. A review of the number of registrations will take place to support this. Actual uptake will be compared with predicted uptake and initial market research.

To carry out a comprehensive review process BHSQ will take due regard to all information, comments and complaints received from users of qualifications in relation to the development, delivery and award of qualifications. Where existing qualifications are under review, BHSQ will undertake this activity in liaison with an appropriate range of stakeholders currently delivering such qualifications.

## Monitoring and review

This document and its content will be reviewed on a three-year cycle, or earlier should it be needed to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

**Date for review:** December 2023

## Document history

Version	Revision date	Reason
2	16/12/2020	To revise and replace previously produced document

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