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Qualification Specification

Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Conditions (RQF)

Qualification Number: 603/4453/2

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Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Conditions (RQF)

Introduction

This qualification specification is designed to outline all you need to know to offer this qualification at your centre. If you have any further questions, please contact your account manager.

Qualification regulation and support

The Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Conditions (RQF) has been developed and is awarded by Highfield Qualifications and sits on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF is a qualification framework regulated by Ofqual.

Key facts

Qualification number:	603/4453/2
Learning aim reference:	60344532
Credit value:	15
Assessment method:	Portfolio of evidence
Guided learning hours (GLH):	115
Total qualification time (TQT):	145

Qualification overview and objective

The objective of this qualification is to support a role in the workplace, specifically in care roles supporting individuals with autistic spectrum conditions.

This qualification can be taken by learners preparing to enter employment or by those who are already in employment in a care role and wish to develop specialist knowledge in relation to autistic spectrum conditions.

This is a knowledge-only qualification that provides underpinning knowledge and understanding in relation to autistic spectrum conditions, behaviour management strategies and the principles of communication and interaction with individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions.

Entry requirements

This qualification is approved for delivery to learners aged 16 and above.

It is advised that learners have a minimum of level 1 in Literacy and/or numeracy or equivalent.

Guidance on Delivery

The total qualification time for this qualification is 145 and of this 115 are recommended as guided learning hours.

TQT is an estimate of the total number of hours it would take an average learner to achieve and demonstrate the necessary level of attainment to be awarded with a qualification, both under direct

supervision (forming guided learning hours) and without supervision (all other time). TQT and GLH values are advisory and assigned to a qualification as guidance.

Guidance on Assessment

This qualification is assessed through completion of a portfolio of evidence which will be internally quality assured by the centre. EQS (External Quality Support) engagements from Highfield will also take place.

The overall grading outcome for this qualification is pass or fail.

Centres must take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of a learner (including any internal quality assurance and invigilation) being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.

Suggested assessment paperwork is available on the Highfield website. If a Centre would like to use alternative paperwork, this must be sent to the Quality Support Team for approval before commencement of the course.

Guidance on Internal Quality Assurance

Highfield Qualifications requires centres to have in place a robust mechanism for internal quality assurance. Internal quality assurance must be completed by an appropriately qualified person and that person must not have been involved in any aspect of the delivery or assessment of the course they are quality assuring.

Highfield Qualifications will support centres by conducting ongoing engagements to ensure and verify the effective and efficient delivery of the qualification.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Centres may apply to use recognition of prior learning or prior achievement to reduce the amount of time spent in preparing the learner for assessment.

For further information on how centres can apply to use RPL as described above, please refer to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy in the members' area of the Highfield website. This policy should be read in conjunction with this specification and all other relevant Highfield Qualifications documentation.

Tutor requirements

Highfield requires nominated tutors for this qualification to meet the following:

- hold a relevant subject area qualification or experience, which could include any of the following:
 - Level 3 qualification or higher in a related subject such as:
 - autism and autistic spectrum conditions

- health and social care
 - mental health
 - other relevant qualifications/experience will be assessed on a case by case basis
 - to hold or be working towards a recognised teaching qualification, which could include any of the following:
 - HABC Level 3 Award in Delivering Training;
 - Level 3 PTLLS, or above
 - Level 3 Award in Education and Training, or above
 - diploma or certificate in education
 - bachelors or masters degree in education
 - level 3 or 4 NVQ in training and/or development
 - proof of at least 30 hours of training in any subject
 - maintain appropriate continued professional development for the subject area
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Assessor requirements

The role of tutor/assessor may be undertaken by the same individual. There is **no requirement** for assessors of this qualification to hold a formal assessor qualification, however, it is recognised as good practice.

Highfield requires nominated assessors for this qualification to meet the following:

- hold a relevant subject area qualification or experience, which could include any of the following:
 - Level 3 qualification or higher in a related subject such as:
 - autism and autistic spectrum conditions
 - health and social care
 - mental health
 - other relevant qualifications/experience will be assessed on a case by case basis

Highfield recommends nominated assessors for this qualification to meet the following:

- Hold or be working towards a recognised assessing qualification to make assessment decisions, holding an assessor qualification such as:
 - Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment, or
 - Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, or
 - A1 Assess Learner Performance Using a Range of Methods, or
 - D32 Assess Learner Performance and D33 Assess Learner Using Different Sources of Evidence
 - Maintain appropriate continued professional development for the subject area
-

Internal quality assurance (IQA) requirements

Highfield Qualifications requires internal quality assurers for this qualification to meet the following:

- Hold or be working towards an IQA qualification, such as:
 - o Highfield Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (RQF), or
 - o Highfield Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (RQF), or
 - o D34 or V1 Verifier Awards
- Be occupationally knowledgeable in relation to the learning outcomes
- Maintain appropriate continued professional development for the subject area

Countersigning strategy

While it is a minimum requirement for centres to have the appropriately qualified workforce in place, it is understood that centres may have new personnel who are working towards those requirements. During this period, centres are required to have a robust countersigning strategy in place that supports and validates unqualified assessment/quality assurance decisions, until the point where they meet the requirements as detailed above.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

Highfield Qualifications has measures in place for learners who require additional support. Please refer to Highfield Qualifications' Reasonable Adjustments Policy for further information/guidance.

ID requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to ensure that the person taking an assessment is indeed the person they are claiming to be. All centres are therefore required to ensure that each learner's identification is checked before they undertake the assessment. Highfield Qualifications recommends the following as proof of a learner's identity:

- a valid passport (any nationality)
- a signed UK photocard driving licence
- a valid warrant card issued by HM forces or the police
- another photographic ID card, e.g. employee ID card, student ID card, travel card etc.

If a learner is unable to produce any of the forms of photographic identification listed above, a centre may accept another form of identification containing a signature, for example, a credit card. Identification by a third-party representative, such as a line manager, human resources manager or invigilator, will also be accepted.

For more information on learner ID requirements, please refer to Highfield Qualifications' Core Manual.

Progression opportunities

On successful completion of this qualification, learners may wish to continue their development by undertaking one of the following qualifications:

- Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Rights in Care (RQF)
- Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Medication Handling and Administration for Care Settings (RQF)
- Highfield Level 2 Diploma in Care (RQF)
- Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care (RQF)

Useful websites

www.highfieldqualifications.com

Appendix 1: Qualification structure

To complete the Highfield Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Conditions (RQF), learners must complete all units contained within the mandatory group.

Mandatory group

Learners must achieve all units in this group.

Unit reference	Unit title	Level	GLH	Credit
T/617/5732	Introduction to autistic spectrum conditions	2	30	4
F/617/5734	Introduction to behaviour management and support for individuals with autistic spectrum conditions	2	50	6
L/617/5736	Understanding the principles of communication and interaction with individuals with autistic spectrum conditions	2	35	5

Appendix 2: Qualification content

Unit 1: Introduction to autistic spectrum conditions

Unit number: T/617/5732

Credit: 4

GLH: 30

Level: 2

Unit Introduction

The unit provides introductory awareness of autistic spectrum conditions*. It provides learners with key areas of knowledge including the relationship between autism and other conditions, theoretical models for understanding the autistic spectrum and how autistic spectrum conditions are diagnosed.

*Please note, throughout this specification the terms autistic spectrum conditions and autism are used interchangeably.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
1. Understand autism, its related conditions and underpinning theories	1.1 Describe autistic spectrum conditions and related diagnoses
	1.2 Outline the prevalence of autism within the UK
	1.3 Describe signs and behaviours associated with autism and autistic spectrum conditions
	1.4 Describe common theoretical models of autism
2. Understand how autism is diagnosed	2.1 Describe tools and guidelines for diagnosing autism in the UK
	2.2 Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the diagnostic process for individuals and their carers
	2.3 Explain why individuals may be reluctant to seek a diagnosis
	2.4 Outline legislation and guidelines that underpin support for individuals with autism
	2.5 Identify sources of information and guidance on autism and autism spectrum conditions
	2.6 Describe how to support individuals with autism to access information and guidance relating to diagnoses
3. Understand how autism affects individuals	3.1 Describe how the characteristics of autistic spectrum conditions affect individuals
	3.2 Explain the relevance of routine to individuals on the autism spectrum.
	3.3 Explain how individuals with autism and others they interact with are affected by each other's behaviour
	3.4 Outline conditions that may co-occur with autism

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
	3.5 Explain how autism affects the lives of individuals and their carers
	3.6 Describe positive aspects of living with autism for individuals and their carers

Amplification: The following amplification provides guidance for centres on coverage and depth for each of the emboldened areas within the assessment criteria. Centres should ensure that all amplification is covered as part of their teaching and learning strategies. Where coverage quantities have been provided e.g. at least 2 etc, these set the minimum requirements for assessment.

1.1 Description must include:

- what the condition is
- the common characteristics of the condition, e.g. sensory issues, difficulties with social communication, social interaction and restricted/repetitive interests or behaviours
- the lifelong nature of the condition

1.1 Autistic spectrum conditions and related diagnoses include autism, Asperger’s, high functioning autism

1.2 Prevalence is the measurement of how common a condition is in a demographic.

1.3 Signs may include delayed speech, communication difficulties including use of single words, reduced awareness of socially expected behaviours, limited social interaction, dislike of change, preference for highly specific interests, reduced use of social eye contact, reduced use of gesture etc. **(at least 3 should be covered)**

1.3 Behaviours may include restricted/repetitive behaviours, unusual sensory behaviours, unimaginative play, the need for clear routines and schedules **(at least 3 should be covered)**

1.4 Theoretical models may include Kanner, Asperger, Wing and Gould (Triad of impairments), Pennington, Ozonoff, Baron-Cohen etc. **(at least 2 should be covered, one being Wing and Gould)**

2.1 Diagnosis of autism spectrum conditions is detailed in NICE clinical guidelines. The current diagnostic manuals used in the UK are the ICD-11 and the DSM-V. Assessment and diagnosis is usually done by a team of multi-disciplinary health professionals using a range of tools including questionnaires, developmental history and direct observation. (The NICE guidelines and at least 2 tools should be covered)

2.2 Carers could be formal and/or informal

2.4 Legislation may include Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Care Act 2014, Autism Act 2009, Equality Act 2010, Mental Health Act 1983, Children’s Act 2004 **(at least 2 should be covered)**

2.4 Guidance may include Nice guidelines, adult autism strategy, SEND 205 **(at least 1 should be covered)**

2.6 Support means to direct an individual to information or guidance, helping them to find the information or guidance. This is **not** helping them to interpret their diagnosis.

3.4 Conditions that may co-occur with autism include learning (intellectual) disabilities, ADHD, epilepsy and anxiety disorders (at least 2 should be covered).

3.5 Affects can include those relating to personal development, puberty, social life, relationships with family members and others, education, employment, access to services and facilities, hobbies etc. **(at least 3 should be covered)**

3.5 Positive aspects require a positive outlook to appreciate the traits, abilities and strengths associated with autism, which vary and may include long-term memory, artistic skills, honesty, intelligence, independent thinking etc. **(at least 2 should be covered)**

Unit 2: Introduction to behaviour management and support for individuals with autistic spectrum conditions

Unit number: F/617/5734

Credit: 6

GLH: 50

Level: 2

Unit Introduction

The unit is about the understanding the behavioural patterns of individuals with autistic spectrum conditions* and coping strategies. It provides learners with key areas of knowledge including how to promote positive behaviour, supporting individuals and their carers with coping strategies and approaches for supporting individuals during significant life changes.

*Please note, throughout this specification the terms autistic spectrum conditions and autism are used interchangeably.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
1. Understand the person-centred approach with individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions	1.1 Describe a person-centred approach to supporting individuals with autistic spectrum conditions
	1.2 Explain the importance of treating people with autistic spectrum conditions as individuals
	1.3 Describe ways to ensure individuals with autistic spectrum conditions are active participants in their own care and support
2. Understand how to support individuals and their carers to manage behaviours	2.1 Describe challenging behaviours that may be associated with autistic spectrum conditions
	2.2 Explain why individuals with autistic spectrum conditions may present with behaviours that challenge
	2.3 Describe strategies used in response to behaviours that challenge
	2.4 Explain the concept of advocacy and how it is used to support individuals with autism and their carers
	2.5 Describe networks for supporting individuals and their carers to cope with behaviour that may challenge
	2.6 Describe coping strategies that individuals with autism can use to manage their behaviour
	2.7 Explain the benefits of co-production to support individuals with autism
3. Understand how to support individuals with autism during transitions	3.1 Identify common transitions
	3.2 Explain how transitions may impact individuals with autism and their carers

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
	3.3 Describe approaches used to support individuals with autism as they experience transitions
	3.4 Describe how to adapt coping strategies as individuals with autism move through different transitions
4. Understand how to support individuals with autism to maintain personal safety and engage in positive risk-taking	4.1 Explain how to use risk assessment to minimise risks to individuals with autism and their carers
	4.2 Explain the benefits and risks associated with promoting the independence of individuals with autism
	4.3 Describe methods to safeguard and promote the personal safety of individuals with autism and their carers
5. Understand how to support individuals with autism to access services and opportunities	5.1 Outline the support networks available to support individuals with autism to access services and opportunities
	5.2 Describe the rights of individuals with autism with regards to accessing services and facilities and opportunities
	5.3 Describe how to support individuals to access services and facilities
	5.4 Explain the reasonable adjustments which may be required for individuals with autism to engage with opportunities
	5.5 Give examples of how individuals with autism may experience disadvantage when accessing services and opportunities
	5.6 Describe ways to support individuals with autism to overcome disadvantage

Amplification: The following amplification provides guidance for centres on coverage and depth for each of the emboldened areas within the assessment criteria. Centres should ensure that all amplification is covered as part of their teaching and learning strategies. Where coverage quantities have been provided e.g. at least 2 etc, these set the minimum requirements for assessment.

1.1 Person-centred is an approach to assist/support an individual to plan their life and ensure they are placed at the centre of their support. Focusing on what is important to the individual.

2.1 Challenging behaviours may include self-injury, hurting others, avoiding requests or demands, eating inedible objects, or destructive behaviours (**At least 4 should be covered**)

2.2 Challenging behaviour may occur for many reasons including unmet communication needs, physical or mental ill health, sensory processing issues, disrupted routines, (**At least 2 should be covered**)

2.3 Strategies include proactive strategies and reactive strategies and will depend on the type of behaviour being exhibited. These include active participation, co-production and positive behaviour support. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

2.4 Advocacy refers to supporting individuals to express their views and wishes ensuring the rights have been secured

2.5 Networks could be formal and/or informal

2.6 Coping strategies can be used to address different challenges caused by autism and may include communication aids such as visual planners or social stories, anxiety management techniques, social skills training **(at least 2 should be covered)**

2.7 Co-production: 'Co-production is not just a word, it is not just a concept, it is a meeting of minds coming together to find shared solutions. In practice, co-production involves people who use services being consulted, included and working together from the start to the end of any project that affects them. When co-production works best, people who use services and carers are valued by organisations as equal partners, can share power and have influence over decisions made' (The TLAP National Co-production Advisory Group).

3.1 Transitions include daily transitions such as ending one activity and moving to another, going from school to home etc. More significant transitions may include moving home, bereavement, entering/leaving care, changing care setting/carers, progressing through education, births in families, divorces/family breakdowns, becoming married/separating, diagnosis of/recovery from illnesses etc. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

3.3 Approaches should take into account the specific nature of changes experienced and how to involve others including the family, friends and carers of individuals with autism. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

4.2 Independence includes positive risk-taking when the potential benefits outweigh the level of risk.

4.3 Personal safety refers to protection from actual/threatened physical harm, hostility, aggression, harassment, devaluation, bullying, exploitation etc.; personal safety also encompasses internet use including social media and the risks of cyberbullying.

5.1 Support networks include informal networks (e.g. parental groups), rights groups, community support organisations and larger organisations (e.g. Ambitious about Autism and National Autistic Society). **(At least 2 should be covered)**

5.2 Services and facilities include healthcare, education, training and leisure services.

5.4 Reasonable adjustment refers to changes/adjustments unique to an individual's needs that will support them to carry out their role safely and productively. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

5.4 Engaging with opportunities (work and/or education) includes all stages e.g. application processes, gaining employment/starting education, inductions, continuing employment, professional/career development etc.

Unit 3: Understanding the principles of communication and interaction with individuals with autistic spectrum conditions

Unit number: L/617/5736

Credit: 5

GLH: 35

Level: 2

Unit Introduction

The unit is about the understanding communication with individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions* and how they process information. It provides learners with key areas of knowledge including how to support communication and social interaction, the sensory processes of individuals who have autism, their cognitive abilities and how to support them to complete tasks.

*Please note, throughout this specification the terms autistic spectrum conditions and autism are used interchangeably.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
1. Understand speech and language development in individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions	1.1 Outline the processes used to communicate using speech and language
	1.2 Explain how speech and language can be affected in individuals with autism
	1.3 Describe communication methods to support communication and social interaction with individuals with autism
2. Understand how to support communication and social interaction with individuals who have autistic spectrum conditions	2.1 Explain how an individual's use of communication can affect relationships and social interaction
	2.2 Outline how professionals and others may support communication and social interaction with individuals with autism
	2.3 Explain the importance of individualised communication with individuals who have autism
	2.4 Explain the impact of having unmet communication needs
3. Understand the differences in sensory processing, cognition and awareness of individuals with autistic spectrum conditions	3.1 Describe the role of cognition in sensory processing
	3.2 Explain the difficulties experienced by individuals with autism in relation to sensory processing
	3.3 Explain how to increase or decrease the sensory stimulation of individuals with autism
	3.4 Describe the relationship between autism, body awareness and mobility
	3.5 Outline techniques to support sensory processing and task completion

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
	3.6 Describe the benefits of techniques to support sensory processing and task completion

Amplification: The following amplification provides guidance for centres on coverage and depth for each of the emboldened areas within the assessment criteria. Centres should ensure that all amplification is covered as part of their teaching and learning strategies. Where coverage quantities have been provided e.g. at least 2 etc, these set the minimum requirements for assessment.

1.1 Processes include cognitive (interpretation and processing of language), social and physical (the mechanics or articulation of speech). **(All should be covered)**

1.3 Communication methods - pictures and symbols, visual timetables, social stories, sign language, e.g. Makaton, avoiding sarcasm and metaphors, allow the individual more time to process information. **(At least 3 should be covered)**

1.3 Social interaction may include social imagination, reading facial expressions, appropriate eye contact, social inhibitions

2.3 Professionals may vary depending on specific needs, e.g. speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, autism outreach teachers, etc. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

2.3 Others may include formal and informal carers, family and friends, advocates etc. **(At least 2 should be covered)**

3.1. Sensory include vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

3.2 Difficulties may include hypersensitivity, hyposensitivity, sensory overload, misinterpreting tone of voice, pitch, humour, nuances of sentences etc. **(At least 3 should be covered)**

3.4 Mobility e.g. balance

3.5 Techniques may include reducing visual clutter/distractions, reducing noise, e.g. using noise cancelling headphones, avoiding giving too many instructions, use of fidget toys, move and sit cushions, break activities into small chunks, provide regular breaks and a 'sensory diet' (on the advice of a specialist), reward task completion etc **(At least 3 should be covered)**

