

**Level 4
Certificate in Professional Development (Youth Work)
(England)**

and

**Level 4
Certificate in Professional Development (Youth Work)
(Wales)**

15 Credits

Version 3, 26 July 2022

Introduction

The National Youth Agency (NYA), Education Training Standards (ETS) England and Education Training Standards (ETS) Wales are responsible for the development and endorsement of Youth Work qualifications in England and Wales based on the National Occupational Standards in partnership with Awarding Organisations/Bodies (AO/Bs¹). This assessment strategy sets standardised and consistent quality assurance expectations for AO/Bs.

The strategy has been developed by the NYA, ETS Wales and the AO/Bs. It provides overarching principles for AO/Bs to use and covers:

- How external quality control of assessment will be achieved
- How the workplace can be used to assess competence for certain units
- How simulated working conditions can be used to assess competence for certain units
- Occupational expertise requirements for trainers and assessors and those providing quality assurance.

The strategy complements the regulatory requirements that AO/Bs must meet when awarding qualifications as required by Ofqual in England and Qualifications Wales.

The NYA and ETS Wales work in partnership with the AO/Bs to meet their quality assurance expectations in relation to the Level 4 Professional Development (Youth Work) qualification. Further guidance and support can be provided on request.

¹ The acronym AO/Bs is used throughout to describe Awarding Organisations in England and Awarding Bodies in Wales

1. Knowledge based units of assessment

The NYA and ETS Wales, sector-based organisations and AO/Bs have developed the Level 4 Professional Development (Youth Work) qualification, underpinned by knowledge and competency learning, which enables youth workers to develop their Youth Work skills and knowledge to a higher level and enhance their professional development.

Assessment methods for the knowledge-based units will be developed by AO/Bs which are proportionate to the level and breadth of knowledge. They should use resources effectively and be contextualised to workplace practices.

2. Competency based units of assessment

The Assessment Strategy requires the AO/Bs to provide detail to the NYA and ETS Wales on each of the following listed below:

Quality assurance

The exact process and frequency of the quality assurance activities, including visits, will be determined following risk assessment by the AO/Bs. Where possible, AO/Bs should promote to the centres the value of rotating those individuals who are undertaking quality assurance internally to encourage standardisation, independence of assessment and the sharing of good practice.

Risk assessment

AO/Bs should take an approach to their centres based on an assessment of risk with respect to the quality and consistency of assessment. AO/Bs should ensure that a risk assessment has been carried out of each approved centre and that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure the reliability of the assessment.

Awarding organisation/body meetings

The NYA and ETS Wales will arrange annual meetings with AO/Bs, the aim of which will be to identify and share good practice and promote consistency. This could include exploring use of simulation and knowledge evidence.

3. Workplace assessment

For certain units, workplace evidence may be collected in the context of full time, part time, casual or voluntary employment. Assessment may also be undertaken in a 'work placement' (i.e., full time learners placed into a work environment for an appropriate period of time or on a regular basis).

4. Use of simulation

For certain units, the use of simulation is permitted. Where simulation is used, it should be designed to ensure that:

- The learner is required to use materials and, where relevant, equipment found and used within the workplace environment
- The learner is provided by the centre with information, advice, and guidance in line with what would be provided in the workplace in the specific context
- The physical environment and situation replicates the workplace environment in which the skills are used
- Other people with whom the learner interacts in undertaking the assessed activity behave 'in character' for the given situation.

5. Occupational expertise of trainers, assessors and those assuring quality

The NYA and ETS Wales acknowledge the vital role that trainers, assessors and those assuring quality have in maintaining the integrity of vocational qualifications. AO/Bs and other stakeholders have to have confidence in the actions and decisions of trainers, assessors and those assuring quality.

Trainers must:

- For the delivery of the mandatory unit, Introduction to Professional Development (Youth Work), be a JNC Professionally Qualified Youth Work practitioner, having undertaken a recognised professional qualification in Youth Work as identified by NYA or ETS Wales²
- Have a minimum of three years practice experience
- For the delivery of the optional units, be an experienced practitioner/subject specialist (minimum of three years' experience within

² A current list of all recognised JNC qualifications in England and Wales is on the NYA website www.nya.org.uk and ETS Wales website www.ets.wales

- the last five years) with expertise in the subject area provided and hold a qualification **at the same level or** above the unit being delivered or assessed
- Have a sound understanding of National Occupational Standards for Youth Work
- Have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual/Qualifications Wales
- Be able to evidence continued professional development, including fieldwork³ activities, within the last 3 years.

Additionally for Wales, trainers must:

- Hold a recognised learning delivery/teaching qualification and/or have experience of delivering learning
- Be registered with the Education Workforce Council as a tutor, trainer, or lecturer in the FE Sector where relevant.

Assessors must:

- For the assessment of the mandatory unit, Introduction to Professional Development (Youth Work), hold a recognised Youth Work (JNC) professional qualification with a minimum of three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of Youth Work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector, and have relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years⁴
- For the assessment of the optional units be an experienced practitioner/subject specialist (minimum of three years' experience within the last five years) with expertise in the subject area and hold a qualification **at the same level or above** the unit being assessed
- Have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work
- Have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual/Qualifications Wales
- Hold or be working towards a recognised assessor qualification
- Be committed to, and able to evidence, further training and development.

³ This could include, for example, Youth Work practice, supervision of practitioners or training delivery.

⁴ This could include, for example, Youth Work practice, supervision of practitioners or training delivery

Those **internally assuring quality** must:

- Hold a JNC Professional Youth Work qualification and three years' practice experience, with field work experience in the context of Youth Work, community work, community education or the voluntary community sector, and/or have broader relevant experience across the youth and community sector in a capacity recognised by the JNC/ETS within the last 3 years
- Have recent experience (within the last three years) of internal quality assurance preferably within an occupational area with relevance to Youth Work
- Have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work
- Have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual/Qualifications Wales
- Hold or be working towards an Internal Quality Assurance qualification
- be committed to, and able to evidence, further training and development.

Those **externally assuring quality** must:

- Hold a JNC professional youth work qualification or an aligned professional qualification (one that is related to children, young people and families, teaching, or social work)
- Have a sound understanding of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work
- Have recent experience of external quality assurance
- Hold or be working towards an external quality assurance qualification
- Have a sound understanding of the requirements for assessment within Ofqual/Qualifications Wales.

6. Review and evaluation of the strategy

The NYA and ETS Wales and the AO/Bs will regularly monitor the effectiveness of the Assessment Strategy. It will be reviewed annually and revised, where necessary.

Mechanisms will be established through the AO/Bs annual meetings with the NYA and ETS Wales to enable AO/Bs to provide feedback that will assist in the review and evaluation of the Assessment Strategy. The feedback will also be used to review assessment and quality assurance practices, identify, and promulgate good practice and inform improvement to the strategy and to future revisions to NOS and qualifications.

The NYA and ETS Wales require AO/Bs to make available, on request, information relating to the competence of staff involved in delivering, assessing and internally and externally quality assuring the Youth Work practice qualifications. This includes:

- Youth Work qualifications
- Youth Work experience
- Assessor, internal and external quality assurance experience
- Assessor, internal and external quality assurance qualifications
- Training qualifications
- Training experience.

Copies of qualification certificates must be made available on request.