

Assessment positive indicators for post-16 submissions

The table below outlines some positive indicators for post-16 qualification reviews.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it is a tool that awarding organisations (AOs) can refer to in the development and approval process.

Qualification Aspect	Theme	Positive Indicator	Related Document(s)
Assessment delivery	Assessment controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment controls include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the timing of the assessment – the conditions within the assessment – the assessment location – any general information that relates to the assessment – the order of the assessment tasks – individual task timings – invigilation arrangements. • Full instructions are provided on how to manage the assessment if it is conducted over a long period of time, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how candidate evidence will be stored – who will be responsible for storing it – how the assessment should be sat and conducted to ensure comparability and validity over time. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p> <p>Sample Assessment Materials (SAM)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security arrangements are clearly documented. These should relate to the assessment materials and the candidate's completed work. 	
Assessment delivery	Guidance for the candidate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidate guidance covers all aspects and expectations of the assessment, not just within the task. This ensures all candidates know the requirements before starting and throughout the assessment. 	SAM
Assessment delivery	Guidance for the marker and assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unambiguous guidance for markers and assessors is provided. This ensures markers and assessors can work in a consistent, systematic way during the assessment. The marking guidance contains sufficient clear and concise information. This helps the user make valid and reliable judgments against a candidate's performance. Marking guidance and assessing guidance is written in plain English. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p> <p>Mark scheme</p>
Assessment delivery	Guidance on grading and awarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All guidance is unambiguous. All relevant documents state where a provider is responsible for grading and awarding. This helps to ensure the provider knows how to grade and award the qualification. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Assessment delivery	Knowledge test mark schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark schemes are appropriate for the type of paper design (item types). They are provided for all questions and assessed criteria. They have clear guidance for assessors, markers, examiners and moderators. 	SAM

Assessment delivery	Portfolio of evidence creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A portfolio of evidence can be used in the assessment process. AOs should issue guidance and controls to providers to ensure that the portfolios are consistent. This guidance gives assurance of comparability and, therefore, reliability and validity. • The suitable evidence types for each of the assessed criteria within the portfolio should be provided. This helps to ensure the correct level of assessment demand. It also gives assurance of the assessment outcome's comparability, reliability and validity. For example, where an assignment is listed, it is stated that this is not suitable for practical-based assessed criteria. • The command verbs used reflect the intended level of demand. • There is a range given that outlines the anticipated number of assessments that should make up the portfolio. 	<p>Qualification specification</p> <p>Assessment strategy</p>
Assessment delivery	Resits and retakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparent guidance is available to providers and learners explaining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what constitutes a resit - what constitutes a retake - how and when learners will be entitled to undertake a resit or retake - how resits or retakes may affect a final grade. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Assessment delivery	Red flag events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk tasks are identified in the assessment strategy, along with 'red flag' situations. All assessment materials describe 'red flag' situations that may require assessments to be stopped. The consequences of stopping an assessment are explained. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p> <p>SAM</p>

Assessment delivery	Rotation of assessment materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AOs have clearly considered the risk of predictability. A rationale for the approach taken to mitigate this risk is outlined. The approach to rotation or renewal of assessment material is clearly described. 	Assessment strategy
Assessment delivery	Transparent pass performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clear to candidates, assessors, markers and moderators what a pass performance looks like. Criterion marking includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what that exact task is – how the task will be completed – holistic description of a pass performance. This ensures validity across multiple assessors and providers – what the key elements of a pass performance looks like. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification SAM Mark scheme
Assessment design	Alignment of assessment criteria to the assessment method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual assessment criteria are correctly aligned to the assessment method. This ensures the assessment's level of demand is maintained. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification SAM
Assessment design	Command verb taxonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The command verbs reflect the qualification's level of demand. They are consistent with the command verbs in the related assessed criteria and learning outcome. 	SAM
Assessment design	Grade boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment strategy defines the grade boundaries. It includes a clear rationale for the approach. • Grade boundaries are documented in the qualification specification. This makes it clear to candidates, 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification

		assessors, markers and moderators how grades are determined.	SAM
Assessment design	Grade descriptors to inform assessors and markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade descriptors accurately reflect the task being undertaken by the candidate. There are clear differentiators across different grades (merit or distinction, for example). Grade descriptors have enough information for markers and assessors to make consistent judgements. 	Mark scheme
Assessment design	Grading approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The marking or grading approach is appropriate for the task and clearly explained. The marking or grading approach is supported by a clear rationale. 	Assessment strategy
Assessment design	Knowledge papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of any knowledge tests is supported by a clear rationale. Detail relating to the item bank explains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how question-item performance is monitored how papers are created and managed in a valid manner during delivery how resits can be managed without predictability. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification
Assessment design	Links between learning outcomes, assessed criteria and indicative content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links between knowledge and skills across the qualification are identified in the specification. This helps to clarify how content is related to the assessments. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification

Assessment design	Mapping of learning outcomes, assessed criteria and the indicative content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear links between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – learning outcomes – assessed criteria – indicative content. • It is clear how the information above is covered in each series and over time. • Knowledge assessments are linked to the relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviours. The assessed criteria of the qualification are mapped to the assessments. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification
Qualification Design	Regulator involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment strategy documents any regulators that were involved in developing the qualification. It also includes a rationale and the role of the regulator in the process. 	Assessment strategy
Qualification Design	Roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All roles and responsibilities involved in the assessment of candidates are documented. This ensures comparability and transparency. 	Assessment strategy Qualification specification
Assessment design	Sampling learning outcomes or assessed criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sampling approach to assessing content may be used. Where this approach is used, a clear content coverage matrix is supplied. The content coverage matrix links back to the assessment strategy and qualification specification. This should, ideally, be in the form of a tracking document. 	Content coverage record
Assessment design	Specification content coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear record of how the learning outcomes and assessment criteria will be covered over the life cycle of the qualification. • Where a sampling approach is used, there is clear mapping of how all content will be assessed over time. 	Assessment strategy

Assessment design	Using simulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a simulation is required, the assessment strategy provides a clear rationale for the approach. • The qualification specification includes sufficient guidance for creating and managing simulated assessment activity. The SAM gives clear examples where appropriate. This ensures that providers can assess all candidates in a reliable and manageable way. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p> <p>SAM</p>
Assessment design	Weighted elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clear to users where the qualification has weighted elements. This ensures that providers and learners are aware of how to gain marks. If the provider must apply any weighting, guidance is clear and ensures accuracy. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Qualification design	Assessment strategy sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sections of the assessment strategy are part of the submission. To help with this, the sections are listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Qualification purpose: The intended role or function of the qualification. – Content: Approach to coverage of the subject content. – Assessment design: All aspects of the structure and development of the assessments. – Assessment delivery: The available modes of delivery and how assessments are accessed. – Marking or assessing performance and standardisation: The approach taken to the marking of all assessments. – Attainment and reporting: The identified levels of attainment and the grading structures used to characterise these levels. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard setting and maintenance: The processes for setting and maintaining standards, and the types of evidence that are used. - Qualification monitoring: The monitoring processes that are applied on an ongoing basis. These should focus on verifying the validity of key aspects of the specification. These include the assessment content, risk of malpractice and maladministration, and maintaining standards. 	
Quality processes	Alignment between documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documents must align. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Quality processes	External Quality Assurance (EQA) activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQA activities are transparent. Including a Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) strategy helps to support statements made in the qualification specification. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Quality processes	EQA sampling approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EQA sampling approach is transparent and clear to providers. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Quality processes	EQA standardisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clear how EQA activity for the qualification is standardised across the organisation. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Quality processes	Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQA activity requirements are transparent to providers. This should include the frequency of any activity and how it is monitored. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>

Quality processes	IQA sampling approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The required IQA sampling approach is transparent and clear for providers. This should include sample sizes and how IQA sampling will be monitored. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>
Quality processes	Moderation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AOs may use a marking and grading approach that requires providers to moderate marks. Where moderation is required, guidance is provided that explains who is involved and how it will be conducted. 	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Qualification specification</p>