

A2 – Level 3 Award in Assessing Candidate performance through observation

D unit qualifications are being replaced with new **Assessor and Verifier Awards** (A and V Awards) If you are already qualified with D units, *you don't need to achieve the new Awards* – but – you are expected to understand the requirements of the new standards and incorporate them into your assessment and verification practice

Here we outline the differences between D32 and the new A2 Award. A2 replaces the old D32. (NB – if you are already registered on D units, you will have time to achieve them. Check with your assessor.)

Explaining the new jargon

Single Unit Awards

The new A and V Awards are taken from the suite of national occupational standards for Learning and Development. They are also now recognised as *Single Unit Awards*. So, if you come across any information relating to Single Unit Awards, you'll know that it simply refers to the A and V Awards as stand-alone qualifications not being achieved as part of the full Learning and Development S/NVQ.

Independent assessment for the single unit Awards

It is a requirement of the new Awards that some independent assessment takes place. *This does not mean that the unit has to be assessed twice!*

It does mean that an independent assessor has to assess a **key piece of evidence** presented by candidate-assessors and candidate-internal verifiers. For example, this could be an assessment plan. Your external verifier will be able to guide you on what may be counted as key evidence.

How the new Award compares

Much of the new criteria are similar to that in the old D units, but have been written in more user-friendly language. Here we present a comparison of the new A2 unit against to the old D unit. Here's how the element titles compare:

D32.1	Agree and review a plan for assessing performance	A2.1	Agree and review plans for assessing candidates' performance
D32.2	Collect and judge performance evidence against criteria	A2.2	Assess candidates' performance against the agreed standards
D32.3	Collect and judge knowledge evidence	A2.3	Assess candidates' knowledge against the agreed standards
D32.4	Make assessment decision and provide feedback	A2.4	Make an assessment decision and provide feedback



Performance requirements

Notable differences are:

- Emphasis on assessment against *agreed standards*
- Emphasis on a *safe* assessment, in addition to it being fair, valid and reliable
- As well as ensuring that assessments are appropriate to candidates' needs, assessors must *explain to candidates how* assessments will achieve this
- Performance criteria now clearly state that assessors must *follow agreed complaints and appeals procedures* if candidates do not agree with assessment decisions

Knowledge requirements

These are now presented in a different format. Instead of appearing alongside individual elements, a list of 35 knowledge requirements, numbered 1-35, specify what all A2 assessors must know. (This avoids what can sometimes be seen as repetition with knowledge questions) They're broken down into three sections and the most notable differences are that assessors must now demonstrate that they have the knowledge detailed below (using the numbers from the standard)

Principles and concepts

22) How to deal with disputes and appeals in line with agreed procedures

External factors influencing the assessment of national standards

- 33) How to use opportunities to update their skills and experience
- 34) How to identify and use information on current assessment best practice
- 35) How to use personal development opportunities to improve assessment skills

You'll notice that personal and professional development is now enhanced to ensure that assessors remain on the ball!

Evidence requirements

There is now more guidance to help candidate-assessors gather evidence to prove competence in the Award. It may appear that the evidence requirements are asking for a lot more evidence than the D units demanded. However, *more guidance doesn't mean more evidence* – it means that assessor-candidates are expected to produce higher-quality, more relevant evidence as the requirements are now clearer.

Evidence requirements are now split into two sections:

- a) Evidence required to support performance claims
- b) Evidence required to support knowledge claims

This document only provides summary information – refer to the full standards for the new Awards to find out more, or contact GQA:

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