NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in Mental Health Awareness
QN: 603/3794/1



Qualification Specification

Qualification summary

Qualification title	**NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in Mental Health Awareness**
Ofqual qualification number (QN)	603/3794/1
Guided learning hours (GLH)	18
Total qualification time (TQT)	20
Minimum age	16
Qualification purpose	This qualification is designed to provide learners with an understanding and awareness of mental health, common mental health disorders and issues, to help reduce stigma and discrimination and encourage people to talk about mental health. Furthermore, the qualification should provide learners with the ability to apply their knowledge of mental health through recognising and responding to the signs of mental ill health in themselves and others and be able to offer mental health first aid to people experiencing mental ill health.
Grading	Achieved/not yet achieved
Assessment method	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence.
Endorsement	This qualification is endorsed by CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity). CIMSPA Endorsed 7½ CIMSPA CPD POINTS
Performance points	Please check the performance points data produced by the Department for Education (DfE) and available online.
Regulation information	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/3794/1.
Funding	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.

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Section 1: introduction

Centres must ensure they are using the most recent version of the Qualification Specification on the website.

Aims and objectives

This qualification aims to:

- focus on the study of mental health awareness
- offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge
- provide opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills.

Support Handbook

This Qualification Specification must be used alongside the mandatory Support Handbook, which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with planning, delivery and assessment.

This Qualification Specification contains all the qualification-specific information you will need that is not covered in the Support Handbook.

Guidance for entry

This qualification is designed for learners aged 16 years and over and who wish to improve their knowledge and awareness of mental health first aid.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the NCFE Portal.

There are no specific prior skills/knowledge a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already achieved a level 1 qualification.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all learners are capable of achieving the learning outcomes (LOs) and complying with the relevant literacy, numeracy, and health and safety requirements.

Learners registered on this qualification should not undertake another qualification at the same level, or with the same/a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve **two units** from the mandatory units.

Please refer to the list of units in appendix A for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all LOs of the units as detailed in this Qualification Specification.

Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to the following:

- further education:
  - health and wellbeing qualifications.

Resource requirements

There are no mandatory resource requirements for this qualification, but centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the appropriate LOs.

Realistic work environment (RWE) requirement/recommendation

The assessment of competence-based criteria should ideally be conducted within the workplace. However, in instances where this is not feasible, learners can be assessed in a realistic work environment (RWE) designed to replicate real work settings.

It is essential for organisations utilising an RWE to ensure it accurately reflects current and authentic work environments. By doing so, employers can be confident that competence demonstrated by a learner in an RWE will be translated into successful performance in employment.

In establishing an RWE, the following factors should be considered.

The work situation being represented is relevant to the competence requirements being assessed:

- the work situation should closely resemble the relevant setting
- equipment and resources that replicate the work situation must be current and available for use to ensure that assessment requirements can be met
- time constraints, resource access and information availability should mirror real conditions.

The learner's work activities reflect those found in the work environment being represented, for example:

- interaction with colleagues and others should reflect expected communication approaches
- tasks performed must be completed to an acceptable timescale
- learners must be able to achieve a realistic volume of work as would be expected in the work situation being represented
- learners operate professionally with clear understanding of their work activities and responsibilities
- feedback from colleagues and others (for example, customers or service users) is maintained and acted upon
- account must be taken of any legislation, regulations or standard procedures that would be followed in the workplace.

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in a qualification.

This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.

The assessment consists of **one** component:

- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence, which is assessed by centre staff and externally quality assured by NCFE (internal quality assurance must still be completed by the centre as usual).

Learners must be successful in this component to gain the Level 2 Award in Mental Health Awareness.

Learners who are not successful can resubmit work within the registration period; however, a charge may apply in cases where additional external quality assurance visits are required.

Unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.

Internal assessment

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks to demonstrate achievement of all the LOs associated with each unit. On completion of each unit, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the assessor must countersign this.

If a centre needs to create their own internal assessment tasks, there are four essential elements in the production of successful centre-based assessment tasks; these are:

- ensuring the assessment tasks are meaningful with clear, assessable outcomes
- appropriate coverage of the content, LOs or assessment criteria (AC)
- having a valid and engaging context or scenario
- including sufficient opportunities for stretch and challenge for higher attainers.

Section 2: unit content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification, including grading, level, credit and guided learning hours (GLH).

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes (LOs) are covered, and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally quality assured. For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact your external quality assurer (EQA).

Unit 01 Mental health awareness (D/617/3070)

Unit summary			
In this unit learners will understand what is meant by mental health and mental health disorders. They will also look at the support and advice available for mental ill health.			
Assessment			
Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence			
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 2**	**12 GLH**

Learning outcomes (Los) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Understand mental health	1.1 Define mental health
	1.2 Describe the mental health continuum
	1.3 Outline stigma and discrimination in relation to mental ill health
	1.4 Identify common misconceptions surrounding mental health
	1.5 Describe the role of the media in the portrayal of mental health
	1.6 Outline key statistical data in relation to mental health
	1.7 Outline the duty of care
2. Understand mental health disorders	2.1 Identify the main signs and symptoms of **common mental health disorders and mental health problems**
	2.2 Identify common treatments and interventions used to manage mental health and mental ill health
	2.3 Describe the main risk factors associated with mental ill health
3. Understand the support and advice available for mental ill health	3.1 Identify credible sources of information, support and guidance
	3.2 Identify credible organisations offering support services
	3.3 Identify appropriate responses that can be made to support someone with mental ill health

Range
2. Understand mental health disorders
2.1 Common mental health disorders and mental health problems to include: • depression • anxiety disorders: stress, phobias and post-traumatic stress disorder • schizophrenia • eating disorders: anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa • addiction and substance misuse • bereavement • self-harm.

Unit 02 Mental health first aid (H/617/3071)

Unit summary			
In this unit learners will recognise and respond to the signs of mental ill health in themselves and others.			
Assessment			
Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence			
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 2**	**6 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Recognise and respond to the signs of mental ill health in themselves and others	1.1 Recognise the signs of mental ill health
	1.2 Provide initial help to a person experiencing mental ill health
	1.3 Signpost appropriate sources of help
	1.4 Escalate situations when a person may be at risk of harm to themselves or others
	1.5 Promote good mental health

NCFE assessment strategy

The key requirements of the assessment strategies or principles that relate to units in this qualification are summarised below.

The centre must ensure that individuals undertaking assessor or quality assurer roles within the centre conform to the assessment requirements for the unit they are assessing or quality assuring.

Knowledge LOs

- assessors will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make assessment decisions
- internal quality assurers (IQAs) will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

Competence/skills LOs

- assessors will need to be both occupationally competent and qualified to make assessment decisions
- IQAs will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

The centre with whom the learners are registered will be responsible for making all assessment decisions. Assessors must be **contracted** to work directly with the centre, contributing to all aspects of standardisation. The centre must ensure a process of training is followed, including during induction and quality assurance activities. Occupationally competent and qualified assessors from the centre must use direct observation to assess practical skills-based outcomes.

Section 3: support

Support materials

The following support materials are available to assist with the delivery of this qualification and are available on the NCFE website:

- learning resources
- Qualification Factsheet.

Other support materials

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

Products to support the delivery of this qualification may be available. For more information about these resources and how to access them, please visit the NCFE website.

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Appendix A: units

To simplify cross-referencing assessments and quality assurance, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

Mandatory units

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
Unit 01	D/617/3070	Mental health awareness	2	12
Unit 02	H/617/3071	Mental health first aid	2	6

Change history record

Version	Publication date	Description of change
AIQ005456	September 2018	Document published
AIQ007214	May 2026	Updates made to assessment method; the units are assessed by an internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence. Minor wording updates have been made to assessment criteria (ACs) across all units to improve clarity and consistency. No changes to learning outcomes (LOs), unit structure or content requirements. Guided learning hours (GLH) have been updated from 15 to 18.
v2.0	November 2026	Qualification title changed and template updated to new version.