

Centre Approval and Accountability Guidance

March 2026

Version 12



Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Your Path to a Successful VTCT Skills Centre Approval	3
2.1. Services.....	3
2.1.1. Fast Track.....	3
2.1.2. Pay by Invoice	4
3. Quality Assurance Activities	4
4. Centre Accountability.....	4
5. Approval criteria.....	5
5.1. Section A: Management, systems, resources	5
5.2. Section B: Delivery arrangements.....	9
5.3. Section C: Assessment and internal quality assurance arrangements	11
5.4. Section D: Theory Examination arrangements	13
5.5. Section E: Learner experience.....	15
5.6. Section F: Practical Examination arrangements	16
5.7. Centre staff roles and responsibilities	17
6. General Staffing Requirements	18
6.1. Internal Assessment Staffing Requirements	18
6.2. Mandated Qualification Requirements	18
6.2.1. Assessors.....	18
6.2.2. IQAs	19
6.3. Unqualified assessors and IQAs	19
6.4. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirements	19

1. Introduction

VTCT Skills is trusted by thousands of Centres worldwide to deliver market-leading qualifications across 17 sectors, supporting over 100,000 learners and apprentices each year. With a global presence in more than 3,000 Centres and recognition in over 40 countries, our qualifications enable learners to progress and build successful careers around the world.

This guidance is designed to support new Centres applying to become an approved VTCT Skills Centre. It outlines the responsibilities, expectations and standards that must be demonstrated across all locations as part of the approval process. Whether training and assessment is at the main site, satellite site, or through approved partnership arrangements within or outside the U.K. Centres must show clear accountability and evidence that every location meets VTCT Skills' approval criteria.

2. Your Path to a Successful VTCT Skills Centre Approval

Becoming an approved VTCT Skills centre is a simple, supportive, and streamlined process and it all begins on our website.

Start your journey by visiting www.vtctskills.org.uk and navigating to the “Become a Centre” page. There, you’ll find our straightforward online application form. Once you verify your email address, you can begin your path toward becoming an approved VTCT Skills centre. VTCT Skills offers two approval payment routes.



Please click on the Image to access the resource

2.1. Services

2.1.1. Fast Track

If you want to progress quickly, our Fast Track service is the ideal choice. By paying your approval fee via Stripe, you gain immediate access to the fastest route through the approval stages.

Our approval Team will typically process your application within two working days. This option keeps everything moving smoothly and is the most efficient way to start delivering VTCT Skills qualifications.

2.1.2. Pay by Invoice

If you prefer to pay by invoice, you will have 30 days to make your payment. Your application will move forward once payment has been received and confirmed by our Finance Team.

If actions are set following the visit, these must be completed within one month. Failure to meet this deadline will result in your application being declined, and the approval fee is non-refundable.

3. Quality Assurance Activities

As part of the approval process, some applications require additional quality assurance checks to confirm that you are ready to deliver VTCT Skills qualifications. These activities may include a remote observation of the centre's facilities, systems, or documentation.

If a quality assurance activity is required, the VTCT Skills Quality Assurance Team will contact you within two working days of payment being confirmed. Quality assurance visits typically take place within 5–10 working days, so centres must ensure they are fully prepared and able to accommodate the visit within this timeframe.

If any actions are set following the quality assurance activity, these must be completed within one month. Failure to complete actions by the deadline will result in the application being declined, and the approval fee is non-refundable.

4. Centre Accountability

Centre approval is granted on the condition that Centres meet and continue to meet all VTCT Skills Centre Agreement requirements and approval visit criteria. These criteria are confirmed during the initial approval process and monitored regularly through external quality assurance activities. Where a Centre does not meet the required standards at approval, VTCT Skills may issue an action plan with mandatory actions to be completed, typically within one month. If these actions are not completed within the required timeframe Centre approval will not be granted and the application will be withdrawn by VTCT Skills and all associated fees will be forfeited.

Once approved, the Head of Centre is responsible for maintaining compliance. The main Centre is accountable for the performance, delivery, and assessment standards at all locations, as well as any connected funding arrangements. Centres must have robust, standardised processes in place so that all learners receive the same quality of training and assessment.

5. Approval criteria

The table below outlines the criteria and provides examples of evidence. Please note that these examples are illustrative and not an exhaustive list.

5.1. Section A: Management, systems, resources

Criteria		Examples of evidence
A1	Does the Centre have clear staff structure and defined roles and responsibilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-defined staff structure with specific roles and responsibilities, along with clear lines of accountability. • Single point of overall responsibility (e.g., principal or head of the Centre). • Documented and signed agreements indicating the lines of accountability of partner organisations in relation to the management of assessment and internal quality assurance.
A2	Does the Centre have appropriate arrangements in place to investigate complaints or possible malpractice or maladministration issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centres are required to have robust policies procedures in place for preventing and investigating incidents of malpractice or maladministration. Learners and Centre staff need to be included in these procedures. • Such investigations must be conducted in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring all relevant evidence is considered without bias. Due regard must be taken of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confidentiality ○ Retention of records and documents ○ Evidence storage ○ Conclusions ○ Sanctions. • Incident investigation report template. • Procedures for notifying VTCT Skills of events occurring. • Evidence of notifications to VTCT Skills.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policies and procedures in place. • Documented Policy Review mechanisms.
A3	<p>Does the Centre have sufficient, qualified staff and CPD arrangements, along with appropriate resources in place to deliver the qualification(s) in accordance with the relevant qualification(s) specification(s) and/or regulatory requirements?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of delivery staff records (Certificates, CVs, and CPD logs) show that evidence the requirements to deliver any requested qualifications have been met. • Details of tutor/assessors’ and internal quality assurers’ qualifications, experience, and CPD. • Details of countersigning arrangements for any unqualified assessors’ or internal quality assurers’ decisions if applicable. • Provided induction and guidance materials for staff. • Development plans in place.
A4	<p>Does the Centre have the systems in place to comply with VTCT Skills’ (including ITEC) policies and procedures for registering and certificating learners?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of learners’ registration, tracking, and achievement. • Assessment and IQA records. • Plans for storage of records. • Process for checking the identity of learners. • Awareness of VTCT Skills requirements • Learner registration and certification records. • Enrolment process includes viewing learners’ original documents to confirm identity. • The Centre uses records and data which have previously verified the learner’s identity and information.

A5	<p>Does the Centre have policies and procedures in place to ensure it meets all requirements and obligations, as defined in the VTCT Skills Centre Agreement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre must specifically have policies to cover the following: <p>Appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should contain details of the course of action open to a learner should they wish to appeal to a Centre assessment decision. This must include time frames for resolution and escalation routes, such as escalation to the Awarding Organisation, for Scottish centre’s reference to escalation Qualification Scotland Accreditation and the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) as appropriate should be included. <p>Complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres should show how they would manage complaints from learners and staff and include appropriate timescales for dealing with them. method by which a complaint should be made. to whom an initial complaint should be made right for the complainant to be supported by a representative. next steps if the complaint is not resolved i.e., to whom the complaint is then referred. the right to complain to the awarding organisation if not satisfied with the outcome. <p>(see VTCT Skills Complaints Policy and Procedure for more details on when a complaint can be escalated)</p> <p>Equality & Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This must be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with appropriate and current legislation. Where appropriate legislation is referenced, this must be the most up to date legislation appropriate to the region in which the Centre operates.
----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

		<p>Health & Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This must be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with appropriate and current legislation. Where appropriate legislation is referenced, this must be the most up to date legislation appropriate to the region in which the Centre operates. <p>Malpractice & Maladministration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre should include definitions of both malpractice and maladministration, clearly outlining the differences between the two. • How instances of malpractice should be notified. • Steps the Centre will take to investigate suspected malpractice. • Time frames for resolution and escalation routes (see VTCT Skills Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure for more details on when a malpractice instance should be escalated). • For Scottish Centres reference to escalation Qualification Scotland Accreditation and the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) as appropriate should be included. <p>Conflicts of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This must provide details of how a Centre will monitor, record, and mitigate conflicts of interest among Centre staff and learners. <p>To support centres in meeting VTCT Skills requirements, we provide a range of optional templates that centre’s may use to develop their own policies and processes. Click on the image in section 2 for access to the templates.</p>
<p>A6</p>	<p>Does the Centre have systems in place to notify VTCT Skills and store documents, where a reasonable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for identifying a learner’s need for a reasonable adjustment. • Records of reasonable adjustments applied.

	adjustment is required in accordance with published guidance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of reasonable adjustment requests.
A7	Does the Centre have systems in place to notify VTCT Skills and store documents where special considerations are required in accordance with published guidance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process for identifying managing Special Consideration requests. Records of special consideration requests.
A8	Does the Centre have resources, equipment, and facilities must be clearly identified and must fully meet the VTCT Skills Centre Qualification requirements for delivering the qualification(s) in line with the relevant qualification specification and/or any applicable regulatory and or other industry standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of work/lesson plans/resources. Evidence of additional resources obtained to support. Records of equipment, facilities, and accommodation. Accessible materials, equipment, and facilities for learners who require reasonable adjustments or additional support. Sufficient physical resources to meet the qualification and assessment requirements. Ensure the site is fit for training purposes, including controlled environment(s) as required.
A9	Does the Centre ensure Learner personal data is collected and stored in accordance with relevant data protection regulations and the learner has consented to its use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures regarding the storing and using of personal data.

5.2.Section B: Delivery arrangements

Criteria		Examples of evidence
B1	Course delivery plans are available and appropriate for the qualification being delivered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas and minutes of team meetings. Delivery Plans/Scheme of Work. Staff handbooks and updates.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of actions taken. • Curriculum review. • Departmental Meetings. • Resolution of previous actions. • Evidence of review and implemented action plans.
B2	<p>Are courses being delivered in accordance with the published qualification specification?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned time allowances for qualification to meet the guided learning hours (GLH) or total qualification time (TQT). • Evidence of using feedback to adjust time provided for a qualification. • Processes to organise and schedule examinations as per the qualification specification and VTCT Skills rules.

5.3. Section C: Assessment and internal quality assurance arrangements

Criteria		Examples of evidence
C1	Does the Centre have reasonable steps in place to prevent the loss, theft of, or breach of confidentiality in assessment materials (and if such an incident where to occur the Centre must immediately inform VTCT Skills)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for notifying VTCT Skills of breaches of security. • Procedures for storing confidential information. • Evidence of notifications to an awarding organisation. • Investigation reports into incident(s). • Evidence of completion of actions issued by an awarding organisation.
C2	Does the Centre ensure that assessments are not conducted by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment and that potential and actual conflicts of interest (e.g. assessing a family member or IQAs signing off their own assessments) are identified, recorded and mitigated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of potential or actual conflicts of interest. • Process for identifying and mitigating conflicts of interest. • Records of learners' registration, tracking, and achievement. • Enrolment process includes viewing learner's original documents to confirm identity. • Learner registration and certification records. • The Centre uses records and data which have previously verified the learner's identity and information. • Invigilation requirements are available to view and invigilators understand the arrangements.
C3	Will the assessment methods you reviewed allow the learner to be assessed correctly against the qualification specification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment plans and learner assessment records. • Provision for learners with particular assessment requirements.

C4	Does the Centre ensure that where a language other than English is to be used, the approval of VTCT Skills has been confirmed in advance, and that the level of demand is consistent with assessments/examinations conducted in English, Welsh or Irish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre can produce written evidence of authorisation by VTCT Skills to deliver in another language.
C5	Are Centre IQAs effective in their planning of the IQA strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented IQA plans and reports/records of activity. • Sampling strategy and schedule of activity. • Assessment and internal quality assurance records. • Evidence of actions taken. • Minutes of team meetings/standardisation.
C6	Does the Centre have appropriate documented standardisation arrangements in place for liaising with, and ensuring consistency across, the qualification delivery team (e.g. a team of assessors and IQA team), including at any associated sites (i.e. standardisation activities) and that all standardisation activities are planned efficiently against specific qualification(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of team meetings and records of communication. • Evidence of standardisation meetings that have taken place and future meetings planned. • Records of relevant action plans. • Records of all assessment sites and personnel. • Evidence of circulating EQA reports to the assessment team and senior management. • Evidence of action plans being implemented.

5.4. Section D: Theory Examination arrangements

Criteria		Examples of evidence
D1	Does the Centre have reasonable steps in place to prevent the loss, theft of, or breach of confidentiality in examination materials (and if such an incident were to occur the Centre must immediately inform VTCT Skills)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for storing confidential information. • Evidence of notifications to an awarding organisation • Investigation reports into incident(s) • Evidence of completion of actions issued by an Awarding Organisation.
D2	Does the Centre ensure that examinations are not conducted by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the examination and that potential and actual conflicts of interest (e.g. assessing a family member or IQAs signing off their own assessments) are identified, recorded and mitigated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of potential or actual conflicts of interest. • Process for identifying and mitigating conflicts of interest. • Records of learners' registration, tracking, and achievement. • Enrolment process includes viewing learner's original documents to confirm identity. • Learner registration and certification records. • The Centre uses records and data which have previously verified the learner's identity and information. • Invigilation requirements are available to view and invigilators understand the arrangements.
D3	Does the Centre ensure that where a language other than English is to be used, the approval of VTCT Skills has been confirmed in advance, and that the level of demand is consistent with assessments/ examinations conducted in English, Welsh or Irish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre can produce written evidence of authorisation by VTCT Skills to be conducted in another language.

D4	<p>Is the Centre aware of the qualification specific documentation and procedures in relation to managing Technical and Applied General (UK) examinations? (N/A for verified qualifications)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of specification detail in course folders. • Minutes of meetings discussing specific requirements. • Minutes of meeting with examination team. • Examination schedules based on VTCT Skills published dates. • Evidence of the results days plan.
D5	<p>Is external assessment conducted in accordance with the VTCT Skills Instructions for Conducting Examinations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invigilation requirements are available to view, and invigilators understand the arrangements. • Invigilation reports and seating plans. • Details of invigilators allocated to tests.
D6	<p>Does the Centre ensure records, including examination papers, assessment materials are securely stored, managed and maintained in accordance with VTCT Skills Instructions for Conducting Examinations and are made available upon request?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security and access arrangements. • Secure storage facilities in place (e.g., alarmed room/building, fireproof safe, cabinet with external locking bar, reinforced glass). • Examination papers, seating plans and marking sheets securely stored.
D7	<p>Is there an effective strategy in place to manage the simultaneous delivery of theory exams across multiple sites? (N/A for Verified qualifications)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security and access arrangements. • Policies and procedures for managing and handling examination papers.

5.5. Section E: Learner experience

Criteria		Examples of evidence
E1	Do learners receive an induction programme which will provide information, advice and guidance about qualification procedures and practices?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner guidance and induction materials. • Details of support services available. • Provision of complaints and appeals procedure to learners. • Contract between Centre and learner for a qualification undertaken.
E2	How will the learner(s) know who to contact regarding appeals, complaints and IQA arrangements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented appeals and complaints procedures, including time frames. • Records of appeals and complaints made and their outcomes. • Signed and dated induction checklists.
E3	How will the learner(s) access the appropriate equipment and materials to undertake the qualification/unit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available resources to meet any relevant legislation for qualifications or sectors being delivered. • Available equipment to meet any relevant requirements in the qualification specifications and the VTCT Skills Centre Qualification Requirements document.
E4	How will learner(s) receive feedback from the Centre's staff in relation to their progress and work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment records/Learner Feedback documentation. • Processes and procedures for assessment tracking.

E5	Learners will have regular opportunities to review their progress and discuss examination resit requirements with their tutors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner assessment plans, with records and procedures, and hold review meetings. • Learner records. • System to track learners' progress. • Feedback provided by delivery staff.
----	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5.6. Section F: Practical Examination arrangements

Criteria		Examples of evidence
F1	The Centre has reasonable steps in place to prevent the loss, theft of, or breach of confidentiality in examination materials (and if such an incident where to or has occurred the Centre must immediately inform VTCT Skills)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for storing confidential information. • Evidence of notifications to VTCT Skills. • Investigation reports into incident(s). • Evidence of completion of actions issued by VTCT Skills.
F2	Does the Centre take reasonable steps to ensure that examinations are planned in timely and structured manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of learners' registration, tracking, and achievement. • Enrolment process includes viewing learner's original documents to confirm identity. • Learner registration and certification records. • The Centre uses records and data which have previously verified the learner's identity and information.
F3	Is the Centre aware of the qualification specific documentation and VTCT Skills Regulations and Procedures for Operating Practical Examinations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of specification detail in course folders. • Minutes of meetings discussing specific requirements. • Copy of VTCT Skills Regulations and Procedures for Operating Practical Examinations.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination schedules based on VTCT Skills published dates (If applicable). |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

5.7. Centre staff roles and responsibilities

To ensure Centres can meet the approval criteria they must demonstrate they have the necessary management structure and appropriately qualified staffing in place. This section provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities.

Role	Responsibilities
Head of Centre	The head of Centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding organisation for ensuring that the Centre is always compliant with the published regulations and VTCT Skills requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments. This individual must have the authority to deploy the necessary resources to ensure that the Centre is always compliant with the published regulations and VTCT Skills requirements.
Head of Quality	This role is responsible for the Centre's quality assurance processes (this is usually a lead IQA or Centre coordinator).
Head of Examinations	This role holds full responsibility for scheduling all examinations and ensuring that invigilators receive thorough, up-to-date training. The postholder must safeguard the security, confidentiality, and integrity of all examination materials in accordance with VTCT Skills policies. In addition, this role is accountable for the accurate and timely submission of learner registrations and certification claims to VTCT Skills.
Main Finance contact	This role will be the first point of contact regarding any financial queries.

6. General Staffing Requirements

The qualification specifications typically provide guidance on the staffing required to deliver each qualification. However, VTCT Skills recognises that every Centre may have its own arrangements. Delivery teams can include teachers, assessors, and internal quality assurers (IQAs), and Centres may operate with a single individual or an individual that fills the position of the multiple roles or separate staff for teaching, assessing, and internal quality assurance.

Typically, and regardless of the delivery model, all individuals involved in delivery, assessing, or quality assurance hold a regulated qualification at the same level or higher than the qualification or a unit of achievement or can demonstrate extensive, up-to-date industry experience supported by appropriate CPD evidence.

6.1. Internal Assessment Staffing Requirements

In addition to outlining the occupational competence needed, the qualification specifications also describe the internal assessment arrangements and the specific roles required to support the process.

While some qualifications mandate assessors and internal verifiers to hold a regulated qualification, VTCT Skills recognises that this is not always necessary for other qualifications. However, where VTCT Skills have identified flexibilities are appropriate, VTCT Skills mandate those involved in the internal assessment undertake VTCT Skills induction. It is good practice for those involved to upskills to a regulated qualification.

6.2. Mandated Qualification Requirements

Where a qualification specification mandates the requirement of an assessor and/or IQA', typically, accepted qualifications include:

6.2.1. Assessors

- D32 Assess candidate performance.
- D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence.
- A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods.
- A2 Assess candidate performance through observation.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement.
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement.

6.2.2. IQAs

IQAs must be competent, as described previously, and must hold at least one of the following recognised regulated internal verification/quality assurance qualifications to be considered a qualified IQA:

- D34 Internally verify the assessment process.
- V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process.
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.

Please note that IQAs may only quality assure evidence that they did not assess.

6.3. Unqualified assessors and IQAs

Where a qualification specification mandates that assessors or IQAs must hold a regulated qualification, Centres must have procedures in place to ensure that any unqualified assessors or IQAs are enrolled on an appropriate regulated qualification. Centres must also provide an action plan with a defined completion timeframe, normally within 12–18 months.

During this period, all assessment and IQA decisions made by unqualified staff must be countersigned by a suitably qualified and occupationally competent assessor or IQA. This ensures that assessment judgements remain valid, reliable, and fully compliant with VTCT Skills requirements.

6.4. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirements

Staff must take part in regular CPD to stay up to date with industry developments and anything relevant to the qualification or units they deliver, assess, or quality assure. CPD should be recorded through a Personal Development Plan (PDP) or a reflective diary. Everyone is responsible for maintaining their own CPD.

Some Assessment Strategies or Qualification Specifications include specific CPD requirements. Where they do not, VTCT Skills has set sector-specific expectations for VTCT Skills.

VTCT Skills provides recommended CPD hours based on the qualification being delivered. If assessors or IQAs work across more than one qualification, they must meet the highest CPD requirement of the qualifications they deliver.

Document amendment history page

Document Review

Role	Review Status
Head of Quality Assurance and Centre Admin	Reviewed and agreed

Document Owner

Document Owner	Document shared with
Head of Quality Assurance and Centre Admin	Quality Assurance Supervisor

Document Sign-off

Role	Sign-off Date
Head of Quality Assurance and Centre Admin	26/03/2026