

Academic Study Skills



Laser Learning Awards

LASER supports its approved centres to develop flexible and responsive credit based courses. This includes those that widen access to lifelong learning, and address exclusion and participation. The structure of our qualifications enables learners to be approved for their achievement, to accumulate credit, and use this to access further qualifications and learning over time.

LASER makes sure:

- quality assurance underpins all provision.
- only centres that meet national standards are approved (for course and qualification delivery and quality assurance).

LASER staff:

- have a wide experience of centre, course and qualification approval.
- support centres to make sure awards are valid and valued.

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Summary of Changes

Version	Publication Date	Summary of Changes
V1.1	July 2024	Document and file links updated throughout to accommodate new LASER website. General grammar, formatting and spelling updates.

Qualification Overview

OFQUAL QUALIFICATION NUMBERS

610/1546/5	LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills
610/1547/7	LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills

Laser Learning Awards is an awarding organisation regulated by Ofqual, the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

PURPOSE AND AIM OF QUALIFICATIONS	This qualification suite provides students with the opportunity to achieve a range of skills which are essential to successful study at degree level. It will support English Language speakers and students for whom English is not a first language. These qualifications will prepare the students to progress to a qualification in another subject area and support their current or future roles in the workplace.
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	Students must be over 16 years of age and have achieved GCSE level English (or equivalent). Students for whom English is not their first language should have achieved: A secure English Language Test (SELT) pass from an approved UK/Non-UK provider equivalent to CEFR level B1. And/or, GCSE English or Scottish National Qualification Level 4 from a UK school.
RULES OF COMBINATION	To achieve the LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills , students must achieve a minimum of 12 credits. To achieve the LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills , students must achieve a minimum of 21 credits.
UNITS	To see the unit content, click here .
ASSESSMENT	This suite of qualifications is achieved by providing evidence covering the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of each chosen unit. Details of assessment methods are contained within each unit. Evidence is assessed and internally verified by the approved centre and externally verified by LASER. For more details, please see Section 3.2 .
PRICE	For LASER's price list, please click here .
DATES	Operational Start Date: 01 October 2022 Qualifications Review Date: 30 September 2027
TO DELIVER	Centres must meet LASER's requirements for centre recognition and qualification approval. Click here for details of how to become an Approved Centre. Requirements include those around teaching and learning resources, staffing, course and venues, record keeping, delivery, assessment, and quality assurance. Once approved, centres can download necessary forms from the Quartz Web Portal . This resource includes a range of information and guidance as well as providing access to secure web-based functions, designed to make the administration and assessment of qualifications simple and efficient.

1. About the Qualification

This suite of qualifications offers maximum flexibility for those students who seek to develop either their functional skills and/or skills in other areas of study according to their needs. The qualifications will be especially useful for those students seeking to progress to higher education. The qualifications are Ofqual regulated on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

The qualifications include key functional skills in writing, mathematics and information communication technology as well as other skills which will be of significant benefit in future academic studies and/or in professional practice.

Students are assessed using a combination of methods including portfolio of evidence and coursework. There are no external exams for either qualification.

To offer these qualifications, a centre must be approved by LASER. For further information about becoming an Approved Centre or working in partnership with an Approved Centre, please visit our website.

Existing approved centres must be approved to deliver this qualification. Please contact quality@laser-awards.org.uk for further information. Full details of all LASER requirements are provided in the LASER centre handbook which is available via our [Quartz Web Portal](#).

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2. Offering the Qualifications

2.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This qualification suite is designed to equip students with a range of skills which are essential for successful Higher Education studies.

2.2 TARGET GROUP

Students, both overseas and in the UK, seeking to enter Higher Education at either Ofqual Level 4, 5 or 6.

2.3 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Students must be over 16 years of age and have achieved GCSE level English (or equivalent). Students for whom English is not their first language should have achieved: A secure English Language Test (SELT) pass from an approved UK/Non-UK provider equivalent to CEFR level B1.

And/or,

GCSE English or Scottish National Qualification Level 4 from a UK school.

2.4 ACHIEVING THE QUALIFICATION

To achieve the LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills, students must achieve 12 credits from any of the qualification units.

To achieve the LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills, students must achieve 21 credits from any of the qualification units. Unit content can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills				OFQUAL CODE: 610/1546/5	
LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills				OFQUAL CODE: 610/1547/7	
LASER UNIT CODE	OFQUAL UNIT CODE*	UNIT TITLE	UNIT DESCRIPTION	CREDIT VALUE	LEVEL
WJH234	L/650/4304	Academic Essay Writing Skills	Optional	3	3
WJH235	M/650/4305	Collecting, Presenting And Using Statistics	Optional	3	3
WJH236	R/650/4306	Digital Skills For Study	Optional	3	3
WJH237	T/650/4307	Independent Academic Study	Optional	6	3
WJH238	Y/650/4308	Introduction To Science And The Scientific Method	Optional	3	3
WJH239	A/650/4309	Preparing For And Taking Written Exams	Optional	3	3
WJH240	M/650/4314	Presentation Skills	Optional	3	3
WJH241	R/650/4315	Research Skills For Study	Optional	3	3
WJH242	T/650/4316	Understanding Maths	Optional	3	2
WJH243	Y/650/4317	Understanding Statistics	Optional	3	3
WJH244	A/650/4318	Writing Skills	Optional	3	3

2.5 TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME AND GUIDED LEARNING HOURS

The recommended number of guided learning hours is as follows:

QUALIFICATION TITLE	CREDIT VALUE	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS (GLH)	TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME* (TQT)
LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills	12	57	120
LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills	21	90	235

* Total Qualification Time represents an estimate of the total amount of time that a student could reasonably expect to devote to successfully achieving the qualification. Total Qualification Time (TQT) is made up of Guided Learning hours (GLH) and Additional Hours (AH).

Values for Total Qualification Time, including Guided Learning, are calculated by considering the different activities that Learners would typically complete to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes of a qualification. They do not include activities which are required by a Learner's Teacher based on the requirements of an individual Learner and/or cohort. Individual Learners' requirements and individual teaching styles mean there will be variation in the actual time taken to complete a qualification. Values for Total Qualification Time, including Guided Learning, are estimates.

Some examples of activities which can contribute to Total Qualification Time include

- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning
- All Guided Learning

Some examples of activities which can contribute to Guided Learning include:

- Classroom-based learning supervised by a Teacher
- Work-based learning supervised by a Teacher
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a Teacher in real time
- E-learning supervised by a Teacher in real time
- All forms of assessment which take place under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including where the assessment is competence-based and may be turned into a learning opportunity.

2.6 LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

This qualification is only available in English.

2.7 PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES

The LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills and the LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills are designed primarily to enable students to progress to studies at a Higher Education institution but will also equip them with skills that will be useful in the workplace.

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3. How the Qualification will be Assessed

3.1 OVERVIEW

These qualifications are assessed by the centre and are subject to LASER's requirements for quality assurance. Once approved, centres will have access to documents designed to make the assessment and internal quality assurance of the qualifications simple and efficient.

3.2 ASSESSMENT DESIGN

These qualifications are assessed through the development of a portfolio of evidence. LASER's Assessment Definitions are available to approved centres on the Quartz Web Portal.

LASER has developed unit assessments and exemplar assessment briefs for centre use. Centre devised assessments are also permitted to allow centres the flexibility to design assessments that fit their students' individual needs. Not all students need to be assessed using the same method. When using a variety of methods, and especially when varying them between students, assessors must check scrupulously that assessment methods are fair to all students, without inadvertent disadvantage through the choice of a different assessment method.

Level Descriptors are provided in [Appendix 1](#). Assessment must be valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the learning outcomes and allow transparent authenticity: this means it must be apparent that evidence produced by a student is the work of the individual student, even if they have worked in a group. All assessments should be internally quality assured to meet these standards before they are implemented. Assessed work must be internally quality assured ([See Section 6](#)).

3.3 RECORD KEEPING

LASER recommends using a Tutor Assessment Planning Sheet, as this helps to set out the various tasks, their assessment methods and the evidence needed to be produced, in a simple plan that can be shown to the internal quality assurer and Quality Reviewer. It also allows the assessor to set out the options where more than one assessment method could be used for any one task: this information can then be transferred as required to the Individual Learner Record for each student, allowing for some different methods to be used for individual students, if individualised learning is appropriate. These planning sheets can be customised as centres prefer, as long as all essential information is included. In addition, a set of Assessment briefs are available for this qualification and can be downloaded from the [Quartz Web Portal](#). Centres can use these to record student achievement and they are ideal for inclusion in a portfolio of evidence.

All assessment methods must be suitably evidenced, and templates for assessors' use are available in the documents area on the [Quartz Web Portal](#). Note particularly the use of a group witness or individual witness statement, to be used in conjunction with a list of questions or discussion prompts, or sample recordings, when the methods 'group discussion' or 'oral question and answer' are used.

It is acceptable for the evidence to be held in a mixture of places (hard copy or digitally), for example in a student file and/or tutor file or on an intranet using a specific student programme. If this is the case, it must be clear for each student precisely where the information is held, by using one record sheet such as

the Individual Learner Record, and that the evidence is complete. Evidence must be available to the LASER Quality Reviewers on request.

Records must be kept of all internal quality assurance activity. Exemplar templates for recording this activity are available on the [Quartz Web Portal](#).

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4. Special Arrangements for Learners with Particular Requirements

For information on special arrangements please refer to the LASER policy document [Access to Fair Assessment](#). This gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements that can be made without compromising the achievement of the assessment criteria to take account of disability or learning difficulty or for those who experience temporary illness, injury or other unexpected events.

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5. Tutor/Assessor/Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

All tutors/trainers/assessors delivering these qualifications must hold an appropriate teaching or training qualification at level 3 or above and provide evidence of continuing professional development (CPD) from the previous two years. They should also be able to evidence appropriate, subject-specific experience to the units being delivered.

All Internal Quality Assurers (IQA) quality assuring these qualifications must hold a relevant qualification and have a current, clear and complete understanding of the subject matter. They should also have up-to-date knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance and should have or be working towards, a relevant teaching/assessing/quality assurance qualification. They should also show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.

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6. Quality Assurance of the Qualification

Approved centres must implement the internal quality assurance arrangements detailed in the **LASER Centre Handbook**. To access this simply logon to the [Quartz Web Portal](#) and visit the document section. The LASER Quality Reviewer will regularly monitor compliance with these requirements. The Quality Reviewer will report on the progress of any agreed actions for quality improvement.

In brief, centres delivering LASER qualifications must have internal quality assurance systems to underpin the delivery of the qualification. Internal quality assurance is the process by which the centre regularly

samples and evaluates its assessment practices and decisions, and acts on the findings, to ensure consistency and fairness. It involves two key processes; verification and standardisation and is done by one or more internal quality assurers. Systems will vary between centres according to their particular situation, for example practices that work in a large centre will not necessarily be effective in a smaller one. However, there must be:

- an appropriate system in place, and
- evidence that it is implemented effectively.

The outcome of the internal quality assurance process is the recommendation of award of credit to students. There are two ways credit can be awarded to students; through a LASER Quality Reviewer, or by a member of staff at the centre who has been approved by LASER to hold Direct Claims Status.

6.1 DIRECT CLAIMS STATUS (DCS)

Direct Claims Status can be awarded when a centre has one or more Approved Internal Quality Assurers (AIQA) for the appropriate sector or course(s). These centres can claim the award of credit directly from LASER. An application for Direct Claims Status must be made by the individual holding AIQA status and must show evidence of good verification practice at the centre for which the application is made. When an AIQA leaves an organisation, Direct Claims Status does not automatically transfer to any new centre. An application must be made in conjunction with the new centre.

AIQA and DCS status is monitored by the Quality Reviewer and can be withdrawn by LASER at any time if quality systems are not effective.

6.2 STANDARDISATION

LASER hold regular standardisation events to ensure consistent application of assessment. Centres are required to contribute to LASER's programme of standardisation and to carry out appropriate internal standardisation.

LASER hold standardisation events to ensure comparable standards are being achieved year-on-year and there is a consistency of delivery and assessment across centres. Quality Reviewers are required to identify samples of students' work for standardisation purposes during quality assurance visits. Where an AIQA is in place they will identify samples of students' work to submit to national standardisation events. Centres are required to retain records of the assessment and internal quality assurance processes to contribute to standardisation events. Where units are common to other awarding organisations' qualifications, LASER will work collaboratively to make sure standardisation requirements as set out in the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition are met.

Standardisation activities also include opportunities for networking and sharing of resources, together with regular information about new or replacement units. Centres are recommended to attend these meetings, in addition to centre visits by Quality Reviewers.

6.3 RETAINING EVIDENCE

For all qualifications, centres must retain complete and accurate records for at least three years from the end of the academic year to which they relate. These records must be made available to LASER on request.

Appendix 1: Ofqual Level Descriptors – Levels 2 & 3

LEVEL	KNOWLEDGE – THE LEARNER:	SKILLS – THE LEARNER CAN:
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures and ideas in an area of study or field of work to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. • Can interpret relevant information and ideas. • Is aware of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems. • Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions. • Identify how effective actions have been.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. • Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. • Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work. • Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. • Use appropriate investigation to inform actions. • Review how effective methods and actions have been.

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Appendix 2: Unit List

Please click below for the Unit List:

LASER Level 3 Award in Academic Study Skills

OFQUAL CODE: 610/1546/5



LASER Level 3 Certificate in Academic Study Skills

OFQUAL CODE: 610/1547/7



As well as consulting this document, providers must also check LASER's essential information regarding the availability of all LASER's qualifications and units, including withdrawal notifications. LASER's 'Qualification and Unit Announcements' are available on our website.

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