Participating in Learning

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 recognised 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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Qualification Overview

OFQUAL QUALIFICATION NUMBERS

600/9515/5	LASER Entry Level Award in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)
600/9517/9	LASER Entry Level Certificate in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)
600/9519/2	LASER Entry Level Diploma in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)

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

PURPOSE AND AIM OF QUALIFICATIONS	These qualifications enable learners working at Entry Level 2 to study a collection of units pertinent to their needs and interest, selected by the centre from a very broad range of subject areas. The qualifications consist of units in English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and Religious Education, Art, Craft, Design, Music, Physical Education, Dance, Drama and Performance, as well as units in Personal and Social Development. The design of these qualifications and the rules of combination maximise curriculum choice and flexibility. Providers have a genuinely extensive choice of units and combinations of units and the freedom to design a truly bespoke programme of study/work experience for their learners based on their professional assessment of what is most appropriate and most likely to aid progression.
WHO IS IT FOR?	These qualifications are suitable for any learner whom the centre has established would benefit.
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	There are no specific entry requirements.
RULES OF COMBINATION	To achieve the LASER Entry Level **Award** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 6 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units. To achieve the LASER Entry Level **Certificate** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 15 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units. To achieve the LASER Entry Level **Diploma** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 37 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units.
UNITS	Please follow the link to the **units list** and click on the unit titles.
ASSESSMENT	The qualifications are achieved by providing evidence covering the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of each unit. Details of assessment methods are contained within each unit. There is no external assessment: evidence is assessed and internally verified by the provider, and verified externally by LASER.
PRICE	For LASER's price list, please click **here**.
DATES	Operational Start Date: 1 July 2013 Qualifications Review Date: 31 August 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. To deliver, A 'New Programme-Provider Course Notification Form' must be completed. 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(s)

There are three LASER qualifications in Participating in Learning: an Award, Certificate and Diploma. All are at Entry Level 2 and all are regulated by Ofqual and sit on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

The LASER Participating in Learning suite has a sister suite of qualifications, also at Entry Level 2. These are the LASER Preparing to Get a Job qualifications (Award, Certificate and Diploma).

Both suites were developed as a direct result of feedback from, and in consultation with, providers. They are ideal for use as part of a learner's Study Programme.

A one page Qualification Summary outlining the LASER Participating in Learning qualifications is provided in **Qualification Overview**.

For information on the sister suite, please see the LASER website **www.laser-awards.org.uk**.

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 complete a New Programme-Provider Course Notification Form before starting to deliver the qualification, which is available via our **Quartz Web Portal**. Full details of all LASER requirements are provided in the LASER centre handbook which is also available via our **Quartz Web Portal**.

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2. Offering the Qualification(s)

2.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The LASER Participating in Learning qualifications enable learners working at Entry Level 2 to study a collection of academic and personal and social development units pertinent to their needs and interest, selected by the centre from a very broad range of subject areas.

The qualifications consist of units in English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and Religious Education, Art, Craft, Design, Music, Physical Education, Dance, Drama and Performance, as well as PSD, Citizenship and Gardening units. A learner's programme could consist of units in exploring poetry and drama improvisations. Or it could cover choices and decisions, healthy lifestyles, being safe during sport, team competitive activities, the human body and photography. These are simply two examples. There are numerous other units to choose from, in numerous combinations and because these qualifications are offered in 3 sizes (Award, Certificate and Diploma), there is flexibility in terms of the number of guided learning hours used too.

The design of these qualifications and the rules of combination maximise curriculum choice and flexibility. The intention is that providers have a genuinely extensive choice of units and combinations of units and the freedom to design a truly bespoke programme of study for their learners based on their professional assessment of what is most appropriate and most likely to aid progression.

All units of assessment are pre-existing units but these qualifications present an opportunity to utilise these units with new learners and in new configurations.

2.2 TARGET GROUP

These qualifications are suitable for any learner whom the centre has established would benefit. They may be particularly relevant to a range of Learners with Learning Disabilities or Difficulties (LLDD).

2.3 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are no specific entry requirements but tutors must ensure that the level of the qualification is appropriate to the learner.

2.4 ACHIEVING THE QUALIFICATION(S)

To achieve one of the LASER Participating in Learning qualifications, the learner must undertake a number of units of assessment and achieve a specified value of 'credit' by meeting the assessment criteria for those units of assessment.

The **'rules of combination'** for each qualification (i.e. the value of credit the learner must achieve, and instructions about the units of assessment they must undertake to do so) are stated below.

To view the units for each qualification, please see **Appendix 2**. Each qualification in the suite consists of the same selection of units.

The qualifications are 'nested'. Credits achieved for the Award can contribute towards achievement of the Certificate and credits achieved for the Certificate can contribute towards achievement of the Diploma.

Rules of Combination:

LASER Entry Level Award in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)
Qualification Number: 600/9515/5

To achieve the LASER Entry Level Award in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 6 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units.

LASER Entry Level Certificate in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)
Qualification Number: 600/9517/9

To achieve the LASER Entry Level Certificate in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 15 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units.

LASER Entry Level Diploma in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)
Qualification Number: 600/9519/2

To achieve the LASER Entry Level Diploma in Participating in Learning (Entry 2) the learner must achieve a minimum of 37 credits. The credits may be taken from any combination of units.

2.5 TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME AND GUIDED LEARNING HOURS

The LASER Level 2 suite of qualifications in Participating in Learning have credit values of between 6 and 37 credits, with a recommended Total Qualification Time of between 6 and 13 hours. The recommended guided learning hours and total qualification time are as follows:

QUALIFICATION TITLE	CREDIT VALUE	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS (GLH)	TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME* (TQT)
LASER Entry Level Award in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	6	60/60	60
LASER Entry Level Certificate in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	15	150/150	150
LASER Entry Level Diploma in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	37	370/370	370

* Total Qualification Time represents an estimate of the total amount of time that a learner 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

The qualification is only available in English.

2.7 PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES

The LASER qualifications for Participating in Learning promote progression onto further study or onto the sister suite: LASER's Preparing to Get a Job qualifications.

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3. How the Qualification(s) will be Assessed

3.1 OVERVIEW

The qualifications are assessed by the centre and are subject to LASER's requirements for quality assurance. Once approved as a Laser Centre simply log on to the **Quartz Web Portal** to access a range of 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. The portfolio should comprise a series of tasks devised by the centre, mapped to the assessment criteria. Satisfactory completion of the tasks and compilation of the portfolio will provide evidence that the learner has met the requirements of the qualification.

Some units may have specific requirements about how they should be assessed. These requirements are stated on the unit of assessment itself where applicable. To view the unit content, please click on the unit title hyperlinks within the tables in **Appendix 2**.

The centre must assess the learner in terms of whether they have met each unit assessment criteria. All the unit assessment criteria in a unit must be met (and evidenced) before a unit can be deemed achieved. Level Descriptors are provided in **Appendix 1**.

Assessment must be valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the outcome, and allow transparent authenticity: this means it must be apparent that evidence produced by a learner is the work of the individual learner, even if they have worked in a group. It is recommended that assessments are internally verified to meet these standards before they are implemented.

Assessed work must be internally quality assured (**See Section 6**).

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[1] All Approved Centres have access to the **Quartz Web Portal**.

3.3 RECORD KEEPING

LASER also recommends using a **Tutor Assessment Planning Sheet**[2] 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 LASER Quality and Curriculum 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**[2] for each learner, allowing for some different methods to be used for individual learners, if individualised learning is appropriate. These planning sheets can be customised as centres prefer, as long as all essential information is included.

All assessment methods must be suitably evidenced, and templates for assessors' use are all available in the document area of 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 and Curriculum 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 arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the achievement of the assessment criteria.

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5. Tutor/Assessor/Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

LASER recommends tutors, assessors, and internal quality assurers are experienced, and requires that they have a clear understanding of the subject matter. All staff involved in the delivery of the qualification should have, or be working towards, a relevant teaching/assessing/quality assurance qualification as appropriate.

[2] Approved LASER centres have access to the **Quartz Web Portal.**

www.laser-awards.org.uk

6. Quality Assurance of the Qualification(s)

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.** The LASER Quality and Curriculum reviewer will regularly monitor compliance with these requirements. The LASER Quality and Curriculum 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 valid 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: quality assurance and standardisation, and is done by one or more internal quality assurers.

Systems do vary between centres according to their particular situation, for example practices that work in a large centre are not necessarily effective in a smaller one. However there must be:

- an appropriate quality assurance system in place and
- evidence the system is implemented effectively.

The outcome of the internal quality assurance process is the recommendation of award of credit to learners (RAC). There are two ways credit can be awarded to learners: by a LASER Quality and Curriculum 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 (DCS) can be awarded when a centre has one or more Approved Internal Quality Assurers (AIQA/s) 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 internal quality assurance practice at the centre for which the application is made. When an AIQA leaves an organisation, DCS does not automatically continue for that centre nor can it be automatically transferred for the individual to any new centre. An application must be made in conjunction with the new centre.

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

6.2 STANDARDISATION

LASER will hold regular standardisation events to make sure there is consistent application of assessment. Centres are required to contribute to LASER's programme of standardisation and also to carry out appropriate internal standardisation.

LASER hold standardisation events on a rolling basis to make sure comparable standards are being

achieved year on year and there is a consistency of delivery and assessment across centres. LASER Quality and Curriculum reviewers will identify samples of learners' work that they want to retain for standardisation purposes during quality assurance visits. Where an AIQA is in place they will identify samples of learners' 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 annual meetings, in addition to centre visits by LASER Quality and Curriculum 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.

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Appendix 1: Ofqual Level Descriptors – Entry Level 2

LEVEL	SUMMARY	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	APPLICATION AND ACTION	AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Entry Level 2	Achievement at Entry 2 reflects the ability to make use of skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities with guidance.	Use knowledge or understanding to carry out simple, familiar activities. Know the steps needed to complete simple activities.	Carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities. Follow instructions or use rehearsed steps to complete tasks and activities.	With appropriate guidance begin to take some responsibility for the outcomes of simple activities. Actively participate in simple and familiar activities.

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Appendix 2: Unit List

Please click below for the Unit Lists:

LASER Entry Level **Award** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	OFQUAL CODE: 600/9515/5 ⊙

LASER Entry Level **Certificate** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	OFQUAL CODE: 600/9517/9 ⊙

LASER Entry Level **Diploma** in Participating in Learning (Entry 2)	OFQUAL CODE: 600/9519/2 ⊙

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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