

Laser Learning Awards (LASER)<sup>1</sup> is required to ensure that all Centres delivering qualifications meet certain standards as part of its obligation to Ofqual, the regulator of qualifications (other than degrees), examinations and assessments in England and of vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland, to protect the integrity of nationally regulated qualifications.

The Centre Recognition Application Form needs to be completed and submitted to LASER before you meet with any LASER representatives. The purpose of the application is to aid LASER in making a decision about your Centre's ability to meet the requirements for recognised Centres.

The Centre Agreement which you will be required to sign, lists the elements which have been determined, in the main, by Ofqual as areas where Awarding Organisations must have a written enforceable agreement with Centres. If you have any queries about the requirements, please discuss these with LASER staff.

## 1. Centre Details

A Centre is defined as an organisation or consortium accountable to an Awarding Organisation for the assessment arrangements leading to the award of a regulated/unregulated qualification or unit of accreditation.

### UKPRN

The UK Register of Learning Providers (UKRLP) is a national portal to share key information about learning providers with partner agencies. Each provider registered on the UKRLP is allocated a UK Provider Recognition Number (UKPRN). To apply for a UKPRN go to [www.ukrlp.co.uk](http://www.ukrlp.co.uk).

### Centre Type

Please select the most appropriate description of your Centre from the list given.

## 2. Key Contacts

One person may hold more than one role, but may not be responsible for all of them.

### Head of Centre

The head of the organisation, e.g. Chief Executive, Managing Director, Principal.

- head of centre has ultimate responsibility for their centres full compliance and adherence to awarding organisation regulations and procedures
- head of centre need to ensure all awarding organisation communications and requests are responded to promptly, for example requests for information, arranging centre visits, notifying awarding organisation of any centre changes, responding to awarding organisation action points
- head of centre is responsible for the training of all learners, and management of all staff and resources through developing sustainable, appropriate structures for management, consultation, decision-making and communication with staff and learners
- the role of head of centre is to lead, motivate and manage staff by delegating responsibility to others who have the appropriate experience and knowledge, and monitoring practices to see that they are being carried out, setting expectations and targets, and evaluating staff performance against them

### Overall Quality Manager/Director

The person with overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with Awarding Organisation requirements for recognition. They will be expected to liaise with LASER Quality and Curriculum Reviewers to ensure that all aspects of compliance and any issues surrounding them are addressed.

### Centre Contact

The key contact between LASER and the Centre.

### Curriculum Development Contact

The person with overall responsibility for curriculum planning and development within your Centre. They must ensure that courses submitted to LASER have been through an internal course approval.

### Quality Assurance Contact

The person accountable for the quality assurance and management of units and qualifications. Key responsibilities include:

- managing internal quality systems including internal quality assurance, standardisation, and responding to LASER quality assurance reports and taking part in annual EQA meetings

<sup>1</sup> All references to LASER in this document also refer equally to Trident Awards, which is the brand name for LASER's work in the security industry.

- ensuring the initial training and updating of staff involved with internal quality systems
- ensuring the regulations for qualifications are met, e.g. security of external/internal assessments
- liaising with LASER staff
- ensuring the centre is represented at standardisation events and that samples of learners' work are made available where appropriate

## Administration Contact

The person with responsibility for administration including, where relevant, examination administration. Key responsibilities include:

- ensuring accurate and prompt completion of administrative forms/processes
- submitting learner registration forms within specified time frames
- liaising with LASER staff and forwarding necessary documents to tutors and other staff
- maintaining accurate records of all course and learner registrations and examinations
- ensuring the secure transmission of details of assessment outcomes to the Awarding Organisation where applicable
- ensuring the appropriate organisation of examinations and submission of examination papers to LASER for marking
- ensuring the prompt distribution of certificates to learners

## Finance Contact

The person with responsibility for finance. Key responsibilities include:

- ensuring timely payment of invoices
- liaising with LASER finance staff

## 3. Qualifications

Please indicate the qualifications that the Centre is seeking approval to deliver. All LASER qualifications are listed on the [LASER website](#) and all Trident security qualifications are on the [Trident website](#).

Please list any qualifications that you are seeking approval for, which would be delivered by self-study. Please indicate whether each will be fully or partially delivered by self-study and whether each will be online or not. If this is not relevant then please leave blank.

Please list any qualifications that you are seeking approval for, for which you plan to use online assessment and for each state whether this would be invigilated using a proctored system (please state which system), or invigilation in person at a test centre. If this is not relevant then please leave blank.

## 4. Training Materials – Applications for SIA Licence-Linked Qualifications in Security Sector Only

List the training materials that will be used in the delivery of the approved physical intervention elements of the qualification. Please note that for physical intervention training the SIA requires training delivery via an approved programme. See [Website](#)

## 5. Centre Recognition

Please submit a copy of the confirmation letter/and or certificate of recognition/approval for any other Awarding Organisation you have recognised/approved Centre status for.

## 6. Quality Assurance

Centres should provide details of the quality assurance system in place in the organisation. Include reference to your IQA policy. Please explain the quality assurance procedures you have in place that you feel are sufficient to meet our requirements.

## 7. Required Documents

The Centre must have all of the following policies, procedures and statements in place (both from Section A and section B) and should be provided as part of the approval process:

- a. Learner Appeals Policy and Procedure
- b. Complaints Policy and Procedure
- c. Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure
- d. Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure
- e. Registrations and Exams Procedure (including identity checks)
- f. Unique Learner Number Procedure
- g. Access to Fair Assessment Statement

- h. Disability Discrimination Policy
- i. Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- j. Health and Safety Policy
- k. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check Policy
- l. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- m. Employer's Liability Insurance
- n. Public Liability Insurance
- o. Professional Indemnity

The following guidance has been produced to assist Centres to develop the required policies and procedures. The guidance sets out the expectation of what the policy or procedure should contain. Additional support can be provided by LASER staff to develop the policies and procedures, if required.

It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that:

- policies and procedures are appropriate to the size, nature and curriculum offer of the centre
- policies and procedures are communicated to all staff, and where appropriate learners, and supported by the centre's management structure
- a system is in place for regular review and evaluation of centre policies and procedures
- there is compliance with LASER's published policies and procedures

#### **a. Learner Appeals Policy and Procedure**

An appeal is a procedure through which a Learner may challenge the outcome of an enquiry about results or, where appropriate, other procedural decisions.

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The procedure will only target learners.

#### **The principles**

The procedure needs to include:

- the required format of the submission of the appeal (this would normally be written)
- an explanation that for appeals against assessment outcomes, the procedures followed will be investigated, and will not include a review of the learner's work
- an explanation of the learner documentation which will be retained during the appeal
- expected timescales for responding to learners
- the stages of the procedure including the actions to be taken by the learner and by the centre
- further action which the learner can take in case of unresolved appeals e.g. following awarding organisation appeals policy and procedures

#### **b. Complaints Policy and Procedure**

The complaints procedure is to be used by anyone dissatisfied with the services the Centre provides and should set out how they can make a complaint and procedures for dealing with complaints.

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The procedure will target anyone who wishes to make a complaint against the Centre.

#### **The principles**

The procedure needs to include:

- the required format of the submission of the complaint (this would normally be written)
- expected timescales for responding to complainants
- the stages of the procedure including the actions to be taken by the complainant and by the centre

#### **c. Internal Quality Assurance**

Internal quality assurance is a systematic series of planned quality checks made by someone within the Centre to ensure that assessments are appropriate, and that assessment decisions are valid and accurate. A Centre's Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures will set out the Centre's management structure and arrangements to ensure its effectiveness, including the procedures to be followed.

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The policy needs to target:

- learners
- tutors/trainers

- assessors
- internal quality assurers
- invigilators

## The principles

The policy and procedure need to include:

- role of internal quality assurer
- model of internal quality assurance
- planning internal quality assurance
- sampling assessment
- centre standardisation
- record keeping

## Sources of further information

LASER staff can provide support to Centres developing their internal quality assurance systems and provide training for internal quality assurers. Further information regarding internal quality assurance and internal quality systems, as well as training events, can be found on the LASER website.

## d. Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process, and/or the validity of certificates. Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates. Failure to deal with identified issues appropriately may in itself constitute malpractice.

## The groups which need to be included

The procedure needs to target Centre staff in order to support them to investigate claims of malpractice, both against a learner and against Centre staff, and to target learners who may wish to make a similar claim.

## The principles

The fundamental principle of investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias.

The investigation process must be conducted with regard to:

- confidentiality
- retention
- evidence storage
- conclusions reached

Investigation of both the following types of malpractice must be covered:

- learner malpractice
- centre staff malpractice

## Sources of further information

LASER Centre Handbook.

Trident Awards Examination Handbook.

LASER's own Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Ofqual provides guidance to Awarding Organisations who find it necessary to investigate allegations of significant malpractice by those involved in the delivery of qualifications. The principles apply to all regulated qualifications and may also be helpful to Centres

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-a-governance>.

## e. Registrations and Exams Procedure (including identity checks)

Centres are required to check and verify the identity of all learners to ensure that the award of credit and qualifications are valid, and to confirm the identity of future applicants to SIA for their licence. Often Centres in receipt of public funding will be required to follow similar procedures to ensure entitlement to funding. A description of these procedures is acceptable.

## f. Unique Learner Number Procedure

The Unique Learner Number or ULN is a requirement for publically funded qualifications. A procedure for generating and collecting ULNs is required in these cases. Please follow the following link to find more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/learning-records-service>

### **g. Access to Fair Assessment Statement**

Fair assessment is the process by which assessments within qualifications/courses/units can be designed to give all learners the fairest possible opportunities to show attainment.

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The statement needs to target learners but also be clearly understood and implemented by staff.

#### **The principles**

In the context of externally accredited provision, the statement needs to make reference to the following groups:

- learners
- tutors/trainers
- assessors
- internal quality assurers
- invigilators

In designing an assessment strategy and/or individual assessment tasks the following principles need to be included:

- reliability
- validity
- fitness for purpose
- transparency
- equality and diversity

### **d. Disability Discrimination Policy**

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment, in order to achieve equal opportunities for those people with 'protected characteristics' including a disability.

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The policy needs to target all groups and prospective groups which may be in contact with the Centre. It is the Centre's responsibility to identify the appropriate groups.

#### **The principles**

The policy needs to set out the arrangements and management structure that will operate to ensure that it meets its responsibilities as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

#### **Sources of further information**

<http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>.

### **i. Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy**

An Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy:

- states your values on equality and diversity (fairness) and how they will be put into practice
- shows your learners, staff, potential recruits and customers that you are serious about fairness and helps them understand:
  - what behaviour you expect and what is not acceptable
  - what they can expect of you
- helps you comply with the law

#### **The groups which need to be included**

The policy needs to target all groups and prospective groups which may be in contact with the Centre. It is the Centre's responsibility to identify the appropriate groups.

#### **The principles**

The policy needs to relate to your organisation's size and make-up, and the nature of your business. The opening section of your policy should contain:

- a statement of your aim to encourage, value and manage diversity
- your commitment to providing equality for all
- your wish to attain a workforce, and provide a service, that is representative of the communities from which it is drawn and to which it offers its service

You should then identify the areas of discrimination that you will counter, usually:

- gender (including sex, marriage, gender re-assignment)
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- disability

- sexual orientation
- religion or belief
- age

All of these are covered by law; there may be other categories that are relevant to your organisation or local circumstances.

## Sources of further information

Equality and Human Rights Commission web site: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com).

ACAS provides advice and guidance to employers to meet their legal responsibilities in respect of the law: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).

## j. Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 sets out that 'Except in such cases as may be prescribed, it shall be the duty of every employer to prepare, and as often as may be appropriate, revise, a written statement of his general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of his employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy, and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all his employees.'

### The groups which need to be included

The policy needs to target all groups and prospective groups which may be in contact with the Centre. It is the Centre's responsibility to identify the appropriate groups.

### The principles

The policy needs to relate to your organisation's size and make-up, and the nature of your business.

## Sources of further information

The Health and Safety Executive provides guidance to employers to ensure that they meet their responsibilities in respect of Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

## k. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check Policy

The Disclosure Barring Service (DBS), an executive non-departmental public body of the the Home Office, processes requests for criminal records checks and provides wider access to criminal record information through its disclosure service. This service enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying learners who may be unsuitable for certain work in identified roles, especially those which involve children or vulnerable adults.

### The groups which need to be included

The policy needs to target learners and staff.

### The principles

Centres, depending on their target learners, needs to consider the need for DBS requests, depending on whether individuals will be involved in the identified roles. The policy needs to set down the arrangements that the Centre intends to operate, including which roles will be subject to a DBS check, and what will be done with the information received.

## Sources of further information

Further guidance can be obtained from the Disclosure Barring Service website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

## l. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning. Assessment for RPL is conducted against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit, and is subject to exactly the same quality assurance requirements as any other kind of assessment within the qualification. RPL enables learners to avoid the duplication of learning, by offering the opportunity to use previous learning or achievement that has *not* been certificated or accredited, in place of attending a taught learning programme. This learning or achievement could be assessed and validated as part of the RPL process, and then count towards the qualification.

For licence-linked security qualifications, RPL/equivalence/exemption claims must comply with SIA requirements – see Exemption Arrangements on the SIA web site: [www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk)



**The groups which need to be included**

The policy should target learners, assessors and internal quality assurers in order to explain the possibilities and processes for claiming RPL.

**The principles**

The policy needs to include:

- an explanation of what RPL is
- an explanation of the situations in which a learner can claim RPL, and where it is not appropriate or possible
- the process to be followed if a learner wishes to claim RPL, including the provision of initial advice and guidance by the assessor, the identification of suitable prior learning against specified unit(s), and the assessment of the prior learning (including the requirement to adhere to any specific assessment strategy for the qualification)
- the records to be kept in order to claim credit via RPL
- the expertise required by assessors in order to support and assure the RPL process

**m. Employer's Liability Insurance**

Employers are responsible for the health and safety of their employees while they are at work. Employees may be injured at work or they, or former employees, may become ill as a result of their work. They might try to claim compensation if they believe their employer is responsible. The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 ensures that companies have at least a minimum level of insurance cover against any such claims. Employers' liability insurance will enable the cost of compensation for your employees' injuries or illness to be met. However, any injuries and illness relating to motor accidents that occur while your employees are working for you may be covered separately by your motor insurance.

You can be fined if you do not hold a current employers' liability insurance policy which complies with the law. Please make sure insurance policies are in date and displayed at your Centre.

**The groups which need to be included**

Insurance applies to all employed staff.

**Sources of further information**

Further guidance can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf>

**n. Public Liability Insurance**

Public liability insurance covers claims made against companies by members of the public or other businesses, but not for claims by employees. If a member of the public is injured on your premises you may be held responsible. For example, a learner might slip on a wet floor. Public liability insurance is designed to pay compensation which can include loss of earnings, future loss of earnings and damages awarded to the claimant in addition to your legal cost in defending the claim and the claimants' legal costs that you incur if you are found to be at fault.

**The groups which need to be included**

All learners, customers and members of public having access to your premises.

**Sources of further information**

Further guidance can be obtained from the Association of British Insurers website: <https://www.abi.org.uk/Insurance-and-savings/Products/Business-insurance/Liability-insurance/Public-liability-insurance>

**o. Professional Indemnity Insurance**

Professional indemnity insurance, also known as PI insurance, is a type of liability cover designed to protect an individual or business against claims made by clients for loss or damage due to negligent advice or services.

**8. Centre Description**

This is the Centre's opportunity to tell LASER about the Centre, to describe your resources, facilities, and operation. The statements made in this section should be supported by specific reference to the policies and documents sent to LASER.

The information in this section is fundamental to LASER making a decision about the Centre's ability to meet the requirements of Centre recognition.

If you are unable to include an organisation chart in the space provided, please submit as an attachment.

Please include as much relevant information as possible on your Centre in terms of its purpose, history and experience of staff.

When describing your Centre's experience of delivery and assessment of learning, this would include previous courses delivered and the experience current staff have of delivering them.

Please include the length of time the Centre has been established under the name on the application form. If this is less than 12 months, please list any previous centre names. Any details of financing would be welcome. Please also include policies relation to payment of invoices and management of learners, should the Centre close mid-course for any reason.

### **9. Centre Declaration**

This must be signed by someone with the appropriate authority, preferably the Head of Centre or alternatively by one of the named contacts in section 2.

LASER reserve the right to refuse approval at any stage of the application process, the reason for refusal may be given but no further details will be supplied. Please refer to the LASER Centre and Individual Approval Policy and Procedures for further details.