



Qualification Specification

GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management (610/7987/X)

This qualification is subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny and General Moderation policy.

This GA qualification is delivered under an exclusivity agreement.

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Section 1: Qualification Overview

1.1 Introduction: About this Qualification

Gatehouse Awards (GA) qualifications are designed to give learners the skills to be active in the modern labour market and progress in their career and/or into higher level study.

This Qualification Specification covers the GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management (610/7987/X).

This document provides centre staff, learners and employers with an overview of the qualification content as well as the assessment and quality assurance requirements for this qualification.

This qualification is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) in England and are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

All versions of this qualification are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is operated by Ofqual at <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

This qualification is not designed to replace any existing qualifications.

1.2 Qualification Titles, Qualification Numbers and Important Dates

Qualification Title and Level	Qualification Number	Operational Start Date	Operational Review Date
GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management	610/7987/X	07/09/2026	Sept 2031

1.3 Qualification Aims and Objectives

The GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management is designed to develop advanced knowledge and understanding in strategic leadership and management within contemporary health and social care. The qualification supports progression to further higher-level study and the development of capabilities relevant to leadership and management responsibilities within the sector. It builds on knowledge and skills that may have been developed through previous health and social care study or relevant experience, while also providing a suitable programme of study for learners entering at Level 6 with an appropriate background.

Learners will develop their understanding of strategic leadership and organisational management and examine how health and social care organisations establish direction, respond to changing environments and make strategic decisions. They will explore strategic workforce management and organisational development, including workforce planning, capability, engagement, wellbeing and organisational culture. Learners will also develop their understanding of financial and resource management and consider how organisational resources can be planned, allocated and managed effectively and sustainably.

The qualification further develops learners' understanding of strategic service planning and transformation, including the use of population, service, performance and stakeholder evidence to identify priorities and inform service development. Learners will examine strategic change and transformation and consider the organisational, workforce and system factors that influence implementation and sustainability.

Learners will also develop advanced research knowledge and skills relevant to health and social care leadership and management. They will critically evaluate research approaches, designs and methods and consider relevant ethical, legal and research-governance requirements. Learners will formulate a research question and develop and justify a research proposal addressing a relevant leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue. Following appropriate review and approval, learners will undertake an applied research project, analyse and interpret their findings, develop evidence-based conclusions and recommendations and critically evaluate the completed research and its potential contribution to health and social care leadership and management.

Throughout the qualification, learners are required to analyse complex organisational and sector issues, evaluate evidence and strategic approaches, exercise reasoned judgement and develop and justify evidence-informed recommendations.

The qualification supports progression to further higher-level study in health and social care, leadership, management and related disciplines and supports learners seeking to develop their capabilities for leadership and management within health and social care.

1.4 Qualification Structure and Overview: Units, GLH, TQT and Credit Value

The structure of this qualification is as follows:

GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management (610/7987/X)					
Mandatory Units	Unit Reference	Level	Credits	GLH*	Study Time
1. Strategic Leadership and Organisational Management in Health and Social Care	D/652/3804	6	20	60	140
2. Strategic Workforce Management and Organisational Development in Health and Social Care	F/652/3805	6	20	60	140
3. Financial and Resource Management in Health and Social Care	H/652/3806	6	20	60	140
4. Strategic Service Planning and Transformation in Health and Social Care	J/652/3807	6	20	60	140
5. Research Methods for Health and Social Care Leadership and Management	K/652/3808	6	20	60	140
6. Applied Research Project in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management	L/652/3809	6	20	60	140
			Total Credits 120	Total GLH* 360	TQT** (GLH + ST) 1200

*Guided Learning Hours (GLH): Definition

The activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

**Total Qualification Time (TQT): Definition

The number of Guided Learning Hours assigned, plus an estimate of the number of study hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

The number of study hours a learner is expected to undertake in order to complete each unit is expressed in the '**Study Time**' above. This, including the GLH, provides the Total

Qualification Time, or TQT, and represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of the qualification.

The estimates for Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time above have been produced with due regard to information gathered from those with experience in education and training and are in line with guidance published by Ofqual on the allocation and expression of Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours.

Level

The qualification within this specification is designated at Level 6 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) according to the Level Descriptors for knowledge and understanding, which build on those used within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This means that the qualifications are considered by GA to lead to the outcome as follows:

Achievement at Level 6 reflects the ability to use advanced practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors and understand different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them. It reflects an ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate complex information, concepts and ideas and determine, refine, adapt and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive and practical skills to address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors. It also reflects the ability to use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions and evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.

1.5 Rules of Combination

In order to meet the rules of combination for the GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management qualification, the learner must achieve all 6 mandatory units. The learner must achieve 120 credits.

Learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes and meet all qualification requirements in order to achieve the qualification.

There are no further rules of combination.

1.6 Intended Audience

The GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management is intended for learners who wish to develop advanced knowledge and understanding of leadership and management within health and social care. It is suitable for learners progressing from relevant Level 5 study, learners seeking to develop their knowledge and capabilities for progression within the health and social care sector, and those seeking preparation for further higher-level study in health and social care, leadership, management or related disciplines.

Learners do not need to be employed within health and social care to undertake the qualification.

The qualification is suitable for learners from a range of backgrounds who have the appropriate prior learning, knowledge or experience to undertake study at Level 6.

1.7 Age and Entry Requirements

This qualification is intended for learners aged 18 and above.

Learners should hold a relevant Level 5 qualification or equivalent.

Applicants who do not hold a relevant Level 5 qualification may also be considered where they have relevant health and social care experience that demonstrates their ability to undertake study at Level 6.

Given the nature of the qualification content, learners are required to have a proficient level of spoken and written English (e.g., GCSE Grade C / Grade 4 or above, or equivalent).

In addition to the above, if English is not the learner's first language, an English language level of minimum International English B2 (CEFR) is required.

Centre recruitment and enrolment processes must be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced centre staff.

It is recommended that prior to commencing a programme of study leading to this qualification, learners receive detailed advice and guidance from the training provider in order to ensure the programme and qualification will meet their needs.

1.8 Research Ethics and Governance Requirements

Learners undertaking the Applied Research Project must conduct research in accordance with appropriate ethical, legal, information-governance and research-governance requirements.

Before any research activity begins, the learner's research proposal must be reviewed and approved through the centre's research ethics and governance arrangements. Centres must ensure that the proposed research is appropriate to the scope and level of the qualification, is feasible for the learner to undertake and does not expose participants, the learner or others to inappropriate or avoidable risk.

Research projects may use approaches such as published literature and evidence, publicly available or appropriately accessible datasets, documentary research, simulated data and appropriately authorised organisational information. Service evaluation or other organisationally based investigation may contribute to the project where appropriate, provided that the proposed investigation is designed and undertaken in a manner that enables the learner to meet all applicable research learning outcomes and assessment criteria for Units 5 and 6.

Where a proposed project involves primary research with participants, access to non-public organisational information or data, or other activities presenting additional ethical, legal or governance considerations, the centre must determine whether the proposed activity is appropriate and whether additional permissions, safeguards or ethical review are required before approval is given. Centre approval of a research proposal does not replace any external ethical, organisational, regulatory or other approval required for the proposed research activity.

Particular care must be taken where proposed research involves children, adults at risk, individuals receiving health or social care, confidential care records, personal or special-category data, sensitive topics or circumstances in which power relationships, dependency or vulnerability may affect participation.

Organisational permission to undertake research does not replace requirements relating to ethical approval, informed consent, data protection, confidentiality or other applicable legal and governance requirements.

Centres must retain appropriate records of research proposal review and approval and must have arrangements for considering significant amendments to approved projects. Learners must not undertake research activity outside the scope of the approval granted.

Where a proposed research activity cannot be undertaken safely, ethically, lawfully or within appropriate governance arrangements, the project must be modified or an alternative research approach selected.

1.9 Recognition of Prior Learning and Transfer of Credits

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessing whether a learner's previous experience and achievements meet the standard requirements of a GA qualification, prior to the learner taking the assessment for the qualification, or part of the qualification, they are registered for.

Any prior learning must be relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and GA will subsequently amend the requirements which a learner must have satisfied before they are assessed as eligible to be awarded the qualification.

Where there is evidence that the learner's knowledge and skills are current, valid and sufficient, the use of RPL may be acceptable for recognising achievement of assessment criteria, learning outcome or unit(s), as applicable. The requirement for RPL in such instances must also include a consideration of the currency of the knowledge gained by the learner at the time they undertook the prior learning.

RPL cannot be guaranteed in instances where industry practice or legislation has significantly changed in the time since the prior learning was undertaken / a previous award was issued.

All RPL decisions and processes are subject to External Quality Assurance (EQA) scrutiny and must be documented in line with GA's quality assurance requirements.

No transfer of credits is permitted.

1.10 Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Assessment for this qualification is designed to be accessible and inclusive. The assessment methodology is appropriate and rigorous for individuals or groups of learners.

Please refer to the GA Candidate Access Policy, available on the GA website, which contains information about Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations. This policy document provides centre staff with 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 qualification.

1.11 Relationship to Other Qualifications and Progression Opportunities

The GA Level 6 Diploma in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management builds on knowledge and skills that may be developed through relevant Level 5 health and social care qualifications or equivalent prior learning and experience. It develops advanced knowledge and skills in strategic leadership and organisational management, workforce management and organisational development, financial and resource management, strategic service planning and transformation, and research within health and social care leadership and management.

Learners who successfully complete the qualification may progress to relevant Level 7 qualifications, postgraduate or other higher-level study in health and social care, leadership, management or related disciplines.

The qualification may also support learners seeking to progress within the health and social care sector by developing knowledge and skills relevant to leadership, management, strategic planning, organisational development, workforce management, resource management and service transformation.

This qualification may also allow learners to progress onto degree-level studies at a university or higher education institution.

1.11 Language of Assessment

This qualification is offered in English.

Further information concerning the provision of qualification and assessment materials in other languages may be obtained from GA.

1.13 Qualification Availability

This qualification is available in the UK and internationally.

If you would like further information on offering this qualification, please contact us. Our contact details appear on our website, www.gatehouseawards.org

Section 2: Qualification Delivery: Assessment, Quality Assurance Model and Administration

2.1 Teaching and Learning Requirements

Courses leading to this qualification may consist of e-learning courses or classroom-based courses, or a blended option.

Learners can therefore undertake learning and assessment on a flexible basis.

Learners must have suitable access to teaching and assessment staff as well as technical support. It is essential that the centre provides specialist staff, high quality learning materials and access to assessment opportunities.

2.2 Assessment & Quality Assurance Model

This qualification is a centre-assessed qualification. This means that it is internally assessed and internally moderated by centre staff who must clearly show where learners have achieved the learning outcomes, assessment criteria and qualification requirements.

Detailed Assessment Instructions for each component unit of this qualification is provided in Section 4 *Unit Specifications* below.

Prior to use, assessment materials devised by the centre must be submitted to GA for 'sign-off' and authorisation. The centre must therefore also:

- review the materials carefully against the sign-off criteria before submission (refer to the *GA External Quality Assurance of Centre-Devised Materials* form).

The centre should contact their dedicated Centre Administrator for full instructions on how to submit their materials and the timescale required for sign-off.

Assessment, internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and quality assurance conducted by GA.

This qualification is subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny (CASS) and General Moderation Policy.

2.3 Assessment of Learners and Portfolio Requirements

All learners must complete assessment for all six mandatory units.

To meet the assessment requirements, learners must:

- follow a suitable programme of learning.
- maintain and submit a portfolio of all coursework incorporating all materials related to assessment.

All evidence must be mapped against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria, reflecting the type of evidence supplied and indicating its location. Using portfolio reference numbers will enable the learner, assessor, IQA and EQA to quickly locate the evidence submitted.

Suitable sources of evidence may include the following:

- essays/assignments
- short questions and answers
- professional discussions
- workbooks
- reflective accounts
- records of questioning
- case studies

The centre must ensure that the learner's work is authentic.

Assurances that learner work is authentic can be gained via:

1. oral questioning to confirm knowledge and understanding.
2. written questions answered under controlled supervised conditions to compare the learner's writing style against their other work.

All knowledge and understanding evidence must be marked and assessed by centre assessors in line with the GA CRAVES requirement, clearly indicating where the learner has achieved the requisite knowledge and understanding. Assessors are responsible for providing feedback and instructions for re-submission, where applicable.

All assessment decisions and internal moderation are externally quality assured by GA.

2.4 CRAVES Requirements

Assessors must ensure that all evidence within the learner's portfolio judged to meet GA's 'CRAVES' requirements is:

- **current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **authentic:** the work is the learner's own work
- **valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner
- **sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy

2.5 Resubmissions

GA recommends that the centre operates a policy of allowing learners to resubmit assessed work a maximum of two times. However, the acceptance and management of resubmissions of assessed work is at the discretion of the centre.

The decision regarding whether to permit a learner to resubmit work and/or attempt an assessment again will be based on an evaluation of how closely their previous attempts met the passing criteria. This evaluation will consider the extent to which the learner's work demonstrated progress towards meeting the required standards.

Resubmitted work will be assessed with the same rigour and adherence to standards as the initial submission.

If a learner does not pass after three attempts at submitting assessed work, the centre must consider the following course of action:

- Additional support – consider whether the learner could benefit from additional support, remedial guidance, or additional resources to help them understand the material better. This could involve providing extra teaching sessions, study materials, or one-on-one tutoring to address specific areas of difficulty. Sometimes, extending deadlines or providing additional time can alleviate pressure and allow for better comprehension and performance.

- Review and feedback - consider whether sufficient detailed feedback, which highlights areas that need improvement and provides specific guidance on how the learner can enhance their work, has been provided after each attempt.
- Alternative assessment methods - consider whether an alternative assessment method, such as the use of professional discussion, may provide opportunities for the learner to demonstrate their understanding. The centre should refer to the GA Candidate Access Policy for further information.
- Reconsideration of participation - assess whether the learner might need to take a break from the programme or whether, despite supportive measures and multiple attempts, the learner's progress is not indicative that they will meet the qualification requirements. They may be issued with a final 'Fail' grade or withdraw from the programme.

The centre must ensure that their policies and procedures regarding learner dismissal or failure are communicated clearly to learners to maintain fairness and transparency.

2.6 Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Internal Moderators (also known as Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs) ensure that assessors are assessing to the same standards, i.e., consistently and reliably, and that assessment decisions are correct. IQA activities will include:

- ensuring assessors are suitably experienced and qualified in line with the qualification requirements
- sampling assessments and assessment decisions
- ensuring that assessment decisions meet the GA 'CRAVES' requirements (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- conducting standardisation and moderation of assessment decisions
- providing assessors with clear and constructive feedback
- supporting assessors and providing training and development where appropriate
- ensuring any stimulus or materials used for the purposes of assessment are fit for purpose.

Sampling of assessment will be planned and carried out in line with a clear IQA and moderation strategy, which takes into account the number of learners, number of assessors, and the experience and competency of assessors.

Centre IQAs may wish to refer to the guidance documents provided by GA to approved centres (available on the Ark) in order to formulate an appropriate Sampling Strategy.

2.7 Grading and Recording Achievement

All learning outcomes and assessment requirements must be met before a learner can be considered as having achieved the qualification.

This qualification is not graded on a scale. Learners are assessed as Pass or Fail.

The centre must ensure that regulations relating to the resubmission of work are adhered to.

2.8 Unit and Portfolio Sign Off

Upon completion, each unit must be signed off by the assessor and IQA to confirm the learner's achievement.

The content of the portfolio that contains all units the learners has achieved is subject to final portfolio sign off by the assessor and IQA to confirm that the specific qualification requirements and rules of combination have been met.

The learner is also required to sign an authenticity declaration, stating that the work contained in their portfolio is their own.

2.9 External Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Assessment and internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and wider scrutiny and centre controls as per GA's quality assurance arrangements for centre-assessed qualifications.

All GA Approved Centres are entitled to two EQA visits per year. Additional visits can be requested, for which there may be an additional charge.

EQA activities will focus on the centre's continuing adherence to and maintenance of the GA *Centre Approval Criteria* and the criteria and requirements for the specific qualifications for which it holds approval. This will include:

- checking that the management of the centre and the management arrangements relating to the qualification are sufficient
- checking that resources to support the delivery of the qualification, including physical resources and staffing, are in place and sufficient
- ensuring that the centre has appropriate policies and procedures in place relevant to the organisation and to the delivery and quality assurance of the qualification

- the use of assessment materials and the arrangements in place to ensure that evidence for assessment is 'CRAVES' (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- sampling assessment decisions against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of learners
- the internal moderation and quality assurance arrangements
- sampling internal moderation records against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of learners
- administrative arrangements
- ensuring that any actions from moderation and wider quality assurance activities have been carried out by the centre
- confirming any claims for RPL, reasonable adjustments or special considerations

Through discussions with centre staff, examining learner work, moderation of assessment, talking to learners and reviewing documentation and systems, the GA EQA will provide the centre with full support, advice and guidance as necessary.

2.10 Registering Learners and Unique Learner Numbers (ULNs)

Learners must be registered through the Ark, the GA online Learner Management System.

Owing to the Total Qualification Time of this qualification, the validity period of registrations made will be three years. Should a learner not have achieved in the timescale, a new registration is required.

Each approved GA centre is provided with a user account to allow approved staff access to the online system.

Where the Unique Learner Number (ULN) of a learners is known, this should be provided at the point of registration in order for GA to issue updates to the Learner Record Service.

2.11 ID Requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to confirm each learner's identity.

Learners are required to declare that all work submitted for assessment is their own work.

2.12 Record Keeping

Records of learner details, their work and any records of Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and records containing learners' personal details must be kept by the centre in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR and all relevant privacy regulations) for a minimum of 2 years.

The centre must operate a safe and effective system of care and comply with information governance requirements, with appropriate policies and procedures in place to maintain confidentiality, related to staff and learners.

All records must be easily retrievable and made available to GA or the Regulator upon request.

Portfolios must be retained until the following External Quality Assurance visit to allow them to be sampled. Following external moderation and the award of a qualification by GA, the centre may return portfolios to learners.

Records of all internal quality assurance and moderation activity undertaken must be kept and made available to GA upon request.

2.13 Results and Certification

Centres may make claims for certification via the Ark when learners complete and the assessor and IQA have confirmed achievement. Claims for certification are subject to successful external quality assurance (EQA).

Following the EQA's confirmation of a learner's achievement, GA will authorise claims for the certification of learners, details of which will be visible to the centre in the centre's Ark account. Certificates are usually issued within 10 working days of the award of the qualification.

The qualification certificate will indicate both the title and the level at which the qualification is achieved.

Certificates will only be issued to learners who have achieved sufficient credits and met the rules of combination for the qualification they are registered for. If a learner has not achieved sufficient credits or failed to meet the rules of combination, the qualification certificate will not be issued.

Replacement certificates are available upon request.

Amendments to certificates are available upon request but may require the centre to provide evidence of the need for any amendment (e.g., learner proof of identification) and will involve the return of the original certificate. Replacements and amendments may incur an additional charge.

2.14 Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claim Status is not available for this qualification.

2.15 Appeals and Enquiries

GA has an appeals procedure in accordance with the arrangements for regulated qualifications.

General enquiries can be made at any time and should be directed to a GA Centre Administrator.

Section 3: Staff and Resource Requirements for Centres

In order to deliver this qualification, the centre must ensure that they meet the following requirements for staff and physical resources.

3.1 General Staff Requirements

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all staff involved in the delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification are suitably qualified in line with the stipulations for teachers, assessors and Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) detailed below.

The centre must ensure that they hold up-to-date and detailed information about the staff involved with the delivery and quality assurance of this qualification and must make records available to GA upon request. The information GA expects the course provider to hold for each member of staff includes, as a minimum:

- a current up to date CV
- copies of relevant qualification certificates
- relevant and up to date CPD (Continuous Professional Development) records

Centre staff must be familiar with the qualification requirements prior to offering the qualification or unit and planning the centre's assessment and moderation strategy.

The centre must provide all staff involved in the assessment process with sufficient time and resources to carry out their roles effectively.

The centre must also ensure that they have the management and administrative staffing arrangements in place which are suitable to support the registration of learners and the receipt of results and certificates.

The knowledge and experience of all staff involved in the teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification will be considered during the approval and re-approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

3.2 Requirements for Tutors and Assessors

Teaching staff include those who deliver teaching and learning content for knowledge and understanding elements and those who are involved in practical teaching and learning.

The primary responsibility of an assessor is to assess a learner's performance and ensure that the evidence submitted by the learner meets the requirements of the qualification.

It is the centre's responsibility to select and appoint suitably qualified and experienced teachers and assessors.

Centres must have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced Tutors and Assessors to assess the volume of learners they intend to register.

All Tutors must:

- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in health and social care (or equivalent)
OR
- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in leadership and management (or equivalent), together with occupational experience of working in, or leading and managing within, the health and social care sector
AND
- hold, or be working towards, a recognised teaching or training qualification, e.g. Level 3 Award in Education and Training or equivalent*

All Assessors must:

- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in health and social care (or equivalent)
OR
- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in leadership and management (or equivalent), together with occupational experience of working in, or leading and managing within, the health and social care sector
AND
- hold, or be working towards, a recognised assessor qualification or their recognised equivalent** e.g.,
 - Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
 - Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
 - A1 Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods
 - D32 Assess Candidate Performance and D33 Assess Candidate Using Differing Sources of Evidence.

*In the absence of a regulated teaching qualification, the Tutor must ensure that they are able to demonstrate that they have delivered a minimum of 30 hours of teaching or assessing. They are then required to agree to update their training to an Ofqual-regulated teaching qualification within 18 months of commencing their role in order to continue to deliver the qualification.

**Assessors may be working towards a relevant equivalent qualification in assessing under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Assessor and their IQA. Trainee Assessors' decisions MUST be counter-signed by a suitably qualified, experienced Assessor.

All staff involved with the delivery and assessment of this qualification must also be able to demonstrate ongoing professional development relevant to the sector subject area.

All teachers and assessors must also:

- be able to evidence relevant and up to date teaching/assessing experience.
- understand the qualification structure, unit learning outcomes and criteria related to the teaching and learning being delivered.
- have access to appropriate guidance and support.
- participate in continuing professional development in the specific subject they are teaching and/or assessing.

3.3 Requirements for IQA (Internal Quality Assurers, also referred to as Internal Moderators)

IQAs are responsible for internal moderation and quality assurance of the qualification to ensure standardisation, reliability, validity and sufficiency of the assessor's assessment decisions.

It is the centre's responsibility to select and appoint IQAs.

To be able to perform the internal moderation and quality assurance role, an Internal Moderator must:

- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in health and social care (or equivalent)
OR
- hold a minimum of a Level 6 qualification in leadership and management (or equivalent), together with occupational experience of working in, or leading and managing within, the health and social care sector
AND
- hold, or be working towards**, one of the following internal quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
 - Level 4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

- V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process
- D34 Internally verify the assessment process

**Internal Moderators may be working towards a relevant equivalent quality assurance qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Internal Moderator. Trainee Internal Moderator's decisions MUST be counter-signed by a suitably qualified, experienced Internal Moderator.

Each assessor may have one or several appointed IQAs.

Staff may undertake more than one role within the centre, e.g., teacher, assessor and IQA. However, members of staff must NOT IQA their own assessment decisions.

The knowledge and experience of Teachers, Assessors and Internal Moderators will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

3.4 CPD Requirements

All staff must ensure their role and subject-specific knowledge, understanding and competence is current and therefore must keep up to date with sector changes and developments.

Participation in continuing professional development in order to evidence contemporaneous proficiency must take place regularly. Centre staff in teaching, assessment or IQA roles must ensure that they complete and document their CPD hours. There are no set minimum number of hours of CPD required; however, the CPD activities must reflect contemporary standards and developments in the health and social care sector.

Records of CPD activities (both planned and those that have taken place) must be made available to GA at EQA visits or upon request.

3.5 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Resources

When devising teaching, learning and assessment materials for this qualification, the centre must:

- ensure teaching and learning materials directly address the learning outcomes and sufficiently prepare learners for assessment.
- structure materials to be accessible and engaging.

- use clear, unambiguous language appropriate for the level.
- align materials to the specific topics and content.
- pitch the level and depth of materials accurately based on the content to be delivered.
- ensure materials can be clearly attributed back to the centre.
- offer opportunities and resources for additional research and study, where appropriate.
- offer opportunity for learners to relate teaching and learning content to their own experience.
- ensure materials provide any relevant guidance to staff on consistent delivery.

Course programmes must be designed using the assessment requirements and unit specifications content below.

Teaching and learning resources must be relevant, up-to-date and of industry standard, in order to allow learners to adequately prepare for assessment. This will be considered at approval and during the on-going monitoring of the centre.

All delivery and assessment resources should be inclusive of the principles of equality and diversity and the safeguarding of learners.

3.6 Venue and Equipment Requirements

When training premises are used in the delivery of teaching and assessment of this qualification, centres should, wherever possible, provide suitable access in line with Disability Discrimination, Diversity & Equality law and regulations and any other regulations which apply.

The centre must ensure that all products and equipment used in the delivery and assessment of this qualification are confirmed as fit for purpose and compliant with current Health and Safety legislation and any other relevant regulations. This will be considered at approval and during the on-going monitoring of the centre.

Where specific products and equipment are required for the delivery and assessment of a GA qualification, the suitability of the products and equipment at the centre will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

For this qualification, suitable equipment includes:

- access to library resources relevant educational literature
- IT facilities and systems to support research, presentations, and access to online learning materials

- case study materials, simulations, or scenario-based resources relevant to health and social care contexts
- a suitable environment for all assessment activities
- a virtual learning environment (VLE) or online platforms to support blended or distance learning delivery models

3.7 Ongoing Support

There are a number of documents on the GA website that centres and learners may find useful: www.gatehouseawards.org. The website is updated regularly with news, information about GA qualifications, sample materials, updates on regulations and other important notices.

Within the centre, a named Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that all information and documents provided to centre staff and learners are correct and up to date.

GA must be kept up to date with contact details of all changes of personnel so the centre can be provided with the best level of support and guidance.

At the time of approval, the centre is assigned a designated Centre Administrator who is their primary point of contact for all aspects of service or support.

Learners should always speak to a member of staff at the centre for information relating to GA and our qualifications prior to approaching GA directly.

Contact details for GA can be found on the GA website www.gatehouseawards.org.

Section 4: Unit Specifications

4.1 Mandatory Unit 1: Strategic Leadership and Organisational Management in Health and Social Care

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
1	Strategic Leadership and Organisational Management in Health and Social Care	60	20	6	D/652/3804
In this unit, learners will examine strategic leadership and organisational management within health and social care contexts. Learners will explore the internal and external factors that influence organisational strategy and consider how policy, regulation, stakeholder expectations, organisational culture and wider sector developments shape strategic priorities and decision-making. The unit develops understanding of strategic leadership theories and approaches and considers how leaders establish organisational direction, respond to complexity and balance competing priorities within health and social care organisations. Learners will evaluate approaches to implementing organisational strategy and consider how performance information, evidence and changing circumstances can be used to review and adapt strategic direction. This unit prepares learners for further academic study and supports the development of analytical, evaluative and strategic management skills relevant to leadership and management roles within health and social care.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit should enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of strategic leadership and organisational management within health and social care contexts. Assessment methods may include analytical assignments, case studies, professional discussions, organisational analyses or structured evaluative reports. Evidence may draw on real or realistically simulated health and social care organisations and services, published organisational information, policy and regulatory sources, case studies, academic literature and other relevant evidence.					

Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to apply strategic leadership and management concepts to health and social care contexts and demonstrate analysis, evaluation and judgement appropriate to Level 6.

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion below.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the strategic context of leadership and organisational management in health and social care	1.1 Analyse internal and external factors influencing the strategic environment of health and social care organisations
	<i>IC: Internal factors including organisational purpose, structure, culture, capabilities, performance, resources and workforce capacity; external factors including political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental influences; population and demographic change; changing patterns of need and demand; technological and digital developments; labour-market and workforce pressures; funding and resource constraints; interdependence between internal and external factors; use of environmental and organisational analysis to understand strategic position, opportunities, constraints and priorities.</i>
	1.2 Evaluate the influence of policy, regulation, sector priorities and wider developments on organisational strategy and direction
	<i>IC: International and comparative developments in health and social care policy, systems and models of provision (where relevant); national and local health and social care policy and priorities; legislation, regulation, standards and statutory responsibilities; commissioning, funding and service priorities where relevant; public expectations and changing models of care and support; prevention, integration, personalisation and inequalities as relevant sector considerations; technological, demographic and societal developments; implications of policy and regulatory change for organisational purpose, priorities and strategic choices; tensions between external requirements, organisational priorities and local needs; organisational responses to changing policy, regulatory and sector environments.</i>
	1.3 Assess the influence of stakeholders, organisational structures and culture on strategic priorities and decision-making

	<i>IC: Internal and external stakeholders including individuals using services, families and carers, workforce groups, leaders and governing bodies, commissioners, regulators, partner organisations, communities and other relevant stakeholders; stakeholder interests, expectations, influence and power; approaches to stakeholder analysis and engagement; formal and informal organisational structures; distribution of authority, responsibility and decision-making; organisational culture, values, norms and behaviours; influence of professional and organisational perspectives; alignment and conflict between stakeholder expectations and organisational priorities; implications for strategic decision-making and organisational direction.</i>
2. Understand approaches to strategic leadership and organisational direction in health and social care	2.1 Analyse theories and approaches relevant to strategic leadership in health and social care
	<i>IC: Critical application of theories and approaches relevant to strategic leadership, including transformational, transactional, situational, distributed, collaborative, servant and systems leadership; strategic leadership within complex organisations and systems; strengths, limitations and contextual relevance of different approaches; relationship between leadership, management and governance; influence of leadership approaches on organisational direction, culture, decision-making and performance; leadership across professional and organisational boundaries; application and limitations of leadership theory within complex and changing health and social care contexts.</i>
	2.2 Analyse approaches used to establish organisational vision, strategic direction and priorities
	<i>IC: Organisational purpose, mission, vision, values and strategic objectives; relationship between organisational purpose and strategic direction; interpretation of evidence, organisational performance, population and service needs and external requirements; identification and evaluation of strategic priorities and options; stakeholder involvement in establishing direction; alignment between strategic priorities and organisational capabilities; consideration of opportunities, constraints, risks and competing demands; development of clear and achievable strategic objectives; communication and embedding of organisational direction.</i>

3. Be able to evaluate strategic leadership and organisational management within health and social care	2.3 Assess factors influencing strategic leadership and decision-making within complex health and social care environments
	<i>IC: Complexity, uncertainty and changing operating environments; quality, safety and person-centred outcomes; ethical and professional responsibilities; organisational values and governance expectations; evidence and availability of reliable information; stakeholder needs, expectations and competing priorities; power, influence and organisational politics; resource and workforce constraints; partnership and system-wide dependencies; systems leadership and leadership across organisational boundaries; strategic partnership and collaborative decision-making; influence, negotiation and relationship-building across organisations and systems; strategic and organisational risk; short- and long-term consequences of strategic decisions; balancing organisational sustainability, service requirements and the needs of individuals and communities; transparency, accountability and reasoned strategic judgement.</i>
	3.1 Analyse the implementation of organisational strategy within a health or social care context
	<i>IC: Translation of strategic direction into organisational objectives, priorities and operational actions; alignment of organisational structures, responsibilities and activities with strategic objectives; communication of strategic priorities; leadership responsibility and accountability for implementation; allocation and coordination of organisational capabilities and resources at strategic level; stakeholder engagement and organisational commitment; identification of dependencies, risks and barriers to implementation; monitoring arrangements and measures of progress; maintaining alignment between strategic intentions and organisational activity.</i>
	3.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of strategic leadership and organisational strategy within a health or social care context
	<i>IC: Criteria and evidence used to evaluate strategic leadership and organisational effectiveness; use of organisational, service and digital data in evaluating strategic performance; achievement of strategic objectives and intended outcomes; organisational performance, quality, safety and effectiveness; experiences and outcomes of individuals using services; workforce and stakeholder perspectives; organisational responsiveness and adaptability; leadership influence on culture, decision-making and organisational performance; intended</i>

	<i>and unintended consequences of strategy; comparison between strategic intentions and outcomes; strengths, limitations and areas for development; use of evidence to support balanced and justified evaluation.</i>
	3.3 Recommend and justify approaches to reviewing and adapting organisational strategy in response to performance, evidence and changing circumstances
	<i>IC: Strategic performance measures, indicators and organisational information; use of internal and external evidence to monitor progress and changing conditions; stakeholder feedback and intelligence; identification of emerging risks, opportunities and changes in need or demand; review of assumptions, objectives and strategic priorities; approaches to strategic review and organisational learning; responding to underperformance or changing circumstances; adaptation of strategic objectives, priorities and actions; balancing continuity with responsiveness; communication and governance of strategic change; importance of ongoing review in supporting organisational effectiveness, resilience and sustainability.</i>

4.2 Mandatory Unit 2: Strategic Workforce Management and Organisational Development in Health and Social Care

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
2	Strategic Workforce Management and Organisational Development in Health and Social Care	60	20	6	F/652/3805
In this unit, learners will examine strategic workforce management and organisational development within health and social care contexts. Learners will explore how workforce needs are identified and planned for in response to organisational strategy, changing service requirements and wider workforce challenges. The unit considers approaches to attracting, developing, supporting and retaining a capable workforce and examines factors that influence workforce capacity, capability, performance and sustainability. Learners will examine organisational development and consider how culture, engagement, learning and development can support organisational effectiveness and workforce improvement. Learners will evaluate strategic approaches to workforce management and organisational development and consider how workforce information, evidence and changing organisational needs can inform future priorities and action. This unit prepares learners for further academic study and supports the development of analytical, evaluative and strategic workforce management skills relevant to leadership and management within health and social care.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit should enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of strategic workforce management and organisational development within health and social care contexts. Assessment methods may include analytical assignments, case studies, professional discussions, organisational analyses, workforce analyses or structured evaluative reports. Evidence may draw on real or realistically simulated health and social care organisations and services, workforce information and data, published organisational information, policy and regulatory sources, case studies, academic literature and other relevant evidence.					

Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to apply workforce management and organisational development concepts to health and social care contexts and demonstrate analysis, evaluation and judgement appropriate to Level 6.

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion below.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand strategic workforce planning and management in health and social care	1.1 Analyse factors influencing workforce requirements within health and social care organisations
	<i>IC: Relationship between organisational strategy, service requirements and workforce needs; current and future demand for health and social care services; population and demographic change; workforce demographics and labour-market conditions; availability and supply of appropriately skilled workers; technological and service developments; policy, regulatory and professional requirements; workforce capacity, capability and skill mix; patterns of turnover, absence and vacancies; changing roles and models of working; financial and resource constraints; internal and external factors affecting short-, medium- and long-term workforce requirements.</i>
	1.2 Evaluate approaches to strategic workforce planning in health and social care
	<i>IC: Purpose and principles of strategic workforce planning; analysis of current workforce profile, capacity and capability; forecasting future workforce requirements; workforce demand and supply analysis; skills and capability assessment; identification of workforce gaps, risks and priorities; succession and talent considerations; scenario and contingency planning; alignment of workforce plans with organisational strategy and service requirements; use of workforce information and evidence; strengths and limitations of different workforce planning approaches; review and adaptation of workforce plans in changing contexts.</i>
	1.3 Assess strategic approaches to attracting, recruiting and retaining an effective health and social care workforce
	<i>IC: Workforce attraction and employer reputation; recruitment and selection strategies; equality, diversity and inclusive recruitment; values-based recruitment where relevant; workforce supply and</i>

	competition; induction and integration into the organisation; retention strategies; reward, recognition and employment experience; flexible working and career opportunities; staff wellbeing and support; factors influencing turnover and intention to leave; ethical, legal and regulatory considerations; effectiveness and sustainability of recruitment and retention approaches; relationship between attraction, recruitment, retention and longer-term workforce capacity.
2. Understand approaches to workforce capability and organisational development in health and social care	2.1 Analyse approaches to developing workforce capability and performance
	IC: Workforce knowledge, skills, behaviours and capabilities; identification of learning and development needs; strategic learning and workforce development priorities; continuing professional development; mandatory and role-specific development; performance expectations and objectives; appraisal and performance review; supervision, coaching and mentoring; feedback and reflective learning; career and progression opportunities; succession and talent development; addressing capability and performance concerns; relationship between individual, team and organisational capability; evaluation of learning, development and performance approaches.
	2.2 Analyse the role of organisational development in supporting workforce and organisational effectiveness
	IC: Meaning, purpose and scope of organisational development; relationship between organisational strategy, development and workforce capability; organisational development theories and approaches, including systems-based, diagnostic and planned-change approaches; organisational culture and climate; structures, systems and ways of working; organisational learning and knowledge sharing; workforce engagement and participation; development of collaborative and adaptive working practices; use of evidence and diagnosis to identify organisational development needs; planned interventions to improve organisational functioning; relationship between organisational development, workforce effectiveness and organisational performance.
	2.3 Assess factors influencing workforce engagement, wellbeing and organisational culture
	IC: Meaning and significance of workforce engagement and wellbeing; organisational culture, values and behaviours; psychological safety,

	<i>trust and relationships; communication, involvement and employee voice; recognition, autonomy and meaningful work; workload, staffing pressures and working conditions; stress, burnout and occupational wellbeing; equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging; bullying, harassment and discrimination; professional and ethical working environments; leadership and management behaviours as influences on workforce experience; impact of engagement, wellbeing and culture on retention, performance, quality and organisational effectiveness; approaches to identifying and responding to workforce experience and concerns.</i>
3. Be able to evaluate strategic workforce management and organisational development within health and social care	3.1 Analyse workforce information and evidence to identify strategic workforce priorities
	<i>IC: Sources and types of workforce information; workforce profile and establishment information; staffing levels, vacancies, turnover, absence and retention; workforce demographics, equality and diversity information; skills, capability and development information; staff survey, engagement and wellbeing information; performance and productivity information where appropriate; qualitative and quantitative workforce evidence; identification of patterns, trends, gaps and risks; limitations and reliability of workforce information; interpretation of workforce evidence in relation to organisational strategy, service requirements and external workforce conditions; identification and prioritisation of strategic workforce needs.</i>
	3.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of strategic approaches to workforce management and organisational development within a health or social care context
	<i>IC: Criteria and evidence for evaluating workforce strategies and organisational development approaches; alignment with organisational strategy and service requirements; workforce capacity, capability and sustainability; recruitment, retention and workforce stability; development and performance; workforce engagement, wellbeing and experience; equality, diversity and inclusion; organisational culture and learning; intended and unintended outcomes; stakeholder and workforce perspectives; implementation challenges and constraints; strengths, limitations and areas for development; use of evidence to support balanced and justified evaluation.</i>
	3.3 Recommend and justify strategic workforce and organisational development priorities in response to identified needs

	<i>IC: Identification and prioritisation of workforce and organisational development needs; development of evidence-informed recommendations; alignment with organisational strategy, service requirements and workforce evidence; consideration of feasibility, resources, workforce implications and organisational capacity; legal, regulatory, ethical and equality considerations; involvement of relevant stakeholders and workforce groups; anticipated benefits, risks and potential unintended consequences; measures and indicators for monitoring progress and impact; justification of recommendations using relevant evidence and analysis.</i>
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4.3 Mandatory Unit 3: Financial and Resource Management in Health and Social Care

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
3	Financial and Resource Management in Health and Social Care	60	20	6	H/652/3806
In this unit, learners will examine financial and resource management within health and social care organisations. Learners will explore how financial information, funding arrangements and organisational priorities influence financial planning and decision-making. The unit considers approaches to budgeting, financial control and the monitoring of financial performance within health and social care contexts. Learners will examine strategic approaches to the allocation and management of resources and consider how financial, workforce, physical, technological and other organisational resources can be used to support service requirements and organisational objectives. Learners will evaluate financial and resource management approaches and use relevant information and evidence to identify priorities and make justified recommendations for the effective and sustainable use of organisational resources. This unit prepares learners for further academic study and supports the development of analytical, evaluative, financial and resource management skills relevant to leadership and management within health and social care.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit should enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of financial and resource management within health and social care contexts. Assessment methods may include analytical assignments, case studies, professional discussions, financial or resource analyses, organisational analyses or structured evaluative reports. Evidence may draw on real or realistically simulated health and social care organisations and services, financial and resource information, published organisational information, policy and regulatory sources, case studies, academic literature and other relevant evidence. Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to apply financial and resource management concepts to health and social care contexts and demonstrate analysis, evaluation and judgement appropriate to Level 6.					

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion below.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand financial management within health and social care organisations	1.1 Analyse factors influencing financial planning and decision-making within health and social care
	<i>IC: Relationship between organisational strategy, service requirements and financial planning; sources and arrangements for health and social care funding; income and expenditure; fixed and variable costs; internal and external financial pressures; changing population and service needs; workforce and operating costs; inflation and wider economic conditions; policy, commissioning and funding priorities where relevant; legal, regulatory and governance requirements; financial constraints and competing priorities; short-, medium- and long-term financial considerations; influence of financial information and evidence on organisational decision-making.</i>
	1.2 Evaluate approaches to budgeting and financial control within health and social care organisations
	<i>IC: Purpose and principles of budgeting; types and approaches to budgets; budget setting and allocation; forecasting income, expenditure and financial requirements; relationship between budgets, organisational objectives and service priorities; financial controls and delegated financial responsibilities; monitoring actual expenditure against budget; identification and management of variances; accountability and authorisation arrangements; financial risk and contingency considerations; strengths and limitations of different budgeting and financial control approaches.</i>
	1.3 Assess approaches to monitoring and evaluating financial performance
	<i>IC: Sources and types of financial information; financial statements and management information relevant to organisational decision-making; income, expenditure, costs and budget performance; variance analysis; financial indicators and measures; trends and patterns in financial performance; forecasting and projected financial position; efficiency, economy, effectiveness and value for money; benchmarking and comparison where appropriate; interpretation and limitations of financial information; financial reporting and</i>

	<i>accountability; use of financial performance information to identify risks, pressures and priorities and inform management decisions.</i>
2. Understand strategic resource management in health and social care	2.1 Analyse approaches to planning and allocating organisational resources
	<i>IC: Meaning and scope of resource management; financial, human, physical, technological, information and other organisational resources; relationship between organisational strategy, service requirements and resource planning; assessment of current and future resource requirements; prioritisation and allocation of finite resources; demand, capacity and utilisation; competing organisational and service priorities; resource dependencies and constraints; short- and long-term resource considerations; evidence-informed allocation decisions; contingency and resilience considerations; alignment of resources with organisational objectives and intended outcomes.</i>
	2.2 Assess factors influencing effective and sustainable use of resources within health and social care
	<i>IC: Efficiency, effectiveness, economy and value for money; quality, safety and person-centred service requirements; resource availability and affordability; workforce, infrastructure and technological capacity; changing demand and service needs; environmental and social sustainability; waste reduction and efficient use of resources; procurement and supply considerations; availability and continuity of supplies and services; ethical and equitable allocation of resources; legal, regulatory and organisational requirements; risk, resilience and business continuity; balancing financial sustainability with quality, access and outcomes.</i>
	2.3 Evaluate approaches to procurement, commissioning and management of resources and services
	<i>IC: Purpose and principles of procurement and commissioning within relevant health and social care contexts; identification and specification of organisational and service requirements; sourcing and selection of goods, services and providers; consideration of cost, quality, suitability, reliability and value; contractual and service requirements; supplier and provider relationships; ethical, legal, regulatory and governance considerations; transparency, accountability and conflicts of interest; monitoring quality, performance and value; supply-chain risks and continuity; strengths</i>

	and limitations of different approaches to securing and managing resources and services.
3. Be able to evaluate financial and resource management within health and social care	3.1 Analyse financial and resource information to identify organisational priorities and pressures
	<i>IC: Selection and interpretation of relevant financial and resource information; budgets, expenditure, costs, variances and financial performance; resource capacity, availability, utilisation and demand; identification of patterns, trends, pressures, gaps and risks; comparison against organisational objectives, service requirements and available resources; consideration of quality, safety and outcomes alongside financial information; reliability and limitations of available information; identification and prioritisation of financial and resource management issues.</i>
	3.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of financial and resource management approaches within a health or social care context
	<i>IC: Criteria and evidence for evaluating financial and resource management; alignment with organisational objectives and service requirements; budgetary and financial performance; efficiency, economy, effectiveness and value for money; resource utilisation and capacity; quality, safety, access and service outcomes; financial and organisational sustainability; equity and ethical considerations; management of financial and resource risks; stakeholder implications; intended and unintended consequences; strengths, limitations and areas for improvement; use of evidence to support balanced and justified evaluation.</i>
	3.3 Recommend and justify financial and resource management priorities in response to identified organisational needs
	<i>IC: Identification and prioritisation of financial and resource needs; development of evidence-informed recommendations; alignment with organisational strategy, service requirements and available resources; affordability, feasibility and sustainability; anticipated costs, benefits and resource implications; quality, safety, access and outcomes; equality, equity and ethical considerations; financial, operational and organisational risks; stakeholder implications; potential trade-offs and unintended consequences; measures and indicators for monitoring financial and resource impact; justification of recommendations using relevant financial, organisational and service evidence.</i>

4.4 Mandatory Unit 4: Strategic Service Planning and Transformation in Health and Social Care

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
4	Strategic Service Planning and Transformation in Health and Social Care	60	20	6	J/652/3807
In this unit, learners will examine strategic service planning and transformation within health and social care contexts. Learners will explore how evidence relating to population needs, service demand, performance and stakeholder experiences can be used to identify priorities and inform strategic service planning. The unit considers approaches to service design and planning and examines how organisations respond to changing needs, policy priorities and operating environments. Learners will examine strategic transformation and change within health and social care, including approaches to planning and implementing change, stakeholder involvement and factors that influence successful adoption and sustainability. Learners will evaluate service planning and transformation within health and social care contexts and use relevant evidence to develop and justify strategic recommendations for service development and transformation. This unit prepares learners for further academic study and supports the development of analytical, evaluative and strategic planning skills relevant to leadership and management within health and social care.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit should enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of strategic service planning and transformation within health and social care contexts. Assessment methods may include analytical assignments, case studies, professional discussions, service analyses, strategic planning activities or structured evaluative reports. Evidence may draw on real or realistically simulated health and social care organisations and services, population and service data, performance information, stakeholder evidence, published organisational information, policy and regulatory sources, case studies, academic literature and other relevant evidence.					

Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to apply strategic service planning and transformation concepts to health and social care contexts and demonstrate analysis, evaluation and judgement appropriate to Level 6.

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion below.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand strategic service planning in health and social care	1.1 Analyse evidence used to identify health and social care service needs and strategic priorities
	<i>IC: Sources and types of evidence used in strategic service planning; population and demographic information; patterns of health, wellbeing and social care need; inequalities and differences in access and outcomes; current and projected service demand; utilisation and capacity information; quality and performance information; outcomes and experiences of individuals using services; stakeholder and community perspectives; policy, regulatory and commissioning priorities; identification of gaps, unmet need, duplication and variation in provision; interpretation and limitations of available evidence; use of evidence to identify and prioritise service needs.</i>
	1.2 Analyse approaches to strategic planning and service design within health and social care
	<i>IC: Purpose and principles of strategic service planning; relationship between population and service needs, organisational strategy and service objectives; assessment of existing provision and service capacity; identification and appraisal of service options; service models and pathways; digital and technology-enabled models of service delivery; use of digital technologies and data in service design and strategic planning; prevention, early intervention, personalisation and integration where relevant; accessibility, inclusion and equity within service design; involvement of individuals, communities, workforce and partner organisations; consideration of quality, safety, outcomes, feasibility and sustainability; development of strategic service objectives and priorities; alignment between service plans and wider organisational and system priorities.</i>
	1.3 Assess factors influencing strategic decisions about health and social care service provision

	<i>IC: Changing population needs and service demand; policy, legislation, regulation and national or local priorities; evidence of quality, performance and outcomes; stakeholder expectations and community needs; organisational and system capacity; workforce availability and capability; financial and resource constraints; technology and infrastructure; inequalities and access; partnership and inter-organisational dependencies; risk and uncertainty; ethical considerations and competing priorities; short- and long-term implications of service decisions; balancing quality, safety, access, outcomes, feasibility and sustainability.</i>
2. Understand strategic transformation and change in health and social care	2.1 Analyse theories and approaches relevant to strategic change and transformation
	<i>IC: Meaning and purpose of organisational change, service transformation and strategic transformation; planned and emergent change; strategic application of change and transformation theories and approaches within complex health and social care organisations and systems; systems approaches to transformation; incremental and transformational change; strengths, limitations and contextual relevance of different approaches; complexity and interdependence within health and social care systems; relationship between strategic objectives, service improvement and transformation; selection and application of approaches appropriate to different organisational and service contexts.</i>
	2.2 Assess factors influencing the implementation and adoption of strategic change
	<i>IC: Organisational readiness and capacity for change; leadership and governance; organisational culture and values; communication and engagement; workforce capability, attitudes and behaviours; stakeholder interests, power and influence; involvement of individuals using services, carers and communities; partnership and inter-organisational working; resources, infrastructure and technology; strategic digital transformation and organisational digital maturity; data strategy and analytics; interoperability and connected systems; responsible adoption and governance of artificial intelligence; algorithmic bias and equity; digital inclusion; cybersecurity and cyber resilience; information governance; technology-enabled workforce and service redesign; resistance, uncertainty and change fatigue; competing organisational priorities; risk and unintended consequences; implementation planning, responsibilities and</i>

	<i>timescales; factors influencing acceptance, adoption and embedding of change.</i>
	2.3 Evaluate approaches to supporting sustainable service transformation
	<i>IC: Clear strategic purpose and intended outcomes; stakeholder involvement and co-production; leadership sponsorship and accountability; communication and engagement; workforce preparation, learning and support; implementation and transition planning; staged implementation, adaptation and transition at organisational or service level where appropriate; monitoring progress, outcomes and unintended consequences; use of feedback and learning; embedding changes within structures, systems, processes and organisational culture; maintaining improvements over time; factors influencing sustainability, spread and scalability; responding to changing evidence, needs and circumstances.</i>
3. Be able to evaluate strategic service planning and transformation within health and social care	3.1 Analyse service information and evidence to identify priorities for strategic service development or transformation
	<i>IC: Selection and interpretation of relevant population, service, performance and stakeholder evidence; patterns and trends in need, demand, access, utilisation, quality and outcomes; service capacity and gaps in provision; inequalities and variation; experiences and perspectives of individuals, communities, workforce and other stakeholders; comparison with strategic objectives, standards or expected outcomes; reliability and limitations of available evidence; identification of problems, opportunities and emerging needs; prioritisation of areas for service development or transformation.</i>
	3.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of strategic service planning or transformation within a health or social care context
	<i>IC: Criteria and evidence for evaluation; alignment with identified needs and strategic priorities; achievement of intended objectives and outcomes; quality, safety, accessibility and person-centredness; impact on inequalities and different population groups; service effectiveness and responsiveness; stakeholder and workforce experiences; implementation and adoption; use of resources and organisational capacity; evaluation of digital investment, benefits and unintended consequences; partnership and system implications; sustainability of outcomes and changes; intended and unintended</i>

	consequences; strengths, limitations and areas for further development; balanced and evidence-informed judgement.
	3.3 Recommend and justify strategic priorities for service development or transformation in response to identified needs
	IC: Identification and prioritisation of service development or transformation needs; development of evidence-informed strategic recommendations; alignment with population and service needs, organisational objectives and wider priorities; anticipated impact on quality, safety, access, experiences and outcomes; equality and equity considerations; stakeholder involvement and acceptability; workforce, financial, technological and other resource implications at strategic level; feasibility and organisational capacity; implementation considerations; risks, dependencies and potential unintended consequences; sustainability; measures and indicators for monitoring progress and outcomes; justification of recommendations using relevant evidence and analysis.

4.5 Mandatory Unit 5: Research Methods for Health and Social Care Leadership and Management

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
5	Research Methods for Health and Social Care Leadership and Management	60	20	6	K/652/3808
In this unit, learners will develop their understanding of research methods and their application to health and social care leadership and management. Learners will examine the purpose and role of research in supporting leadership, management, organisational and service-related decision-making and will consider the relationship between research, audit, service evaluation and service improvement. They will explore methodological approaches, research designs, data sources, sampling, data-collection methods and approaches to analysis, considering how these should be selected and combined to produce a coherent research design. The unit develops learners' understanding of the ethical, legal and research-governance requirements associated with health and social care research, including the responsibilities involved in accessing participants, information and data and in protecting the rights, safety, privacy and wellbeing of those who may be affected by research activity. Learners will apply their understanding to formulate a relevant research question and develop and justify a feasible research proposal addressing a leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue within health and social care. This unit provides the methodological and ethical foundation for the Applied Research Project in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management and supports the development of advanced analytical, evaluative and research skills appropriate to Level 6 study.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit must enable learners to demonstrate their ability to evaluate research approaches and methodological options and apply these to the development and justification of a research proposal relevant to health and social care leadership and management. Assessment must include the development of a structured research proposal which includes: a clearly defined research question, aim and appropriate objectives;					

- critical use of relevant literature and evidence to establish the context and rationale for the proposed research;
- selection and justification of an appropriate methodological approach and research design;
- proposed data sources, sampling and data-collection methods, where applicable;
- proposed approaches to analysis;
- consideration of feasibility, access, resources and timescales;
- identification and assessment of relevant ethical, legal and research-governance requirements;
- consideration of potential limitations, bias and risks associated with the proposed research.

The proposed research may relate to a real or realistically simulated health and social care leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related context.

Learners must not begin the research activities proposed for the Applied Research Project until the research proposal has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the centre's research ethics and governance arrangements.

Assessment may draw on academic literature, published research, organisational documentation and information, policy and guidance, published or appropriately accessible datasets, case studies and other relevant evidence.

Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate critical analysis, evaluation, methodological coherence, reasoned justification and academic judgement appropriate to Level 6.

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the role and methodological foundations of research in health and social care leadership and management	1.1 Analyse the role of research in supporting health and social care leadership, management and organisational decision-making
	<i>IC: Purpose and role of research in health and social care leadership and management; research as a source of evidence for strategic and organisational decision-making; contribution of research to understanding leadership, workforce, organisational and service-related issues; use of research to identify and investigate problems,</i>

	<i>needs, relationships, experiences and outcomes; contribution of research to organisational learning, service development, policy and strategic decision-making; relationship between research evidence, professional and organisational knowledge, stakeholder perspectives and other forms of evidence; opportunities and limitations associated with using research to inform leadership and management decisions; importance of critical and proportionate use of research evidence within complex organisational contexts.</i>
	1.2 Analyse the distinctions and relationships between research, audit, service evaluation and service improvement in health and social care
	<i>IC: Purposes and characteristics of research, audit, service evaluation and service improvement; generation of new or transferable knowledge; assessment of practice or performance against defined standards; evaluation of existing services, processes or interventions; systematic activity intended to improve quality, effectiveness or outcomes; differences and relationships in aims, questions, methods, evidence and intended use of findings; potential overlap between activities; importance of accurately defining the nature and purpose of an investigation; implications of classification for methodological choices, permissions, ethics, governance and use of findings; application to leadership, management, organisational and service-related contexts.</i>
	1.3 Critically evaluate the influence of research paradigms and methodological perspectives on the design and interpretation of health and social care research
	<i>IC: Meaning and purpose of research paradigms and methodological perspectives; positivist, post-positivist, interpretivist and pragmatic perspectives as relevant to health and social care research; assumptions concerning knowledge, reality, evidence and the role of the researcher; relationship between paradigm, research purpose, research question and methodological approach; influence on qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research design; implications for data generation, analysis and interpretation; researcher positioning and reflexivity where relevant; strengths and limitations of different methodological perspectives; recognition that methodological choices should be coherent with the purpose, context and question of the proposed research rather than selected solely by preference or convention.</i>

2. Be able to critically evaluate and select research designs and methods for health and social care leadership and management research	2.1 Critically evaluate research designs and methodological approaches in relation to different research questions and contexts
	<i>IC: Relationship between research questions, aims, methodological approaches and research design; qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods approaches as methodological choices; deductive, inductive and abductive reasoning where relevant; experimental, quasi-experimental, observational, survey, case study, comparative, longitudinal, cross-sectional and document-based designs as appropriate to health and social care leadership and management research; primary, secondary and mixed-source research designs; strengths, limitations and methodological implications of different designs; suitability for investigating organisational, workforce, leadership, management and service-related issues; feasibility within different contexts; generalisability and transferability; importance of alignment between research purpose, methodological approach and design.</i>
	2.2 Critically evaluate sampling, data sources and data-collection methods for a proposed health and social care research investigation
	<i>IC: Population and sample; sampling frame where relevant; probability and non-probability sampling approaches; purposive, convenience, quota, snowball, stratified, random and other appropriate sampling approaches; sample size and adequacy in relation to the purpose and design of the research; representativeness and diversity; sampling bias and limitations; primary and secondary data; organisational, workforce, service and population data; published datasets, documents and records; interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, observation and documentary methods; accessibility and inclusivity of data-collection approaches; strengths and limitations of different sources and methods; relevance, credibility, completeness and currency of data; access and practical feasibility; alignment of sampling, data sources and collection methods with the research question and design.</i>
	2.3 Critically evaluate analytical approaches and factors affecting the quality and interpretation of research findings
	<i>IC: Selection of analytical approaches appropriate to the research question, design and type of data; qualitative analysis including coding, categorisation and thematic approaches; quantitative analysis including descriptive statistics and appropriate interpretation of</i>

	numerical data; use of tables, charts and summary measures where relevant; identification and interpretation of themes, patterns, differences, trends, associations and relationships; integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence within mixed-methods research where appropriate; validity and reliability in quantitative research; credibility, dependability and transferability in qualitative research; bias, confounding and researcher influence where relevant; reflexivity; missing, incomplete or inconsistent data; limitations and uncertainty; distinction between association and causation; risks of overinterpretation; transparency and reproducibility or auditability as appropriate; implications of analytical choices for the strength and interpretation of findings.
3. Understand ethical, legal and research-governance requirements for health and social care research	3.1 Critically evaluate ethical principles and responsibilities relevant to health and social care research
	IC: Ethical principles and responsibilities in research including respect for autonomy, dignity, rights, welfare and safety; informed and voluntary consent; provision of accessible and sufficient information to support informed participation; right to decline or withdraw where applicable; avoidance and minimisation of harm, burden, distress and exploitation; consideration of potential benefits and risks; privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility within research design and participation; fair and appropriate recruitment and selection of participants; additional ethical considerations where research may involve children, adults at risk, individuals receiving health or social care or people who may require additional support to participate or make decisions; power relationships, coercion and undue influence; conflicts of interest; researcher integrity, transparency and accountability; ethical implications of research design, methods, data use, analysis, reporting and dissemination.
	3.2 Analyse legal, information-governance and research-governance requirements relevant to health and social care research
	IC: Legal and regulatory requirements relevant to the proposed research and context; data protection and information-governance requirements; lawful and appropriate access to information and data; confidentiality and privacy; data minimisation and purpose limitation where applicable; anonymisation and pseudonymisation; secure collection, transfer, storage, access, retention and disposal of research information and data; use of health, social care, workforce,

	organisational and other potentially sensitive information; organisational policies and research-governance arrangements; permissions and access requirements; ethical review and approval processes where applicable; responsibilities of researchers, centres and relevant organisations; distinction between organisational permission, ethical approval, informed consent and lawful processing of data; maintaining appropriate documentation and records; requirements relating to reporting, dissemination and responsible use of research findings.
	3.3 Assess ethical and governance risks associated with a proposed health and social care research investigation and determine appropriate safeguards
	IC: Identification and assessment of ethical, legal, information-governance and practical risks arising from proposed research; nature and sensitivity of the research topic; characteristics and circumstances of potential participants; potential vulnerability, power imbalance or dependency; use of confidential, personal, special-category or sensitive information; risks relating to identification or re-identification; physical, psychological, social, professional or organisational harm; researcher safety and wellbeing where relevant; proportionality between research aims, potential benefits, burdens and risks; selection of lower-risk methods or data sources where appropriate; use of published evidence, structured literature review, open datasets, documentary research, simulated data and appropriately authorised anonymised organisational information where suitable; safeguards relating to recruitment, consent, confidentiality, data management and participant welfare; referral or escalation arrangements where relevant; requirements for ethical and governance review; circumstances in which proposed research should be modified, restricted or not approved; justification and documentation of safeguards and risk-management decisions.
4. Be able to develop and justify a research proposal for a health and social care leadership and management project	4.1 Formulate a focused and feasible research question, aim and objectives relevant to health and social care leadership and management
	IC: Identification of a leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue suitable for research; use of relevant literature, evidence, organisational information and contextual knowledge to identify and refine the research focus; rationale and significance of the proposed investigation; formulation of a clear, focused and researchable question; development of an appropriate research aim and coherent objectives; alignment between

	<i>the research question, aim and objectives; definition of scope and boundaries; consideration of the intended contribution of the research to leadership, management, organisational or service knowledge and practice; feasibility in relation to available evidence or data, access, timescales, resources and researcher capability; consideration of ethical, legal and governance constraints when determining the scope of the proposed research.</i>
	4.2 Develop a coherent research proposal aligned with the research question, methodological approach and intended analysis
	<i>IC: Structure and components of a research proposal; research context, rationale, question, aim and objectives; critical use of relevant literature and evidence to establish context and support the rationale for the proposed investigation; selection of methodological approach and research design; proposed population, sample and sampling approach where applicable; proposed data sources and data-collection methods; proposed analytical approach; alignment and methodological coherence between the research question, aims, design, sampling or data sources, data collection and analysis; consideration of validity, reliability, credibility, transferability and bias as appropriate; ethical, legal, information-governance and research-governance requirements; proposed safeguards and risk-management arrangements; access and permissions; resources, project stages and realistic timescales; anticipated limitations and constraints; appropriate academic conventions, referencing and presentation.</i>
	4.3 Critically justify the methodological, ethical and practical decisions within a proposed health and social care research project
	<i>IC: Critical justification of the selected methodological approach, research design, sampling or data-selection approach, data sources, data-collection methods and proposed analytical methods; relationship between methodological decisions and the research question, aim and objectives; consideration of reasonable alternative approaches and justification for choices made; strengths, limitations and trade-offs associated with the proposed design; methodological coherence; implications for validity, reliability, credibility, transferability and interpretation as appropriate; potential sources of bias, researcher influence and uncertainty; justification of ethical safeguards and approaches to consent, confidentiality, privacy, data management and participant welfare where applicable; justification of the proposed approach in relation to legal and research-governance</i>

	<i>requirements; feasibility in relation to access, resources, timescales and researcher capability; anticipated limitations and potential unintended consequences; proportionality of the proposed investigation and its associated risks and burdens; reasoned judgement about whether the proposed research is methodologically, ethically and practically appropriate to proceed.</i>
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4.6 Mandatory Unit 6: Applied Research Project in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Level	Unit Reference
6	Applied Research Project in Health and Social Care Leadership and Management	60	20	6	L/652/3809
In this unit, learners will undertake an applied research project addressing a leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue within health and social care. Building on the research proposal developed and approved through Research Methods for Health and Social Care Leadership and Management, learners will implement an appropriate research methodology and manage the research process in accordance with relevant ethical, legal and research-governance requirements. Learners will collect, access or use appropriate research information and data in accordance with the approved project design and will analyse and interpret their findings using methods appropriate to the research question and methodology. They will consider findings in relation to relevant literature and evidence and critically examine the limitations, bias and uncertainty associated with the research. Learners will develop evidence-based conclusions and recommendations and consider the implications of their findings for health and social care leadership, management, organisations, workforces or services. The unit culminates in a critical evaluation of the research project, including the effectiveness of the methodology, the quality and limitations of the evidence produced and the potential contribution of the findings to leadership, management and service development.					
Assessment Instructions and Guidance					
Assessment for this unit must enable learners to demonstrate their ability to undertake and critically evaluate an applied research project relevant to health and social care leadership and management. The research project must be based on a proposal that has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the centre's research ethics and governance arrangements before research activity begins.					

The project must address a leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue within health and social care and must enable the learner to demonstrate appropriate application of research methods, analysis and interpretation of findings, development of evidence-based conclusions and recommendations and critical evaluation of the completed research.

Assessment must include evidence of:

- implementation and management of the approved research project;
- appropriate application of the approved methodology and research methods;
- compliance with relevant ethical, legal, information-governance and research-governance requirements;
- systematic and secure management of research information and data;
- analysis and interpretation of findings using methods appropriate to the research design and data;
- consideration of findings in relation to relevant literature and evidence;
- development and justification of conclusions and recommendations;
- consideration of implications for leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service practice;
- critical evaluation of the methodology, research process, findings and limitations of the project.

Where changes to the approved research proposal become necessary during the project, these must be appropriately justified, documented and subject to further approval where required by the centre's research ethics and governance arrangements.

The nature and scope of the research activity must remain within the ethical and research-governance parameters approved by the centre. Appropriate evidence must be retained to demonstrate that required permissions and approvals were obtained before relevant research activity was undertaken.

Assessment must provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate independent research, critical analysis, interpretation, reasoned judgement, evidence-based decision-making and critical reflection appropriate to Level 6.

Indicative Content (IC) is provided against each individual Assessment Criterion.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Be able to conduct an approved research project relevant to health and social care leadership and management	1.1 Implement an approved research methodology and methods in accordance with the research proposal
	<i>IC: Implementation of the approved research question, aim and objectives; application of the approved methodological approach and research design; implementation of sampling or data-selection approaches where applicable; collection, generation, extraction or use of data and information using approved methods; application of research instruments, protocols or procedures where relevant; systematic and consistent application of research methods; maintenance of alignment between the research question, methodology, methods and intended analysis; recognition of practical or methodological issues arising during implementation; working within the approved scope of the research; maintaining appropriate records of research activity and methodological decisions.</i>
	1.2 Manage the research project in accordance with ethical, legal and research-governance requirements
	<i>IC: Implementation of approved ethical and governance arrangements; confirmation of relevant permissions and approvals before undertaking associated research activity; informed consent and participant information where applicable; protection of participant rights, dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing; confidentiality, anonymity and pseudonymisation as appropriate; lawful and appropriate handling of personal, sensitive or organisational information; secure collection, access, transfer, storage and management of research data and records; data minimisation and appropriate access controls where relevant; management of ethical, information-governance and research-governance issues arising during the project; researcher safety and wellbeing where relevant; maintenance of appropriate documentation and audit trail; reporting and escalation of concerns, incidents or unexpected issues in accordance with applicable arrangements; continued compliance with the scope and conditions of research approval.</i>
	1.3 Manage the progress of the research project and respond appropriately to issues or changes arising during implementation

	<i>IC: Planning and management of project activities, stages, resources and timescales; monitoring progress against the approved proposal; identification of methodological, practical, access, recruitment, data or resource-related challenges; assessment of the implications of emerging issues for the feasibility, integrity and quality of the research; proportionate responses to unexpected circumstances; adaptation of project activities where justified; maintenance of methodological coherence when considering changes; recognition of changes that remain within approved parameters and those requiring further review or approval; justification and documentation of amendments and decisions; communication with relevant parties where required; contingency planning; decisions to modify, pause or discontinue research activity where appropriate; completion of the project within an appropriate and manageable scope.</i>
2. Be able to analyse and interpret research findings	2.1 Organise and analyse research information and data using methods appropriate to the research design
	<i>IC: Preparation and organisation of research information and data for analysis; checking data for completeness, consistency, accuracy and relevance where appropriate; management of missing, incomplete or anomalous data; coding, categorisation and organisation of qualitative information; application of thematic or other appropriate qualitative analytical approaches; organisation and analysis of quantitative data using appropriate descriptive statistics, tables, charts, summary measures or other relevant techniques; integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence within mixed-methods research where applicable; systematic and transparent application of analytical methods; maintenance of appropriate records of analytical decisions and processes; use of digital tools or software where appropriate; alignment of analytical methods with the research question, objectives, methodology and nature of the data.</i>
	2.2 Interpret research findings in relation to the research question, aim and objectives
	<i>IC: Identification and interpretation of themes, patterns, trends, differences, similarities, associations and relationships within the findings as appropriate; consideration of the significance and meaning of findings within the research context; comparison of findings across participants, groups, sources, datasets or forms of evidence where appropriate; integration and interpretation of findings within mixed-methods research where applicable; relationship of findings to the</i>

	research question, aim and objectives; distinction between findings and interpretation; consideration of alternative interpretations; avoidance of unsupported inference and overinterpretation; distinction between association and causation where relevant; reasoned interpretation proportionate to the nature, quality and scope of the evidence.
	2.3 Critically analyse research findings in relation to relevant literature and the quality and limitations of the evidence
	IC: Comparison and integration of project findings with relevant literature, research and other evidence; areas of agreement, difference, contradiction or new insight; consideration of findings within the wider health and social care leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service context; critical consideration of the quality and sufficiency of the evidence generated or used; validity and reliability, or credibility, dependability and transferability, as appropriate; influence of sampling or data selection, data sources, data-collection methods and analytical choices on the findings; potential bias, confounding, researcher influence and uncertainty; missing or incomplete evidence; methodological and practical limitations; consideration of unexpected or contradictory findings; implications of limitations for interpretation; identification of what can and cannot reasonably be concluded from the evidence.
3. Be able to develop evidence-based conclusions and recommendations from research findings	3.1 Develop conclusions that are supported by the research findings and address the research question
	IC: Synthesis of analysed and interpreted findings; development of conclusions directly supported by the evidence; relationship between conclusions and the research question, aim and objectives; identification of the principal findings and their significance; consideration of areas of agreement, difference, contradiction or uncertainty within the evidence; distinction between findings, interpretation and conclusions; proportionality between the strength and scope of the evidence and conclusions drawn; avoidance of unsupported generalisation or causal claims; acknowledgement of limitations, bias and uncertainty when drawing conclusions; clear and reasoned response to the research question; identification of questions or issues that remain unresolved.
	3.2 Develop and justify evidence-based recommendations arising from the research findings

	<i>IC: Translation of research findings and conclusions into relevant recommendations; clear relationship between evidence, conclusions and recommendations; recommendations for leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service practice as appropriate; consideration of reasonable alternative responses to the findings; prioritisation of recommendations where appropriate; justification based on the strength, relevance and applicability of the evidence; feasibility and proportionality of recommendations; consideration of resources, organisational capacity, stakeholder needs and perspectives, risks, constraints and potential unintended consequences; distinction between recommendations supported by the research and wider suggestions requiring further evidence; identification of areas requiring further investigation or research where appropriate.</i> 3.3 Evaluate the implications of the research findings and recommendations for health and social care leadership and management <i>IC: Potential implications of findings and recommendations for leadership and management practice; organisational strategy, policy and decision-making; workforce planning, development and organisational culture; service planning, delivery and transformation; quality, governance and risk management; resource allocation and sustainability where relevant; experiences and outcomes of individuals, communities, staff and other stakeholders as appropriate; applicability and transferability of findings to different organisational or service contexts; potential benefits, risks, limitations and unintended consequences associated with acting on findings; organisational readiness and contextual factors affecting application; implications for future evidence gathering, evaluation or research; reasoned judgement about the potential contribution and appropriate use of the research within health and social care.</i>
4. Be able to critically evaluate a research project and its contribution to health and social care leadership and management	4.1 Critically evaluate the methodology and research process used within the completed project <i>IC: Critical evaluation of the suitability of the methodological approach and research design for addressing the research question, aim and objectives; effectiveness of sampling or data-selection approaches, data sources, data-collection methods and analytical methods; methodological coherence across the completed project; strengths and limitations of the methodology as implemented; comparison between the planned and implemented research</i>

	<i>approach; methodological, practical, access, resource or time-related challenges encountered; effectiveness of adaptations or decisions made during implementation; influence of researcher positioning, reflexivity and researcher decisions where relevant; consideration of alternative methodological approaches and how these may have affected the research; effectiveness of project planning and management; lessons arising from implementation of the research process.</i>
	4.2 Critically evaluate the quality, limitations and ethical conduct of the completed research
	<i>IC: Critical evaluation of the quality and sufficiency of the evidence generated or used; validity and reliability, or credibility, dependability and transferability, as appropriate; representativeness and adequacy of samples or data sources where relevant; potential sources and effects of bias, confounding, researcher influence, missing data and uncertainty; limitations arising from the research scope, design, methods, context or implementation; implications of limitations for the findings, conclusions and recommendations; effectiveness of ethical safeguards and research-governance arrangements; management of consent, confidentiality, privacy, data and participant welfare where applicable; ethical or governance challenges encountered and responses to them; consideration of whether the research was conducted responsibly and within approved parameters; transparency in acknowledging limitations and the boundaries of the evidence.</i>
	4.3 Critically evaluate the contribution of the research and identify opportunities for further development
	<i>IC: Overall contribution of the research to understanding the leadership, management, organisational, workforce or service-related issue investigated; significance and usefulness of the findings; contribution to existing literature, evidence, organisational knowledge or professional understanding; potential application of findings and recommendations to leadership, management, organisational or service decision-making; applicability and transferability to other contexts; potential influence on strategy, policy, workforce, quality, resources or service development where relevant; strengths and limitations of the contribution made; gaps or unresolved issues identified through the research; opportunities for further research, investigation, evaluation or evidence gathering; potential development</i>

	<i>or refinement of the research approach; reasoned judgement about the overall value and contribution of the completed project to health and social care leadership and management.</i>
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