The Registrar General's Nationally accredited programme for Registration Officers

Question & Answer document

<u>Candidates</u>

1.   Who is the programme suitable for?

The national qualification is suitable for any registration practitioner who is involved in delivering a broad range of registration transactions. It is essential that candidates are able to demonstrate competence in all of the required modules (albeit that delegates are likely to have differing levels of experience). The modules include;

- Customer Service in a registration environment
- The relationship between local government and the registration service
- Using IT in the registration service
- Delivering Registration Services (units comprise births, still-births, deaths, marriages, notices of marriage and civil partnership , certificates and counter-fraud and conducting ceremonies)

As the programme develops we hope to be able to consider an optional element to the Delivering Registration Services module which would enable candidates to complete a core set of units alongside some optional elements.

2.   Where can I find out more?

A full set of information is available on the LRSA web site. http://www.lrsa.org.uk/LearningLink.cfm including the detailed content of the four modules. The site also includes instructions about how to use the Technical Assessment tool. Technical Assessment is the single model of assessment which has been developed to test officer performance in a real life registration scenario.

You do not have to be working towards the qualification in order to access the tools which also include the technical e-learning available from the Registrars website: https://ips-extranet.homeoffice.gov.uk/

3. How much does it cost and is there any provision to afford flexible payment?

The cost of completing the programme is £400 per candidate. **LRSA will provide a subsidy of £100 for a single candidate from a member authority each year**.

Payment can be made in full in Year 1 or can be paid in two equal instalments (with the first in Year 1 and the second in Year 2).

The offer we made was that LRSA would subsidise one candidate from a member authority each year. The subsidy for the first year is £100 but this was based on around 100 candidates. If we have fewer expressions of interest we will provide a higher subsidy up to the maximum figure of £10,000. However, if we have more candidates we may have to reconsider the subsidy in year 2.

4.   How do I apply for a place on the programme?

The formal programme will be launched at beginning September 2014. If you wish to be considered for a place on the programme you should first complete an Application Form *http://www.lrsa.org.uk/GuidanceandInformation.cfm* and submit it to the e-mail address at the end of the form.
Applications will be supported subject to;
- Agreement to funding being confirmed
- Assessor availability

It is important to note that all candidates accepted on to the programme will be required to attend a briefing event in advance of commencing the programme.

5.   Do I need to be an experienced Registration Officer?

No. The qualification has been designed so that it is appropriate both for experienced staff and also for newly appointed registration officers.

6.   What is the expected duration of the programme?

It is difficult to estimate with any degree of accuracy the amount of time that it will take for you to progress through the programme. We anticipate that an experienced officer could complete the programme within 6-12 months. For a less experienced officer it may take up to 2 years to complete. A more accurate prediction can be made once the pilot has been completed and evaluated.

Once you have been accepted onto the programme you will be required to complete all elements within a 2 year period as there is no provision to extend beyond this time.

7.   How much time will I need to commit to completing the various modules?

Whilst your manager may wish to agree an amount of time to support you progressing through the programme, it is essential that candidates appreciate that there will be an expectation that much of the research and learning will be completed in your own time. We anticipate that completion of the whole programme will take between 150 and 200 hours over a two year period. 80 of these hours will be dedicated to the Delivering Registration Services (technical) module.

8.   Will I be expected to attend learning events to support completion of the programme?

No. However you will be required to maintain a portfolio of evidence to support your research and learning. You will also be assigned an Assessor who will have been trained to support you through your programme of learning.

9. *How will my learning be assessed?*

There are 5 key methods of assessment:

- **E-learning** – which provides underpinning knowledge for the qualification
- **Technical Assessment** – observed delivery of a broad range of 'live' registrations
- **Written answer** – narrative response to set questions (in Answer book format) in your own words demonstrating research, learning or practical application of a particular module/unit
- **Professional discussions** - These are the result one to one progress discussions that you will have with your assessor on specific modules/units.
- **Witness testimony** – observations made by experienced colleagues and approved by a line/senior manager

10. *What are my personal responsibilities for the duration of my learning?*

In opting to pursue the qualification you are committing to complete the programme within a 2 year period. During this time, you will need to be highly motivated and willing to pursue learning (sometimes outside of your normal working hours – this would not normally be paid although you will need to clarify this with your employer), thereby enabling you to complete your portfolio of evidence.

You will need to act positively on feedback provided by your assessor to enable you to complete your assessments to an agreed standard. All evidence provided within your portfolio needs to be presented in a clear and consistent way ensuring that it is valid, authentic, current, reliable and sufficient. Evidence will need to be submitted as it is completed rather than waiting until the portfolio is complete. You will need to discuss and agree how this can be achieved when you meet with your Assessor.

11. *What support can I expect from my Assessor?*

Each candidate on the programme will be assigned a trained Assessor. Your Assessor will meet with you regularly to help you develop a realistic Action plan with milestones for achievement. Your Assessor will be responsible for assessing your performance across a range of tasks to ensure that your evidence of competence meets with the assessment criteria. Through your observed technical assessments, you will be provided with immediate feedback on your performance which may include some learning points/areas for development to enable you to achieve the levels of scoring required to demonstrate technical competence.

Your Assessor will provide you with a full briefing prior to commencement of learning and thereafter will ensure that fair and consistent assessment decisions are made based on the evidence provided. He/she will also provide advice and support as required to guide you towards a successful outcome.

12. *What happens at the end of the programme?*

At the end of the programme you will submit your completed portfolio to your assessor and hold a final professional discussion. Upon completion of the programme and subject to a judgement being made that competence has been achieved, you will be presented with a certificate by the Registrar General with accreditation from the awarding body (City & Guilds).

13. *Who is the awarding body for the programme?*

The awarding body for the programme is City & Guilds.

14. *What happens in the event that I partially complete a module but am unable to conclude my learning due to circumstances outside of my control? (e.g. long term illness, maternity leave etc)*

Provided that your Assessor has formally assessed the evidence that you have provided it can be 'banked' for up to 2 years. However, it is important to note that the full portfolio of evidence must be completed within the 2 year period. Regarding 'banked' evidence, it is important to understand that If new legislation has been implemented during the two year period, it may be necessary to re-complete and submit the required evidence for completion of the module.

15. *What level will the award be aligned to against the national qualification framework (NQF)?*

The Registrar General's Nationally accredited programme for Registration Officers is a 'bespoke' programme, and therefore it is not aligned to a Level with the NQF. Based on the work which was completed some years ago with EdExcel, the Board anticipates that the qualification will eventually be aligned to a Level 4/5 qualification although this cannot be confirmed with any certainty at this stage.

For the future (following completion and evaluation of the pilot) there may be scope to consider the equivalent of a Certificate and Diploma level of achievement against the qualification. This approach would be developed to recognise that not all registration officers will have an opportunity within their own local authority to pursue and complete all of the technical units within the Delivering Registration Services Module. At this stage, completion of all units remains a fundamental requirement of the qualification.

16. *How will I know whether I have provided sufficient evidence?*

Your assessor will discuss evidence with you and provide guidance and support to enable you to achieve a successful outcome. In order to assist your assessor, you need to order your portfolio of evidence in a logical and consistent format. Again your assessor will advise you on this and other matters at your initial meeting.

17. *How is current evidence defined?*

It is widely acknowledged in Registration that the opportunity to become involved in some technical duties can be somewhat limited by availability. Examples include Registrar Generals' Licence and Registering Churches for worship and marriage. For the purpose of the qualification, evidence will be classed as current if it has been collected during the course of the last 2 years. Candidates are therefore encouraged to begin to gather examples of evidence as soon as they have made a commitment to join the National Qualification.

18. *What happens in the event that I wish to challenge an Assessor judgement?*

All Assessors are fully trained to ensure consistent application of the Standard. In the event that a candidate wishes to challenge an Assessment decision they should do so by following the Appeals procedure. The judgement of the appeals panel will then be final.

Assessor

1. *What skills are required for the role of Assessor?*

A role profile *http://www.lrsa.org.uk/GuidanceandInformation.cfm* which provides details of the skills and qualities required of an assessor can be found on the LRSA web site. The role of Assessor is considered to be critical to the success of the programme and it is widely anticipated that trained Assessors will become future Champions for the programme.

2. *How do I apply to be an Assessor?*

You will need to complete an Application form which should be supported by your line manager/Head of Service. Forms should be returned to the address at the end of the application. In making your application you are committing to support up to three candidates (at any one time) through to completion of the programme. This will require you to commit up to half a day per month per candidate.

3. *If my nomination is accepted, what training will be provided?*

Assessors will be required to attend a compulsory two day training event in advance of *** ub this role. This is a pre-requisite of the role of Assessor. Beyond that, the consistent application of the Standard will be routinely monitored by Internal Verifiers (IV). Each Assessor will be advised of their IV upon appointment.

4. *Do I have to be a registration practitioner to apply to become an Assessor?*

No. The role lends itself well to people who already hold a training / supervisory / managerial post as it is helpful to have some flexibility around how your work is planned and executed. If you have a technical background you will be able to support the delivery of Technical Assessment amongst your candidates. If not, you will need to consider how best this might be delivered from within your team.

5. *Will any external support be provided to Assessors on an ongoing basis?*

Yes. Each local authority cluster will be assigned a 'buddy' authority. The person providing Assessor support will also usually be the Internal Verifier. For the purpose of the pilot the 'buddy' will be a member of the Project Board. The buddy will provide support as required although this is likely to be by telephone/e-mail rather than through visits. If a visit is necessary this will be charged on a cost recovery basis.

It is also intended that a virtual network will be established and hosted on the LRSA website to ensure that learning between Assessors can be developed and shared.

6. *What is the anticipated time commitment required for an Assessor?*

The time commitment will be dependent upon the number of candidates that you are assigned. A rough estimate would suggest that Assessors may need to spend an average of 1 or 2 hours per month for each ***. It is often considered very beneficial if Assessors can be located on the same site as their candidates, thereby affording time for ongoing support and mentoring as required. The maximum number of candidates per Assessor would be 3.

7. What is my role in delivering feedback?

The Assessor has a key role in providing ongoing feedback to their candidate(s). Feedback should be objective and reflect the assessment criteria and not the Assessor's personal opinion.

8. How will I know when assessment is complete?

An assessment is complete when sufficient, valid, current, authentic and reliable evidence has been provided to meet with all of the assessment criteria.

Internal Verifier

1. What does the Internal Verifier do?

The primary role of the Internal Verifier is to monitor the work of the Assessors, ensuring relevant consistency checks are carried out. The role is concerned with all aspects of quality assurance, ensuring that all assessment activities are carried out fairly and consistently to meet with the requirements of the national standard

2. Who will be the Internal Verifiers?

To begin with, members of the Project Board will take on the Internal Verifier roles, each having assigned responsibility across a geographic patch. For the future it is hoped that Internal Verifiers will be selected from regional training group leads. Discussions are already progressing with colleagues to develop this concept.

3. How many Assessors will an Internal Verifier be responsible for?

It is recommended that an Internal Verifier has no more than three Assessors (with a maximum of 9 candidates at any one time)

What is a Technical Assessment and do I need to have a technical registration background to use it?

The Technical Assessment tool is a spreadsheet which provides a series of prescribed or open questions which can be tested during the face to face objective assessment of offices *** at the point of the registration processes.

Whilst it is beneficial to have a registration background in order to deliver Technical Assessment (particularly in the event that the process being observed is not straightforward), the tool can be equally successfully delivered by non-technical personnel. The tool is not intended to catch people out and can therefore be shared in advance of the assessment being undertaken to allow colleagues to remind themselves of the basis upon which the assessment is being made.