City & Guilds Accredited

The Registrar General's nationally accredited programme for Registration Officers

Candidate Information Pack

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1 Welcome and Introduction

Dear Candidate

Welcome to the Registrar General’s nationally accredited programme for Registration Officers. I hope that your learning journey is both enjoyable and challenging in terms of providing you with a unique opportunity to extend your learning and have your skills and knowledge accredited.

The qualification was developed to promote quality and consistency within the registration service. It affords accreditation of the broad range of competencies required for a modern Registration Officer operating in a customer focussed environment.

Throughout your learning journey, the onus is on you to be pro-active and take personal responsibility for collecting evidence for your portfolio. This will require self-motivation, drive and commitment.

In the next sections you will have all the information you need to get you started and to enable you to successfully complete the programme.

It is hoped that you will not only learn about your service and your local authority but that you will also learn a lot about yourself, thereby improving your skills and confidence as a registrar.

Good luck and enjoy your journey.

2 The Accredited Programme in Short

The Registrar General's nationally accredited programme for Registration Officers (NAP) is an NVQ-style modular programme of self-directed learning.

The broad principles are:

- 4 core modules (listed below);
- each module has a number of units and learning outcomes;
- the candidate demonstrates competence in each learning outcome by gathering evidence of their competence in a number of ways (also listed below) and presenting a portfolio with their evidence;
- the candidate's work is assessed by a competent assessor and once approved and completed they will gain their certificate, approved by City & Guilds being personally signed and presented by the Registrar General or his/her representative;
- most of the work required to be assessed is "on the job", but also requires the candidate to complete their own learning, perhaps outside the workplace;
- the total time taken to complete the qualification will vary from one candidate to another but it is likely to take between 150 and 200 hours which can be spread over 2 years;
- work carried out for some of the learning outcomes may also be cross-referenced to other modules/units, for example, observation of a technical registration process (technical assessment) will also cross-reference to other units in the Customer Service and Using IT modules.

The Modules

Module 1 – Customer Service in a Registration Environment

Module 2 – Understanding the relationship between Local Government and the Registration Service

Module 3 – Using Information Technology in the Registration Service

Module 4 – Delivering Registration Services (units include: Births, Deaths, Stillbirths, Marriages, Civil Partnerships, Ceremonies, Certificates & Counter-fraud)

Detailed descriptions of all modules and units can be found via the LRSA website at: http://www.lrsa.org.uk/ and on the GRO Registrars website.

Evidence of Competence

Each candidate will be assigned an assessor who will support and direct you to achieve a successful outcome. They will assess you against a broad range of learning outcomes which can be evidenced using any of the following methods:

E-learning (EL)	Successful completion of all GRO e-learning modules (Level 1 @ 100% & Level 2 @ 95%)
Written Answers (WA)	Successful completion of candidate workbooks (95% pass rate)
Technical Assessment (TA)	Successful achievement of technical assessments (95% pass rate)
Witness Testimony (WT)	Observation by an experienced work colleague or line manager
Professional Discussion (PD)	Professional discussions with the assessor
Other (O)	Any other evidence method not listed above

3 Terminology

Before we go into detail, there is a whole host of terminology which may or may not be familiar to the candidate. Some of the common terminology and a short definition are listed below.

Assessor	An assessor regularly examines a candidate's portfolio of evidence, observes them in their workplace, provides constructive feedback and offers support and advice where necessary. They also maintain a record of the candidate's progress against the requirements of the National Qualification.
Internal Verifier	An internal verifier has a quality assurance role, ensuring assessments are carried out fairly and consistently in accordance with national standards. They support and monitor the assessors.
Portfolio	A portfolio is a way of recording evidence of your achievements. It is a collection of different items of evidence which demonstrates that you have the required skills, knowledge and understanding to support your claim to a qualification.
Evidence	Evidence is gathered by various methods: e-learning; written answers; technical assessments; witness testimony and professional discussions with the assessor.
Technical Assessment	The aim of the technical assessment template is to arrive at an objective evaluation based on the registration officer's (RO's) actions during a full range of registration activities Further details can be found on the LRSA website at: http://www.lrsa.org.uk/ and on the GRO Registrars website at: https://gro-extranet.homeoffice.gov.uk/training/technical-assessment/
Competence	Competence i.e. the ability to do something successfully or

	efficiently is measured throughout the Programme against the criteria set out in Form CF2.
Module	There are 4 modules: Customer Service; Understanding Local Government; Using IT; Delivering Registration Services.
Unit	Each module is divided into a series of detailed units and sub-units.

4 The Modules and Units in More Detail

Full details about all the modules and units can be found on the LRSA website at: http://www.lrsa.org.uk/ as well as on the GRO Registrars website at: https://gro-extranet.homeoffice.gov.uk/

5 Building your portfolio and gathering evidence

Building your portfolio

The production of a well-organised, clearly labelled portfolio which relates each piece of evidence to the relevant outcomes and performance criteria requires a careful methodical approach. When your assessor looks through your portfolio, he/she will find the task of making judgements about your competence much easier if the information in it is presented in a logical sequence. You will need to present your evidence in a format that is easy to read and in which materials can be added to or taken away.

The portfolio and any files associated with it are very important and you must keep it safe and ensure you comply with Data Protection policies. Take advice from your assessor who will help you include an organised set of references that will allow your evidence to be easily and quickly found (using Form CF4). In order to keep the amount of paper evidence in your portfolio to a minimum, wherever possible you should supply an electronic link to the relevant evidence. However, if this is not possible, you should provide a paper copy.

Planning your portfolio and how you will collect the evidence

Start by talking with your assessor and looking carefully at the national qualification modules. You do not have to do the modules in the order in which they appear. Look at the guidance that is provided for every module and that will give ideas as to what you can do. A good start would be to work your way through all the GRO e-learning modules and print off certificates showing successful completion (100% for level 1 and 95% for level 2). Ideally you should gain as much evidence that crosses different areas as possible, by doing a number of significant tasks. It is really important that you plan your work over time as you may need to negotiate with other people as to how you will get the chance to collect evidence.

Before you start looking for different kinds of evidence and deciding if they should be included in your portfolio, you will find it helpful to plan how you will carry out the tasks and how long they may take.

What must be in a portfolio?
A front cover with your name and description of the qualification is essential. This record should be placed at the front of your portfolio with a contents page. The Candidate Information Pack Appendix 2 details the various forms that will be required at various stages during the assessment.

Index of evidence. The index of evidence (Form CF4) should be placed in the back of your portfolio. As you produce pieces of evidence, you should give each piece a unique number and link it to the Qualification Overview and Assessment Progress Plan (CF2) so that your assessor can see which piece of evidence is put forward for which module. A note should be made where one piece of evidence can be used to prove competence in more than unit (cross-referencing). Every piece of evidence should be numbered and referenced on the index, including evidence that is not located in the portfolio, such as confidential material which has been left in situ in the workplace. The final column of the sheet will be completed by the internal verifier when your evidence is sampled.

Cross-referencing: Form CF2 provides guidance on which units can automatically be cross-referenced which means that you may need to provide only one piece of evidence to satisfy several units. Your assessor will give you further guidance regarding cross-referencing. Your assessor will update the Form CF2 as you move through the programme.

What can be used as evidence?
All the evidence you collect and present for assessment must be relevant to the qualification. Your assessor will help you choose which pieces of evidence are required and advise you, where necessary, regarding Data Protection. Evidence will include such things as e-learning certificates, technical assessment feedback forms, completed written answer books, witness testimonies, correspondence relating to specific technical registration work (e.g. corrections), RON reference numbers (e.g. to evidence a stillbirth registration). Other types of evidence might be needed to prove competency in dealing with, for example, a notice for a marriage abroad which may not be able to be evidenced during the normal working day. In such circumstances a notice could be taken using the RON training site and appropriate evidence produced by way of a printout of the notice. It is not necessary to take copies of evidence if your assessor can access them easily in their natural location.

How should evidence be presented?

E-learning: Printed certificates showing a 100% pass rate for all level 1 and 95% for all level 2 e-learning modules.
N.B. There is no limit to the amount of times that you can access the e-learning in order to achieve the required score.

Written Answers: Copies of duly completed and marked workbooks (all NAP workbooks are available on the LRSA website at: http://www.lrsa.org.uk/) and on the GRO Registrars website at: https://gro-extranet.homeoffice.gov.uk/)

Technical Assessment: copy of the feedback form showing a mark of 95% or more.

Witness Testimony: completed on Form AF7 by an experienced work colleague and countersigned by your line manager.

Professional Discussion: completed on Form AF6 by your assessor.

Other: other types of evidence should be recorded on Form CF4 'Index of Evidence'.

How long is evidence valid for?
Evidence must be valid and current (no more than 2 years old). 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 buildings for worship and marriage. For the purpose of the programme, 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 programme.

If there has been a recent change in legislation, a professional discussion may be required to prove the candidate has up-to-date knowledge.

Finding the necessary forms to use.
All NAP forms are held on the LRSA website at: (http://www.lrsa.org.uk/LearningLink.cfm). Copies are also available via the GRO Registrars Website.

6 The Assessment Process

You are now ready to start the programme and a summary of the whole process is contained in Appendix 1 (Nationally Accredited Programme Pathway) which illustrates the journey from start to finish.

Once you have been accepted on the programme and assigned to a cohort you will be allocated an assessor who will contact you to introduce themselves and agree next steps. You will also be given a unique candidate number. .

The relationship between the candidate and the assessor is crucial to ensure successful completion of the qualification

Initial Meeting

The candidate and assessor will meet to start to plan the assessment of the programme. This first meeting, which should be attended by the Internal Verifier, should:

- be attended by the assessor and all of his/her candidates at the same time – If practicable, geographically-close assessors might wish to join forces for this first meeting to enable several candidates to begin to form a network for sharing issues and questions;
- explain programme expectations along with an outline of the appeals process (there is a generic powerpoint presentation and briefing notes on the LRSA website);
- explain the Internal Verification process (Form IV11 Sampling Plan);

- afford the opportunity for the candidate/s to complete Form CF1 which commits them to taking part in the programme;
- allow time for the candidate/s to begin to compile an individual action plan (Form CF3) which details when the assessor and candidate will meet in the future, a timetable if possible and what they will achieve at each meeting e.g. they could agree a timescale for submitting the consistency check work as detailed on the IV11 Sampling Plan form. They could also agree which GRO e-learning modules (Form CF5) and Technical Assessments (Form CF6) may need to be completed and by when;
- set up a portfolio: a standard file will be fine for this but the candidate may need a bigger one (maximum one lever arch file) as the programme progresses. Explain how the Portfolio should be structured. (If possible, demonstrate a completed portfolio);
- Include forms CF1, CF2, CF3, CF4, CF5 and CF6.

Forms

There are 6 basic forms which need to be completed and kept up-to-date as you progress through the qualification:

CF1 Candidate Record Form

- Complete the relevant information
- Sign the declarations
- Keep in your portfolio for future reference

CF2 Qualification Overview and Assessment Progress Plan

- The Qualification Overview is for your reference only.
- Your assessor will complete the relevant progress plans for each module (Form CF2a) as you complete each task. Marks awarded for written answers are entered and progress is mapped by means of a traffic light system (red, amber, green).
- When a module has been completed, it is signed off by the assessor and internal verifier.

CF3 Action Plan and Review

- Complete in consultation with your assessor

CF4 Index of Evidence

- Each piece of evidence produced must be given a unique number and be linked to the Qualification Overview and Assessment Progress Plan (CF2) so that the assessor can see which bit of evidence is put forward to which module. Every piece of evidence must be numbered and referenced, including evidence that is not located in the portfolio, such as confidential material which has been left in situ in the workplace. Assessors will initial each piece of evidence kept in the candidate's portfolio to confirm it is acceptable.

CF5 Record of completed GRO e-learning

CF6 Record of completed Technical Assessments

Appendix 2 contains a complete list of all the Accredited Programme forms.

Subsequent meetings
As part of the action plan (CF3) the candidate may decide they can start to complete other parts of the qualification which will generate other forms of evidence in the portfolio. Enough time must then be left for the assessor to assess the portfolio. The assessor will complete their assessment and give feedback to the candidate whenever necessary.

Data Protection
In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 you should not retain any documents in your portfolio that contain personal information, for example, copies of registrations that you have completed. Remember that personal data is not just the obvious names and addresses - it could be non-personal data that put together with some other piece of information you hold will identify a person. It will also include commercially sensitive information such as financial reports. If it is necessary for you to use personal information as evidence of a particular competence or skill then you should ask your assessor or colleague to sign a statement to confirm that they have seen the piece of work and that it meets the required standard.

Completing modules and units
When a piece of work has been assessed and deemed to be sufficient the assessor will update the form CF2 accordingly.

Completing the qualification and internal verifier sampling
To ensure that the standard and quality of the qualification (and assessment) is maintained, samples of work will be regularly assessed by an internal verifier before the final portfolio can be submitted to the Qualification Manager.

Meeting the evidence criteria The qualification is designed for the candidate to prove their competence in their day-to-day job mainly through e-learning, written answer books and technical assessments, all of which are measurable. However, there may be times when the required criteria have not been met and another form of evidence needs to be produced if the original evidence is not of sufficient quantity or quality. The candidate and assessor will discuss this and decide what additional evidence is needed, e.g. a further observation or amendment to submitted work and the candidate will re-submit their work for assessment again. The exceptions to this are the e-learning modules which require a pass mark of 100% for level 1 and 95% for level 2, the technical assessments for which a pass mark of 95% is required and the written answer books which each require a pass mark of 95%.

Appeals Process
The appeals process is set out in Appendix 3

7 Quality Assurance: the role of the Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier's job is to ensure a consistent quality of assessment throughout the qualification.

The Internal Verifier will monitor the assessor's performance at least three times during the course of the qualification, using a mixture of observation and interviews. The first observation will take place approximately one month after the candidate has started the qualification, the second half-way through and the third when the candidate has completed their work.