



Accredited Qualification Mark

Supporting information

February 2016

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## Introduction

### The Restorative Justice Council

The Restorative Justice Council (RJC) is the independent third sector membership body for the field of restorative practice. It provides quality assurance and a national voice advocating the widespread use of all forms of restorative practice, including restorative justice. The RJC's vision is of a restorative society where everyone has access to safe, high quality restorative practice wherever and whenever it is needed.

The RJC's role is to set and champion clear standards for restorative practice. It ensures quality and supports those in the field to build on their capacity and accessibility. At the same time, the RJC raises public awareness and confidence in restorative processes. The ultimate aim of the RJC is to drive take-up and to enable safe, high quality restorative practice to develop and thrive.

### This document

This document provides information on the RJC's Accredited Qualification Mark (AQM). It is aimed at organisations that deliver qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards in restorative practice and are seeking accreditation from the RJC. It provides information on:

- the purpose and benefits of the AQM
- eligibility for the AQM
- the AQM criteria
- how to apply for the AQM
- fees
- maintenance and renewals

### Accredited Practitioners

The RJC maintains a register of both Associate and Accredited restorative practitioners.

**Associate Practitioners** have completed initial facilitation training and are generally new entrants to the profession or people who only use restorative practice informally as an additional skillset to their main role. Organisations that provide facilitation training courses can apply for the RJC's Training Approval Scheme, a quality mark for facilitation training courses in restorative practice. Information on the Training Approval Scheme is provided in the Supporting Information available on the RJC website.

**Accredited Practitioners** are generally more experienced and can provide evidence that their work meets national standards. In order to register as an Accredited Practitioner the individual must either be independently assessed by an RJC assessor (Direct Accreditation<sup>1</sup>) or have successfully completed a qualification, learning programme or customised award that holds the RJC's AQM. The practitioner must hold a certificate of achievement to show completion of an AQM qualification.

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on Direct Accreditation is provided in [Achieving RJC direct accreditation – Handbook for Applicants](#).

## The AQM

The AQM enables organisations to demonstrate that their course meets rigorous standards and helps individuals to make informed decisions about quality qualifications.

A qualification, learning programme or customised award that is awarded the AQM can be branded as RJC accredited and will be listed on the RJC website. The organisation will be able to use the RJC's AQM logo on promotional materials and marketing literature. A copy of the AQM logo can be seen on page six.

The AQM demonstrates that the qualification, learning programme or customised award meets the requirements of the RJC, the national standard-setting body for restorative practice. It provides learners with additional assurance that the qualification is designed specifically for restorative practice and is independently assessed as meeting robust standards.

An individual who completes an AQM accredited course is eligible for registration as an RJC Accredited Practitioner within two years of successfully completing the course.

## Eligibility

The AQM is awarded to qualifications, learning programmes and custom awards which recognise good restorative practice and fulfil RJC criteria aimed at ensuring high standards.

To be eligible for the AQM, the qualification, learning programme or customised award must:

- Cover the performance criteria, knowledge and understanding within the four core National Occupational Standards in Restorative Practice.
- Include observations on work-based performance and either;
  - sit within an appropriate qualifications framework (a list of appropriate frameworks are provided in Appendix B) and;
  - be subject to quality assurance monitoring by an independent body (a list of appropriate independent bodies are provided in Appendix C) or;
- meet RJC standards 2 – 7 described in Table 1

The AQM criteria in full is set out in Appendix A.

Qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards delivered within the UK and internationally are eligible to apply for the AQM. Programmes delivered internationally will only be eligible for assessment if materials are provided in the English language.

## AQM criteria

The criteria for the AQM are designed to ensure high standards in content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements of qualifications, learning programmes and custom awards. The criteria are presented under the seven standards displayed in Table 1. Organisations that sit within an appropriate qualifications framework (a list of appropriate frameworks are provided in Appendix B) and are able to provide evidence that their qualification, learning programme or customised award is subject to quality assurance monitoring by an independent body are exempt from standards 2 – 7. All criteria must be met for a qualification, learning programme or customised award to be awarded the AQM.

Table 1: AQM standards

Number	Standard
1	The programme is fit for purpose and addresses the requirements essential for competence as a restorative practitioner.
2	Individual learner assessments are undertaken by appropriately experienced personnel.
3	Internal quality assurance is in place to ensure fairness and consistency of assessment.
4	Learners and staff understand the requirements of the qualification.
5	An appeals procedure is in place which is clear, fair and communicated.
6	Learner progress is tracked and recorded accurately.
7	The effectiveness of the qualification is reviewed and evaluated.

## Applying for the AQM

There are three steps in the AQM application process:

- 1 Submission of a completed application form with accompanying supporting evidence and assessment fee.

Organisations that would like to submit a qualification, learning programme or customised award for the AQM should complete an application form which is available to download at [www.restorativejustice.org.uk/AQM](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/AQM).

The application form requires applicants to provide an explanation on how each criterion is met and provide evidence to support each answer. Appendix A provides a list of suggested documents that may be used to evidence each criteria. The list of evidence is not exhaustive and other evidence that shows how the criteria has been met may be submitted.

All information shared with the RJC in support of an AQM application will be treated in the strictest confidence. Information will only be used to assess applications internally and will not be shared externally.

All assessment fees must be paid within 30 days receipt of an invoice. A summary of assessment fees are provided on page seven.

- 2 Application review

The application and supporting evidence will be reviewed by the RJC against the AQM criteria within eight weeks of receipt of an application form. Timescales are dependent on sufficient evidence being provided in support of an application. All criteria must be met and evidenced.

The RJC may contact representatives of the organisation to clarify information or request further evidence.

- 3 RJC evaluation and decision

The findings from the review will be collated and a decision on accreditation will be made within eight weeks of receipt of a full application form. Accreditation decisions will be verified on a sampling basis by a qualified RJC verifier. Applicants will receive a written summary of the RJC decision and confirmation of the assessment decision.

**Successful applicants** will be awarded the AQM for a three-year period. Successful applicants will receive a certificate and will be able to use the RJC AQM logo (below) on materials and marketing literature. Accredited qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards will be listed on the RJC website.

After the three year period, the RJC will undertake a review of the qualification, learning programme or customised award to confirm that criteria continues to be met and that relevant procedures are being maintained by organisations seeking to renew the award of the AQM.



**Unsuccessful applicants** will receive an explanation of why the qualification, learning programme or customised award has not met the criteria. The RJC will provide the organisation with relevant recommendations and allow three months to demonstrate that they have made sufficient changes to meet the criteria.

## Fees

The table below shows the fees associated with the AQM. Appendix D provides a flow diagram to help identify which assessment fees will apply to your qualification, learning programme or customised award.

Table 2: AQM fees

Assessment	Description	Fee
Full assessment	This fee applies when an organisation applying for the AQM is submitting a qualification, learning programme or customised award for the first time that is <b>not</b> subject to quality assurance monitoring by an independent body listed in Appendix C or does not sit within an appropriate qualifications framework (a list of appropriate frameworks are provided in Appendix B). This fee will apply to each qualification, learning programme or customised award submitted for accreditation.	£500 plus VAT
Fast track assessment	This fee applies when an organisation applying for the AQM is submitting a qualification, learning programme or customised award for the first time is subject to quality assurance monitoring by an independent body listed in Appendix C and sits within an appropriate qualifications framework (a list of appropriate frameworks are provided in Appendix B). This fee will apply to each qualification, learning programme or customised award submitted for accreditation.	£200 plus VAT
Renewal fee	This fee applies to all AQM awarded qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards that wish to renew AQM accreditation after three years.	£200 plus VAT

A £30 (including VAT) administration fee is payable by individuals applying for Accredited Practitioner status that have successfully completed an AQM qualification, learning programme or customised award.

## Maintaining the AQM

The AQM is awarded for a period of three years unless changes are made to contents or structure of the course. AQM organisations must contact the RJC as and when there are changes to the qualification, learning programme or customised award. The assessment of updates and changes to AQM courses made within the three-year accreditation period will be assessed free of charge.

Throughout the period of accreditation, organisations must satisfy the RJC that they continue to meet the requirements of the AQM. This will be monitored by RJC staff via annual spot checks. Organisations may be asked to provide evidence of ongoing delivery for example, by submitting learner evaluation forms or other course materials.

## Appendix A – AQM criteria

Organisations applying for the AQM must demonstrate that their qualification, learning programme or customised award meets the criteria presented in the table below.

The following table sets out:

- 1) The criteria to be met for achievement of the AQM.
- 2) The associated criteria to be fulfilled for each standard to be met.
- 3) Possible types and sources of evidence that might be used in determining whether each standard might be met. Where evidence involves a discussion, this can be noted on the application form and a suitable time will be arranged by the RJC.

### Criteria recommended towards awarding the AQM

Criteria	Possible types/sources of evidence
<b>Standard 1 : The programme is fit for purpose and addresses the requirements essential for competence as a restorative practitioner</b>	
1.1 The qualification has clear aims, objectives and learning outcomes.	1 Programme details, including the clear documentation of aims, objectives, content and learning outcomes.
1.2 The content of the qualification covers the performance criteria and knowledge and understanding within the four core National Occupational Standards (NOS) in restorative practice.	2 A description of the programme aims, objectives, content and learning outcomes. 3 Programme and learner support materials including, for example, trainer notes and session plans.
1.3 The content of the qualification links to the aims, objectives and learning outcomes.	4 'In-house' mapping, if available, of the programme content against the requirements of the four core NOS.
1.4 The descriptors of the qualification sit within an appropriate qualifications framework (a list of appropriate frameworks is provided in Appendix B) or meets RJC standards 2 – 7.	5 Minutes of programme reviews. 6 CVs and CPD records of tutors. 7 Person specification details for tutors.
1.5 The qualification includes assessment of individual learners, which is fair and used to inform learner development, with the assessment to include observation of work-based performance.	8 Discussion with the programme manager.
1.6 The qualification is subject to quality assurance monitoring by an independent body (a list of appropriate independent bodies are provided in Appendix C) or meets RJC standards 2 – 7.	

Criteria	Possible types/sources of evidence
<b>Standard 2 : Individual learner assessments are undertaken by appropriately experienced personnel</b>	
<p>2.1 The assessment is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- valid, covering the learning outcomes</li> <li>- reliable, being evidence of the learner’s own performance across the learning outcomes</li> <li>- current, determining that the learner is competent now</li> <li>- sufficient, demonstrating consistency of performance over time</li> </ul> <p>2.2 Tutors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are experienced in restorative practice</li> <li>- are up to date regarding developing best practice in restorative practice</li> <li>- are experienced in assessment</li> <li>- have a thorough understanding of the qualification</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Details of assessment materials and methods.</li> <li>2 Learner assessment records and development plans.</li> <li>3 Sample learner portfolios, including records of observation, and evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>4 CVs and CPD records of assessors.</li> <li>5 Person specification details for assessors.</li> <li>6 Numbers of assessors, and the ratio and relationship of assessors to learners.</li> <li>7 Records of assessor/learner allocation.</li> <li>8 Procedures to be followed should an assessor(s) become unavailable for a period of time.</li> <li>9 Details of any counter-signing arrangements relating to assessment decisions by ‘unqualified’/ inexperienced assessors, where applicable.</li> <li>10 Discussion with assessors.</li> </ol>

**Standard 3 : Internal quality assurance is in place to ensure fairness and consistency of assessment**

3.1 Assessments are checked for standardisation and consistency.	1 Internal quality assurance (IQA) sampling strategy and schedule.
3.2 The learning process meets the diverse needs of individual learners and supports them in completing the qualification.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 IQA plans, quality assurance records and tracking systems.</li> <li>3 Examples of sampled assessments.</li> <li>4 Records of queries raised by assessors and the consequent outcomes.</li> </ol>
<p>3.3 Suitable staff are responsible for internal quality assurance and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- clear regarding the purpose of their role</li> <li>- experienced in quality assuring assessment decisions</li> <li>- experienced in restorative practice</li> <li>- up to date regarding developing best practice in restorative practice</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 Programme policy and procedures relating to equality of access.</li> <li>6 Details of provisions available for learners with particular requirements associated with learning and/or assessment.</li> <li>7 Minutes of assessment team and/or ‘standardisation’ meetings.</li> </ol>
3.4 Feedback is provided to assessors towards ensuring the ongoing high quality and fairness of assessments.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 Information provided to assessors, and records of communication between assessors and/or quality assurers.</li> <li>9 Evidence of any corrective action undertaken in managing the quality of assessments.</li> <li>10 CVs and CPD records of quality assurers.</li> <li>11 Person specification details for quality assurers.</li> <li>12 Numbers of quality assurers and the ratio and relationship of quality assurers to assessors.</li> </ol>

- 13 Details of any counter-signing arrangements relating to decisions by 'unqualified' or inexperienced quality assurers, where applicable.
- 14 Discussion with quality assurers.

Criteria	Possible types/sources of evidence
<b>Standard 4 : Learners and staff understand the requirements of the qualification/programme</b>	
4.1 Information is provided to learners and staff involved in the qualification regarding its content, the likely time required for learning and associated roles and responsibilities.	1 Programme policy and procedures relating to equality of access. 2 Details of provisions made/available for learners with particular requirements associated with learning and/or assessment.
4.2 Information is provided to learners explaining the purpose of the assessments and the learners' role in the assessment process.	3 Minutes of relevant review meetings. 4 Discussion with the programme manager. 5 Learner and staff support materials relating to the programme. 6 Records/copies of relevant presentational materials and/or briefing documents. 7 Details of any relevant induction programme for learners/staff.
<b>Standard 5 : An appeals procedure is in place which is clear, fair and communicated</b>	
5.1 The appeals process is set out clearly, explaining the actions to be taken by the appellant and associated timescales.	1 Details of the appeals policy and procedures. 2 Records of any appeals made and their outcomes.
5.2 Information regarding the appeals process is provided to all learners and staff.	3 Details of the appeal tracking system.
<b>Standard 6 : Learner progress is tracked and recorded accurately</b>	
6.1 Systems are in place to record the details of learners' entry on to the qualification, the progress of assessments and completions.	1 Learner registration records. 2 Learner tracking system. 3 Learner assessment records, including records of assessment outcomes.
6.2 Appropriate administration support is provided to maintain the records.	4 Discussion with the person responsible for tracking learner progress and maintaining associated records. 5 An organogram.
<b>Standard 7 : The effectiveness of the qualification is reviewed and evaluated</b>	
7.1 Methods for evaluating the qualification are appropriate.	1 Methods for capturing feedback from those involved with the programme (including for example, learners and their managers, trainers, assessors and quality assurers). 2 Evaluation forms.
7.2 Review and evaluation is used to improve and inform future provision of the qualification.	3 Minutes of programme review meetings. 4 Progress reports regarding programme development.

## Appendix B – Appropriate qualifications frameworks

Qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards that sit within the following qualifications frameworks are accepted onto the AQM by the RJC:

- The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).
- The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).
- The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).
- Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).
- European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

## Appendix C – Appropriate independent bodies

Qualifications, learning programmes or customised awards subject to quality assurance monitoring by one of the following independent bodies are exempt from AQM standards 2 – 7:

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).
- The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual).
- Quality assurance agencies that are members of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).
- Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS).

## Appendix D – Flow diagram for AQM assessment fees

