



Product Development Guidance

Guide for CIMSPA Education Partners

Version 1.

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Introduction

Education regulatory bodies and sector alliances have historically created and facilitated framework descriptors for learning and educational achievement at various levels, for the purposes of determining standards of achievement (formal qualifications), cognitive challenge (taxonomies for learning) and appropriate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (employee development).

Whilst commonly accepted, there are differences amongst well established national frameworks such as:

- [Regulated Qualifications Framework \(RQF\)](#)
- [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#)
- [Credit and Qualifications Framework \(CQFW\)](#)
- [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#)
- [The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland \(FHEQ\)](#)
- [The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland \(FQHEIS\)](#)

Qualifications across the UK and Europe are assigned different levels based on these national frameworks. For instance, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland an undergraduate degree is classified as Level 6, whereas in Scotland, it is equivalent to Level 9 or 10 within the SCQF.

CIMSPA have developed this guidance by considering current, and previous frameworks and approaches, such as:

- Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

- Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition ‘Section E- Design and development of qualifications: Level requirements (including level descriptors)
- Ofqual “Qualifications and Component Levels”
- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) “Comparing Qualifications” and their “Employers’ Levelling Tool”.
- Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEFQ)¹ information via the SEEC (UK Alliance) Level Descriptors
- European comparisons via the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Purpose

This guidance document is designed to assist CIMSPA Education Partners in the development of education products where they intend to submit for endorsement against CIMSPA professional standards, and to maximise their chances of meeting CIMSPA endorsement requirements². These requirements include:

- Comprehensive coverage of knowledge, skills, and behaviours.
- Alignment with appropriate professional standards intended ‘level.’
- Valid and effective assessment methods (where applicable).

It is designed to complement existing guidance on framework levels and descriptors, in addition to representing sector employer “asks” in terms of skills, knowledge and behaviours as defined within CIMSPA’s membership categories for the workforce. This document must therefore be read and used in conjunction with:

- [The relevant professional standards](#)
- CIMSPA Policy for Standards for Deployment

¹ At the time of publishing, this document is nearly 8 years old; it is still relevant via Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, but it has been alongside SEEC descriptors which are also guidance for Higher Education Institutes.

- [Partner Endorsement Guide](#)

Operational context

Any education product developed by CIMSPA Education Partners must also consider:

- Any prescribed environment, context or specialism required for a particular role or occupation.
- Any further requirements or restrictions defined by a legitimate third party (such as an education product developed by a Sports Governing Body (SGB)), or by legal requirement.
- Any pre-requisites or prior experience required to access the education product.
- Any commonly accepted educational level of achievement expected from prospective learners wishing to access the education product, therefore providing opportunity for completion and/or attainment.
- Any risk assessment against a role, any mandatory exclusions, or controls, and against standards for deployment requirements (where applicable).

Using this guidance

Below are level descriptors and explanations of what can be expected from a learner on completion of an education product, relating to knowledge, skills, and behaviours of the required professional standard for roles which support employment within our sector. These are intended to be directive, rather than prescriptive, to avoid simply reproducing identical language in your design approach, without considering the intent and purpose of your product, and therefore help with benchmarking expected outcomes.

Level Descriptors Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards include Swimming Teacher, Gym Instructor and Core Group Exercise Instructor)
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work under supervision (indirectly, and not in all sector roles) with responsibility for organising or negotiating their own work, dependent on customer priorities and/or organisation demands. May require completion of routine or familiar tasks, or non-routine, but in a familiar context. • Operate within standard procedures, making adjustments for circumstances. • Timescales affecting tasks usually short term.
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and carrying out tasks and duties against Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). • Monitoring and taking responsibility for supplies/resources. • Acting as lead contact for well-defined services or procedures. • Preparing or carrying out well-defined technical tests. • Resolving recording or passing on straightforward customer queries or complaints/feedback. • Preparing or presenting standard reports.
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures, and ideas in specific area of study or occupational role. • Ability to interpret relevant information and ideas. • Awareness of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards include Swimming Teacher, Gym Instructor and Core Group Exercise Instructor)
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, routine, and/or specific work-related tasks. • Address straightforward problems. • Identify, gather, and use relevant information to inform actions. • Identify how effective actions have been. • Ability to select tools, materials, and applications for specific tasks, adjusts when needed; uses safely. • Team and organisational work. • Ethical awareness/application.
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to own responsibilities, and how these impact on others. • Interpersonal/communication skills. • Adapt behaviour when appropriate – ability to understand when that may be required. • Straightforward problem-solving.

Level Descriptors Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards include Strength and Conditioning Trainer, Personal Trainer and Aspiring Manager).
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and authority to make independent decisions based on area of work and responsibility. • Operates in a predictable and defined context with an agreed scope and level of autonomy.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards include Strength and Conditioning Trainer, Personal Trainer and Aspiring Manager).
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing or presenting standard reports. • Independent completion of clearly defined routine and non-routine tasks. • Supervising standard operational services and monitoring progress. • Scheduling and setting targets. • Coordinating or contributing to resource planning or projects.
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates factual, procedural, and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work which is pre-defined (theories, ideas, concepts) but wide ranging in relation to techniques, facts, terminology, and equipment essential to the role and wider sector. • Awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical and technological depth of understanding of professional skills and context. • Organises and communicates information, using predefined criteria, to audiences in familiar contexts. • completes tasks which may be complex and non-routine. • Applies an awareness of pre-defined ethical values and issues to personal decisions and actions in familiar contexts.
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews effectiveness of chosen methods and actions. • Interprets and evaluates relevant information and ideas. • Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses as they apply to work in hand or future plans. • Adaptable behaviour. • Ethical awareness. • Solve problems which may sometimes be complex and non-routine.

Level Descriptors Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards include Strength and Conditioning Coach).
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for courses of action. • Take responsibility for the work of others within parameters of the defined role.
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources (including other team members where appropriate) within scope of role. • Exercise responsibility, autonomy, and judgement within broad but well-defined parameters.
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates practical, theoretical, and technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. • Ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. • Awareness of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work. • Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical, technological, and conceptual depth of knowledge and understanding. • Identify, adapt, and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally well-defined. • Awareness and adoption/application of relevant research into daily tasks.
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results. • Adaptable behaviour. • Ethical awareness. • Solves problems which are complex and non-routine but well-defined.

Level Descriptors Professional (level 5 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes General Manager).
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for self, the work of others (individuals and teams). • Expected to be able to make decisions in various contexts, sometimes unforeseen or unpredictable.
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for planning and developing courses of action. • Allocation of resources and strategic priorities. • Autonomy and judgement within broad parameters. • Accountability for the analysis and diagnosis of specific issues. • Accountability for design, planning, execution, and evaluation of projects.
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates practical, theoretical, or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts. • Proven ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts, and ideas. • Awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work • Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine, adapt, and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems. • Use relevant research or development to inform actions. • Participate or lead relevant research. • Evaluate actions, methods, and results.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes General Manager).
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results. • Make suggestions and proposals for further development of ideas, lead on implementation. • Overall responsibility for decision-making or courses of action. • Accountability for design and implementation. • Complex problem-solving skills.

Level Descriptors Chartered (level 6 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles).
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are capable of underpinning substantial changes or development at organisational level. • Initiates and lead projects, tasks, and processes, taking responsibility where relevant, for the work, the outcomes, the roles of others and the allocation of substantial resources. • Exercises broad autonomy and judgement. • Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops their organisational, planning and development skills through strategic long-term delivery. • Implements and delivers high performance strategies and leads initiatives to drive change.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles).
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study. • Demonstrates acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of the area of work and responsibility. • Has a conceptual understanding that enables them to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems. • Demonstrates advanced practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of the field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. • Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them. • Critically analyses, interprets, and evaluates complex information, concepts, and ideas.
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within the area of responsibility. • Applies the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend, and apply their knowledge and understanding, • Determines, refines, adapts and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive, and practical skills, to complete work activities. • Uses and, where appropriate, designs or commissions relevant research and development to inform actions. • Evaluates actions, methods and results and their implications. • Demonstrates occupational knowledge, understanding, skills and methods across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. • Addresses problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles).
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits of knowledge. • Demonstrates the ability to manage their own personal professional development. • Critically evaluates arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts, and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem.

Level Descriptors Chartered (level 7 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles (e.g., Executive, Strategic)).
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with complex issues - both systematically and creatively, making sound judgements in the absence of complete data. • Able to clearly communicate their conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences. • Demonstrates self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems. • Acts autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. • Takes responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial changes or development. • Initiates and leads complex projects, tasks, and processes, taking responsibility, where relevant for the work and roles of others and the allocation of substantial resources. • Exercises broad autonomy and judgement across a significant area of work. • Evaluates financial and nonfinancial information relating to strategic planning.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles (e.g., Executive, Strategic)).
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers high performance strategies focusing on sustainable outcomes through a clear agenda, research, operational plans, and monitoring and measuring outcomes. • Initiates and leads change in the organisation through insight/foresight management. • Applies a clear governance structure within the organisation. • Implements financial strategies.
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the area of professional practice. • Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of the field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. • Critically analyses, interprets, and evaluates complex information, concepts, and theories to produce modified conceptions. • Understands the wider context in which the area of work is located. • Understands current developments in the area of work. • Knows how project management can be used to support long-term organisational performance. • Knows how to manage strategic marketing. • Knows how to manage and implement digital and information governance/management systems. • Knows how to facilitate innovation within the organisation plan, organise and manage resources to achieve organisational goals. • Uses detailed customer insight and analysis of data to drive customer service outcomes. • Knows the impact of innovation and change. • Know the impact and value of a governance system within the sport and physical activity sector.

Descriptors	Generic operational context (examples of current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards includes Senior Management roles (e.g., Executive, Strategic)).
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines and uses appropriate methodologies and approaches. • Designs, commissions, or undertakes research, development, or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work. • Critically evaluates actions, methods, and results and their short- and long-term implications. • Demonstrates occupational competence which involves the reformulation and application of advanced theoretical and/or technological knowledge, understanding, skills and methods across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. • Conceptualises and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. • Demonstrates the ability to lead and influence people, building constructive working relationships. • Supports others to achieve by supporting them through a coaching and mentoring process, or similar. • Builds collaborative relationships and partnerships. • Engages employees through operational strategies creating an inclusive culture and feedback cycle. • Uses qualitative and quantitative data analysis of information to implement organisational improvements for innovation and growth. • Develops and/or implements an organisation vision, culture, and values
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to demonstrate the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility, and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. • Ability to reflect on own performance, identifying and acting on learning and development needs. • Creates a personal development plan using widely recognised tools and techniques. • Can build engagement and develop high-performance within a team. • Knows and shows the benefits of developing an organisational culture. • Develops collaborative relationships through working with internal and external stakeholders.

Appendix 1 Table 1: Level Descriptors Technical Group 1 to Professional

Level	Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)	Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)	Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)	Professional (level 5 equivalent)
Descriptors	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards* includes Swimming Teacher, Gym Instructor, Core Group Exercise Instructor.</p>	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards* includes Strength and Conditioning Trainer, Personal Trainer, Aspiring Manager.</p>	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards* includes Strength and Conditioning Coach.</p>	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards* includes General Manager.</p>
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work under supervision (indirectly, and not in all sector roles) with responsibility for organising or negotiating their own work, dependent on customer priorities and/or organisation demands. May require completion of routine or familiar tasks, or non-routine, but in a familiar context. • Operate within standard procedures, making adjustments for circumstances. • Timescales affecting tasks usually short term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and authority to make independent decisions based on area of work and responsibility. • Operates in a predictable and defined context with an agreed scope and level of autonomy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for courses of action. • Take responsibility for the work of others within parameters of the defined role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for self, the work of others (individuals and teams). • Expected to be able to make decisions in various contexts, sometimes unforeseen or unpredictable.

Level	Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)	Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)	Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)	Professional (level 5 equivalent)
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and carrying out tasks and duties against Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). • Monitoring and taking responsibility for supplies/resources. • Acting as lead contact for well-defined services or procedures. • Preparing or carrying out well-defined technical tests. • Resolving recording or passing on straightforward customer queries or complaints/feedback. • Preparing or presenting standard reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent completion of clearly defined routine and non-routine tasks. • Supervising standard operational services and monitoring progress. • Scheduling and setting targets. • Coordinating or contributing to resource planning or projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources (including other team members where appropriate) within scope of role. • Exercise responsibility, autonomy, and judgement within broad but well-defined parameters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for planning and developing courses of action. • Allocation of resources and strategic priorities. • Autonomy and judgement within broad parameters. • Accountability for the analysis and diagnosis of specific issues. • Accountability for design, planning, execution, and evaluation of projects.

Level	Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)	Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)	Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)	Professional (level 5 equivalent)
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures, and ideas in specific area of study or occupational role. • Ability to interpret relevant information and ideas. • Awareness of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates factual, procedural, and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work which is pre-defined (theories, ideas, concepts) but wide ranging in relation to techniques, facts, terminology, and equipment essential to the role and wider sector. • Awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates practical, theoretical, and technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. • Ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. • Awareness of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work. • Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates practical, theoretical, or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts. • Proven ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts, and ideas. • Awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work • Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

Level	Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)	Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)	Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)	Professional (level 5 equivalent)
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, routine, and/or specific work-related tasks. • Address straightforward problems. • Identify, gather, and use relevant information to inform actions. • Identify how effective actions have been. • Ability to select tools, materials, and applications for specific tasks, adjusts when needed; uses safely. • Team and organisational work. • Ethical awareness/application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical and technological depth of understanding of professional skills and context. • Organises and communicates information, using predefined criteria, to audiences in familiar contexts. • completes tasks which may be complex and non-routine. • Applies an awareness of pre-defined ethical values and issues to personal decisions and actions in familiar contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical, technological, and conceptual depth of knowledge and understanding. • Identify, adapt, and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally well-defined. • Awareness and adoption/application of relevant research into daily tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine, adapt, and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems. • Use relevant research or development to inform actions. • Participate or lead relevant research. • Evaluate actions, methods, and results.

Level	Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)	Technical Group 2 Practitioner (level 3 equivalent)	Higher Technical (level 4 equivalent)	Professional (level 5 equivalent)
Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to own responsibilities, and how these impact on others. Interpersonal/communication skills. Adapt behaviour when appropriate – ability to understand when that may be required. Straightforward problem-solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews effectiveness of chosen methods and actions. Interprets and evaluates relevant information and ideas. Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses as they apply to work in hand or future plans. Adaptable behaviour. Ethical awareness. Solve problems which may sometimes be complex and non-routine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results. Adaptable behaviour. Ethical awareness. Solves problems which are complex and non-routine but well-defined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results. Make suggestions and proposals for further development of ideas, lead on implementation. Overall responsibility for decision-making or courses of action. Accountability for design and implementation. Complex problem-solving skills.

* These are illustrative occupational roles, used as examples without specifying any context, environment, or specialism within such as roles as an individual professional may offer and are dependent on standards for deployment.

Appendix 2 Table 2: Level Descriptors

Many skills and knowledge described below are shared across both levels, as described within the professional standards.

Level	level 6 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)	level 7 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)
Descriptors	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards* include Senior Management roles.</p>	<p>Generic operational context</p> <p>Current roles as defined by CIMSPA professional standards** includes Senior Management roles (e.g., Executive, Strategic).</p>
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are capable of underpinning substantial changes or development at organisational level. • Initiates and lead projects, tasks, and processes, taking responsibility where relevant, for the work, the outcomes, the roles of others and the allocation of substantial resources. • Exercises broad autonomy and judgement. • Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with complex issues – both systematically and creatively, making sound judgements in the absence of complete data. • Able to clearly communicate their conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences. • Demonstrates self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems. • Acts autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. • Takes responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial changes or development. • Initiates and leads complex projects, tasks, and processes, taking responsibility, where relevant for the work and roles of others and the allocation of substantial resources. • Exercises broad autonomy and judgement across a significant area of work. • Evaluates financial and nonfinancial information relating to strategic planning.

Level	level 6 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)	level 7 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)
Representative tasks and duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops their organisational, planning and development skills through strategic long-term delivery. • Implements and delivers high performance strategies and leads initiatives to drive change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers high performance strategies focusing on sustainable outcomes through a clear agenda, research, operational plans, and monitoring and measuring outcomes. • Initiates and leads change in the organisation through insight/foresight management. • Applies a clear governance structure within the organisation. • Implements financial strategies.

Level	level 6 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)	level 7 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)
Level of knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study. • Demonstrates acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of the area of work and responsibility. • Has a conceptual understanding that enables them to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems. • Demonstrates advanced practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of the field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. • Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them. • Critically analyses, interprets, and evaluates complex information, concepts, and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the area of professional practice. • Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of the field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. • Critically analyses, interprets, and evaluates complex information, concepts, and theories to produce modified conceptions. • Understands the wider context in which the area of work is located. • Understands current developments in the area of work. • Knows how project management can be used to support long-term organisational performance. • Knows how to manage strategic marketing. • Knows how to manage and implement digital and information governance/management systems. • Knows how to facilitate innovation within the organisation plan, organise and manage resources to achieve organisational goals. • Uses detailed customer insight and analysis of data to drive customer service outcomes. • Knows the impact of innovation and change. • Know the impact and value of a governance system within the sport and physical activity sector.

Level	level 6 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)	level 7 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within the area of responsibility. • Applies the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend, and apply their knowledge and understanding, • Determines, refines, adapts and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive, and practical skills, to complete work activities. • Uses and, where appropriate, designs or commissions relevant research and development to inform actions. • Evaluates actions, methods and results and their implications. • Demonstrates occupational knowledge, understanding, skills and methods across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. • Addresses problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines and uses appropriate methodologies and approaches. • Designs, commissions, or undertakes research, development, or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work. • Critically evaluates actions, methods, and results and their short- and long-term implications. • Demonstrates occupational competence which involves the reformulation and application of advanced theoretical and/or technological knowledge, understanding, skills and methods across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. • Conceptualises and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. • Demonstrates the ability to lead and influence people, building constructive working relationships. • Supports others to achieve by supporting them through a coaching and mentoring process, or similar. • Builds collaborative relationships and partnerships. • Engages employees through operational strategies creating an inclusive culture and feedback cycle. • Uses qualitative and quantitative data analysis of information to implement organisational improvements for innovation and growth. • Develops and/or implements an organisation vision, culture, and values.

Level	level 6 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)	level 7 equivalent (Professional Status/Chartered)
Transferable “soft” skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits of knowledge. • Demonstrates the ability to manage their own personal professional development. • Critically evaluates arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts, and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to demonstrate the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility, and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments. • Ability to reflect on own performance, identifying and acting on learning and development needs. • Creates a personal development plan using widely recognised tools and techniques. • Can build engagement and develop high-performance within a team. • Knows and shows the benefits of developing an organisational culture. • Develops collaborative relationships through working with internal and external stakeholders.

* These are illustrative occupational roles, used as examples without specifying any context, environment, or specialism within such as roles as an individual professional may offer and are dependent on standards for deployment.

** Scotland ascribes different numbers to their equivalent levels of educational demand and achievement, dependent on the level: Scotland – Levels 9-11; EQF levels at 6 and 7 are the same.

References

- Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition 'Section E- Design and development of qualifications: Level requirements (including level descriptors) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>
- Credit level descriptors for higher education (SEEC 2016): <https://www.seec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SEEC-descriptors-2016.pdf>
- The Frameworks for Higher Education UK: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-frameworks>
- The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education; Occupational Level Guide: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/resources/occupational-level-guide/>
- Ofqual (withdrawn) Qualification and Component Levels: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734361/qualification-and-component-levels.pdf
- Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework levels diagram: <https://scqf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/framework-diagram-a3-web-mar-2024.pdf>
- Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework; Employer Guide and Levelling Tool: <https://scqf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/employer-level-tool-web-2024.pdf>
- Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- European comparisons via the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

- Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Glossary of terms

- Professional standard – outline the minimum knowledge, skills, and behaviours an individual must understand and demonstrate for every occupation and job role in the sector.
- Level descriptors - are statements that describe the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for a specific level of a qualifications framework.
- Education Partners - refers to CIMSPA Education Partners including Awarding Organisations, Higher and Further Education, Training Providers and Sporting Governing Bodies.
- Ofqual - The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) regulates qualifications, examinations, and assessments in England.
- Framework - a system that classifies qualifications into levels based on the knowledge, skills, and abilities required at each level.
- Education Products – refers to degree programmes, continuous professional development (CPD), training programmes, vocational programmes, professional qualifications and regulated qualifications.