Frequently asked questions

Qualification type: Vocationally Related Qualification
Qualification title: Certificate in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening
Qualification level: Level 3
Qualification number: 7359

Section 1
Information for learners

Who is this qualification for?
This qualification has been designed as an accreditation of the minimum level of competence required by ALL personnel involved in the identification of sight-threatening diabetic retinopathy in the English National Screening Programme. The National Service Framework for Diabetes has stipulated that:

* People with diabetes should be confident that the member of staff they see
  - is properly trained and up-to-date
  - provides high quality care underpinned by clinical and service protocols and audit
  - has the interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with them.

What does accreditation mean?
An accreditation process is a one-off measure of current competence. It recognises that the learner has been assessed against the standards set for the profession and has achieved the required standard. Principally it is designed to protect the patient but also protects the worker and employer. It is NOT a measure of continuing competence. Continuing competence is achieved through Continuing Professional Development and is measured by Performance Indicators (internal and external quality assurance) in the National Screening Programme and appraisal.

Are there any entry requirements?
Learners will be engaged to work in a national retinopathy screening programme and will be referred by their NHS trust or by the organisation contracted to provide screening. This will presuppose the necessary literacy, numeracy and care skills required to undergo the training.

How many units are there?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Core</th>
<th>Optional</th>
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Mandatory units
Unit 301 National Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Programmes, Principles, Processes and Protocols
Unit 302 Diabetes and its Relevance to Retinopathy Screening
Unit 303 Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology of the Eye and its Clinical Relevance

Optional units (of which learners must take at least 3)
Unit 304 Preparing the Patient for Retinopathy Screening
Unit 305 Measuring Visual Acuity and Performing Pharmacological Dilatation
Unit 306 Imaging the Eye for the Detection of Diabetic Retinopathy
Unit 307 Detecting Retinal Disease
Unit 308 Classifying Diabetic Retinopathy
Unit 309 Administration and Management Systems in a Retinopathy Screening Programme

Each unit can be individually certificated or a candidate can enrol for the whole award. The whole award (Level 3 Certificate in Diabetic Retinopathy) is made up of the 3 mandatory units
and 3 optional units. The units chosen by a candidate must be agreed with their screening programme and should match their job role. Recommended units according to job role can be found in the scheme handbook. Additional units must be taken by candidates if their job role extends beyond the 6 units in the award.

**How many units do I need to do in order to complete the qualification?**
3 core / mandatory units and 3 optional units

**Which units should I complete?**
You should discuss this with your screening programme manager or training lead. The following units are the minimum recommended for the various job roles in a screening programme for diabetic retinopathy:

- **Measurement of visual acuity and drop instillation**
  - Units 1, 2, 4 and 5

- **Imaging the eye**
  - Full certificate - Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

- **Grading diabetic retinopathy**
  a. Disease / no disease only
  - Units 1, 2, 3 and 7
  b. Full disease grading
  - Units 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8

- **Screening Centre Managers and Administrators**
  - Units 1, 2, 4 and 9

**Does this qualification replace an existing qualification?**
No

**Who do I contact for advice?**
The Administrative Centre can be contacted on the following email address: -

drsadministrator@glos.nhs.uk

The address of the Administrative Centre is: -
DRS Certificate Co-ordinator
Front Office Suite
Learning and Development
Redwood Education Centre
Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
Great Western Road
Gloucester
GL1 3NN
Telephone 08454 226087
Fax. 08454 226346

The English National Screening Programme Training and Education Lead is: -
Dr Deborah M Broadbent
Liverpool Diabetes Eye Centre
Rowan House
Royal Liverpool University Hospital
Prescot Street
Liverpool L7 8XP
deborah.broadbent@rlbuht.nhs.uk
How can I find out about the Certificate in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening?
Information is available on the English National Screening Programme website www.nscretinopathy.org.uk.
Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish candidates will be available from the individual national programmes.

How do I contact City and Guilds?
The contact details are as follows: -
1 Giltspur Street
London, EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.cityandguilds.com

Are there any tests or exams associated with this qualification?
The assignments for each unit can be found in the Scheme Handbook. They comprise a mixture of written short answers, practical demonstrations, invigilated grading tests and scenarios.

What documents will I need for this qualification?
All relevant documentation, e.g. portfolio, for this award will be provided at the induction day.

How long will it take me to complete?
The Notional and Guided learning hours for each unit are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>NOTIONAL LEARNING HOURS</th>
<th>GUIDED LEARNING HOURS</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
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The Notional learning time should include all the learning activities which the learner is expected to undertake in order to achieve the learning outcomes, including:
- Formal learning (classes, seminars, tutorials)
- Practical work
- Information retrieval in libraries
- Expected private study and revision
- Work based activities leading to assessment
- All forms of assessment

Guided learning hours are those hours included in the Notional hours when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim. This includes lectures, tutorials and supervised study. It also includes time spent by staff directly assessing the learner’s achievement, but does not include time spent marking assignments when the learner is not present. It does not
include hours when supervision is of a general nature and not specific to the study of a learner (e.g. work based acquisition of skills).

What do I do next?
You should discuss with your screening programme manager or lead which units you need to take according to your job role. Your manager should then arrange for you to have a mentor and assessor / s for the units you will be taking.
When you are ready you should download an application form from the website www.drscertificate.org or contact the Administrative Centre – see appendix 1 Application process.

Do I need to attend an induction course?
All candidates will need to attend a 1 day induction course. At least one assessor from each screening programme should attend a half day induction course. Assessors who have attended the induction course will be expected to ensure that other assessors for the same programme are fully informed about the process of the award, their role and the relevant documentation.
Induction days will normally be held at either Sandford Education Centre or Redwood Education Centre in Gloucestershire (see below).

How much will the award cost?
Appendix 2 gives the costs for individual units and the complete Certificate. The total costs are given under column 1. The costs will be subsidised by the English National Screening Programme for candidates in England registering by end December 2007 and completing by end March 2008. Column 2 gives the actual costs to individual candidates / programmes.

Induction courses will be provided free of charge in the Sandford Education Centre or Redwood Education Centre in Gloucestershire until December 2007. Candidates and assessors will be expected to pay for their own travel expenses and refreshments. Induction courses can be delivered regionally but will incur a cost of £150 plus travel expenses for a Certificate Co-ordinator to attend. Programmes will be expected to provide the venue and refreshments.

Internal verification will provided by a central panel of experts and this cost is included in the unit costs.
Section 2
Information for screening programmes

What is the role of the Screening Programme Manager / Lead?
The Screening Programme manager should discuss with the candidate which units need to be completed according to their job role. It is also the responsibility of the screening programme manager to ensure that an appropriate mentor is identified for the candidate /s and that appropriate assessors for each unit are engaged. The Manager must verify that the candidate is ready to sit the assignments and complete the necessary documentation. See appendix 1 – Screening Programme managers, mentors and assessors.

What is the role of a mentor?
The learner should meet with a mentor appointed by their local screening programme (e.g. line manager or programme manager within the workplace) regularly on an individual or group basis to review learning and progress needs. The mentor will direct and support the learner and engage experts to act as assessors. The mentor may also act as an assessor for some units.

What is the role of an assessor?
Workplace Assessors must be occupationally competent in the areas of expertise that they will be assessing in this qualification. They will observe, record and provide constructive criticism. Assessor guidance will be provided but evidence of relevant assessor qualifications will be an advantage.

Who should NOT be an assessor?
Anyone who wishes to, or will need to, complete the unit /s in the future e.g. if holding the qualification might be a requirement for increased pay or for regulation purposes should not act as an assessor until they have completed the unit themselves.

Who should be an assessor?
Appropriate assessors for each unit are as follows:
Unit 1- Experienced clinical lead, public health consultant
Unit 2- Diabetologist, diabetes specialist nurse
Unit 3- Ophthalmologist, optometrist, ophthalmic trained nurse
Unit 4- Ophthalmologist, optometrist, ophthalmic trained nurse
Unit 5- Ophthalmologist, optometrist, ophthalmic trained nurse
Unit 6- Ophthalmic photographers, experienced photographers in retinopathy screening
Unit 7- Ophthalmologist, senior diabetic retinopathy grader
Unit 8- Ophthalmologist, senior diabetic retinopathy grader
Unit 9- Senior administrator from a retinopathy screening programme

In addition, anyone who has achieved a unit will then be able to become an assessor for that unit, further to a decision made by the employer.

This list is a guide only. The administrative centre will ask for a copy of the assessor’s CV in order to ensure that they have the relevant qualification and /or experience to act as an assessor for an individual unit.
Section 3
Additional clarification and guidance on standards, assessment and process issues

Where can I find the National Occupational Standards for screening for Diabetic Retinopathy?
The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Screening for Diabetic Retinopathy can be found on the Skills for Health website with the completed competency framework for Diabetes. They can be accessed using the following link:


The award covers the following NOS:-
- HC1 Confirm that the patient and the equipment are ready for screening for diabetic retinopathy
- HC2 Measure visual acuity
- HC3 Instil eye drops to dilate the pupil prior to image capture
- HC4 Obtain images of the retina
- HC5 Assess images of the fundus for evidence of disease
- HC6 Assess images of the fundus to establish the degree of diabetic retinopathy or other abnormality
- HC8 Maintain an information system to support retinal screening for patients
- HC9 Arrange appointments to suit patient and organisational needs
- HC10 Receive individuals and carers who attend appointments

How is the accreditation process quality assured?
Internal verification will be provided by a panel of experts at the Administrative Centre who will sample portfolios according to an agreed sampling strategy to ensure fair and consistent assessment across all screening programmes. City and Guilds will provide an External Verifier
Appendix 1

APPLICATION PROCESS - Candidate

| Agree with screening programme manager / lead that you are ready to undertake the Certificate in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening. Agree with your screening programme manager / lead which units you need to complete according to your job role. Ask your manager / lead to identify an appropriate mentor and assessor /s for the units you will complete. |
| Download an application form from the website [www.drscertificate.org](http://www.drscertificate.org) or contact the Administrative Centre. |
| Complete application form and ensure your manager / lead completes the Manager’s section. Post the application form to the Administrative centre - you will receive acknowledgment of receipt. |
| When the administrative centre has confirmed that assessors meeting the requirements have been engaged a letter of acceptance will be sent to you with an invoice and details of induction days. |
| Once you have attended the induction day you can start the units. You should meet regularly with your mentor to assess progress. You should meet your assessor at the beginning of the process to agree an assessment plan. |
| When you have completed the assignments and paperwork for each unit you can submit it to the Administrative Centre for Internal and External Verification. |
| You will receive notification once the unit has been successfully passed. On successful completion of the 3 mandatory and 3 optional units for the award you will receive the Certificate in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening. If you are completing individual units you will receive certificates for each unit when you have completed the units you have registered for. |
| Your personal details and details of the units you have achieved will be recorded on the “Register of accredited personnel in the English Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Programme” on the website [www.drscertificate.org](http://www.drscertificate.org) |
The Screening Programme manager should discuss and agree with the screener which units they need to complete according to their job role.

The Screening Programme manager should ensure that an appropriate mentor for the candidate/s is identified. The mentor should provide support and guidance for the candidate during the accreditation process. The candidate and mentor should meet regularly to discuss progress.

The Screening Programme manager should ensure that appropriate assessors for the units have been identified and engaged. The assessors identified will be asked to complete an Assessor’s form and provide their CV. The assessor should meet the candidate to set an assessment plan. The assessor should complete all the necessary documentation. Assignments will be sampled by the Internal Verification Panel to ensure fair and consistent assessment.

The Screening Programme manager should complete the Manager’s section of the Application Form verifying that the candidate is ready for assessment and providing assessor details for the Administrative Centre. This form should be included with the Candidate’s application and posted to the Administrative Centre.
## Appendix 2 PRELIMINARY COSTINGS CERTIFICATE IN DIABETIC RETINOPATHY SCREENING

### Summary of costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs per unit – 6 units achieve the full Certificate.</th>
<th>Column 1</th>
<th>Column 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costs:</td>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>Actual costs for candidates</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Half of the Certificate costs will be centrally funded for candidates registering before December 2007 with a view to completing units before April 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 unit</td>
<td>£176</td>
<td>£88</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 units</td>
<td>£196</td>
<td>£98</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 units</td>
<td>£216</td>
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<td>4 units</td>
<td>£236</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 units</td>
<td>£256</td>
<td>£128</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Achieves the Certificate</strong></td>
<td><strong>6 units</strong></td>
<td><strong>£276</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£138</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£168</strong></td>
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Please note that individual screening programmes will require candidates to do the required number of units for their job role and this may exceed 6 units. Please check with your programme before registering.

These costs include Registration and Certification with City and Guilds, Administrative Centre costs including personnel, candidate portfolio, assessor guidance portfolio, helpline, website administration, on-line exams and register of successful candidates and internal verification of the award. **These costs do not include any visits to individual programmes by the Certificate co-ordinators or provision of assessors. If these services are required costings can be requested from the certificate co-ordinators.**