



Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance

VSIAG005

Qualification Handbook

March 2017 Version 1.3

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1. Introduction

1.1 About VetSkill

We are an awarding organisation, recognised by Ofqual and CCEA. Our aim is to be the leading awarding organisation within the veterinary and animal care sectors.

The majority of our qualifications will be designed especially for the veterinary care sector, providing for veterinary related occupations such as veterinary nurses, care assistants, receptionists and practice managers. We will also offer a range of other qualifications, such as dog grooming, business administration and information, advice or guidance which will service a wider animal welfare related clientele as well as others.

We are committed to developing qualifications that support dynamic career development pathways for learners whilst meeting the changing needs of Employers.

1.2 Customer service statement

The way in which our qualifications are delivered is key to the reputation of VetSkill and our centres. We will therefore support centres and learners in every possible way to help you meet our quality standards.

Communication

We will:

- Be easy to contact during our office opening hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays. We will notify you at least one month in advance of any additional planned office closures
- answer queries courteously, promptly and knowledgeably
- acknowledge correspondence (letters and emails) within two working days of receipt
- respond to correspondence (letters and emails) within ten working days of receipt
- respond to telephone queries within 24 hours of receipt of your call
- answer detailed enquiries within 5 working days
- ensure that our published information is accessible, easy to understand and up-to-date

Registration and certification of learners

We will:

- process learner registrations within one week of receipt of a valid application
- issue multiple choice external examination results within four weeks of a test date
- publish a result schedule for other types of external assessment
- issue qualification certificates within seven working days of receipt of a valid claim

External Quality Assurance

We will allocate you a named Quality Visitor (QV) when you receive confirmation of qualification approval. Your Quality Visitor will:

- visit your centre at least once a year, and visit a sample of work placement locations where relevant to the qualifications you offer
- provide you with an annual visit plan detailing the visits and other quality assurance activities to be undertaken
- give you a minimum of 8 weeks' notice in relation to routine quality visits
- give you immediate oral feedback following each visit, along with the opportunity to discuss findings and possible actions.
- you will receive a written report within ten working days of the visit date

1.3 Centre support

We will support our centres and learners in every possible way to help you meet our quality standards. We will:

- provide an informative and accessible website where you can find up-to-date information for learners and centres and download publications free of charge
- run free or at-cost networking and training events throughout the year
- provide exemplar examination and assignment materials
- send email bulletins and a regular newsletter
- support the development of new centres

Helping us to help you

We can support you more effectively if you:

- quote your centre number, and learner numbers where appropriate, on all correspondence with us.
- refer to our publications and disseminate them to staff and learners promptly
- observe instructions, especially on application forms e.g. registration and examination applications
- keep appointments with VetSkill representatives.
- tell us promptly about any specific problems – by letter, email or telephone.
- if you telephone, make the focus of your call clear e.g. registrations, centre visits, examinations etc. so that we can direct you to the appropriate person quickly

Appeals and complaints

We will make every effort to resolve concerns that you may have. If you feel we haven't done this to your satisfaction, you may address your concerns to the Chairman of the VetSkill Board who will respond to you within seven working days

The VetSkill appeals procedure in relation to assessment and quality assurance decisions is set out within the VetSkill Centre Handbook. We make a charge for the consideration of appeals, which is fully refundable in successful cases.

For help or advice please contact:

Vet Skill Ltd
Unit 1, Headland House
Chord Business Park
London Road
Godmanchester
Cambridgeshire
PE29 2BQ

Tel: 01480 278 580

Fax: 01480 278 581

Email: info@vetskill.com

Website: www.vetskill.com

2. Qualification information

2.1 Purpose

This qualification is designed for learners who aspire for career progression or wish to develop skills in providing Information, Advice or Guidance in a range of sectors

It is designed to provide practical competence and underpinning knowledge that is relevant to the role of many staff working in any environment including education and training, public sector establishments, careers advice services, voluntary sector organisations and housing associations etc.

The supporting taught programme should include a balance of teaching and learning strategies, designed to help learners develop knowledge, understanding and effective practical skills.

2.2 Overview

Qualification title and level:	VetSkill Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance		
Subject area:	Direct Learning Support		
VetSkill qualification number:	VSIAG005	Qualification accreditation number:	603/1317/1
First registration date	04.04.2017		
Last registration date	03.04.2020		
Last certification date	03.04.2021		
SSC	N/A		

2.3 Qualification structure

The Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance comprises of 5 mandatory units. Learners must achieve all 5 mandatory units totalling 15 credits, 3 credits per unit, to complete the qualification.

2.3.1 Mandatory units:

VetSkill unit No	Accredited No	Title	Level	Credit	GLH	TQT
IAG01	J/615/6148	Introduction to Information, Advice or Guidance	2	3	12	30
IAG02	L/615/6149	Developing communication skills when providing Information, Advice or Guidance	2	3	12	30
IAG03	F/615/6150	Client choices and potential barriers when providing Information, Advice or Guidance	2	3	12	30
IAG04	J/615/6151	Signposting and referral in Information, Advice or Guidance	2	3	12	30
IAG05	L/615/6152	Providing Information, Advice or Guidance to clients	2	3	12	30
		Total		15	60	150

2.4 Assessment methods

For this qualification, learners will be required to compile a portfolio of evidence

2.4.1 Portfolio of evidence

		Unit level assessment (conducted by centre)		Qualification Summative Assessment (conducted by VetSkill)
VetSkill Unit No	Title	Assessment of K & U	Assessment of Skills	
IAG01	Introduction to Information, Advice or Guidance	Portfolio of evidence		Quality visitor sampling
IAG02	Developing communication skills when providing Information, Advice or Guidance	Portfolio of evidence		Quality visitor sampling

IAG03	Client choices and potential barriers when providing Information, Advice or Guidance	Portfolio of evidence	Quality visitor sampling
IAG04	Signposting and referral in Information, Advice or Guidance	Portfolio of evidence	Quality visitor sampling
IAG05	Providing Information, Advice or Guidance to clients	Portfolio of evidence	Quality visitor sampling

Practical tasks and knowledge and understanding tasks for each unit which will be presented in the form of a Portfolio of evidence of competence.

The Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance is internally assessed by the Centre and externally sampled by VetSkill appointed Quality Visitors.

Time constraints

All evidence must be generated and assessed within the learner's period of registration. Centres should advise learners of any internal timescales for the completion and marking of centre based assessments.

Evidence requirements

The portfolio should demonstrate competence across each learning outcome for each unit of the qualification.

2.4.2 Practical and written assessment

The centre may use its own internally designed assessments, including written and practical tasks as evidence of underpinning knowledge, understanding and competence of the registered candidate

The assessment methods used must be:

- Valid - the assessment must measure what it claims to measure and what is important to measure and fit with the learning outcome and assessment criteria.
- Reliable - the assessment result should be replicable and consistent under different circumstances.
- Sufficient – the assessment must be capable of allowing the Learner to generate sufficient evidence
- Authentic – the assessment process must ensure that the evidence generated for assessment is the Learners own work.

On completion of each unit, the learner must sign to declare that the work produced is their own and the Assessor should validate the authenticity of the Learners work.

2.4.3 Examples of assessment methods include:

Written tasks

Assignments, reports, leaflets, handouts, case studies, projects, diagrams, definition sheets, written tests, poster, logs, letters, presentations, record of professional discussion, record of oral or written questions

Practical tasks

Assessor direct observations, observation checklists.

Evidence of competency in the job role is expected to be provided by real evidence of practical undertaking in the workplace.

Simulation is **not** permitted for any of the Information, Advice or Guidance units within this qualification.

Witness testimony

Some evidence submitted by a learner may require a 'witness testimony'. For this evidence to withstand scrutiny, either the witness should be occupationally competent in the skills that they are observing or the Assessor should state clearly the status of the witness and the context in which the statement is used as part of the assessment judgement.

Overall assessment of a unit

It is the responsibility of the assessor to ensure that all of the evidence produced towards a unit is collated together, authenticated and that all of the marking checks have been completed fully.

Recording forms

Learners and centres may decide to use a paper-based or electronic method of recording evidence. VetSkill has no preference in this regard, VetSkill Quality visitors must be able to fully access all evidence.

2.5 Entry requirements

Learners undertaking this qualification will be expected to be currently in, or are looking to work in an information, advice or guidance role, and in a position to gather the evidence required to deem them competent in all learning outcomes.

It is VetSkill's approved centre's responsibility to ensure that the experience gained is sufficient in length, quality and appropriate in nature for the learner to be able to achieve the qualification.

It is the responsibility of the Centre to ensure that any work experience placement is of sufficient quality to support the learner, particularly if the learner is a volunteer. The placement must meet the minimum legal requirements for employing personnel, and VetSkill's placement criteria. The Quality Assurance of placements must be monitored by the Centre and may be visited by a VetSkill Quality Visitor as part of the external quality assurance process.

There are no formal or specific academic or learning entry requirements for learners undertaking this programme. The nature of both the learning and assessment required for the qualification is such that learners will require basic literacy and numeracy skills. It is for the centre to determine if an applicant meets these requirements prior to the learner commencing the programme through a process of initial assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that learners are in a realistic position to achieve the qualification within a reasonable time scale. Learners may be of an employed, voluntary or non-employed status, but they must be able to gain real experience in order to build a portfolio of evidence.

Access to this qualification is available to all candidates who meet the entry requirements specified. The head of centre should ensure that all candidates have access to a taught programme and assessment. Centres are required to actively check that all required centre policies are being adhered to.

Learners must, with reasonable adjustments, be able to achieve the full range of competencies stipulated in the assessment criteria.

2.6 Age restrictions

This qualification is available to learners aged 16 years and over. VetSkill cannot accept any registrations for learners below 16 years.

2.7 Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The guided learning hour's requirement for this qualification is 60 hours.

2.8 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

The Total Qualification Time for this qualification is 150 hours.

2.9 Exemptions

No exemptions have been identified.

2.10 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) recognises the contribution a person's previous experience could contribute to a qualification. RPL is allowed and is also sector specific.

2.11 Reasonable adjustments

Learners who are able to provide evidence of special assessment adjustments required (either educational or medical) will be catered for in accordance with the guidance provided in the *VetSkill Centre Handbook* and *Reasonable Adjustments Policy*.

2.12 Special consideration

Requests for special assessment consideration will be addressed in accordance with the guidance provided in the *VetSkill Centre Handbook* and *Special Consideration Policy*.

2.13 Appeals

Centres must have in place an auditable appeals procedure. If a learner is not satisfied with the conduct of an assessment, the head of centre should address the problem via the appeals procedure. If the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of his/her appeal VetSkill will conduct a review of the process to ensure equitable management and outcome. All appeals must be clearly documented and made available to the Quality Visitor, or to VetSkill if a review is requested.

Appeals in relation to VetSkill external examinations will be conducted in accordance with the *VetSkill Examination Appeals Rules and Procedures*.

3. Centre requirements

Centres offering this qualification must have approval from VetSkill.

3.1 Centre approval

Delivery of this qualification is subject to approval by VetSkill. New centres must apply for centre and qualification approval and will be subject to a site visit before approval can be granted.

3.2 Qualification approval

Full details of the process for centre/qualification approval and the associated forms can be obtained from info@vetskill.com

4. Registration and Certification

4.1 Registration

Learners must be registered for the qualification at the commencement of their course using the relevant application form available from VetSkill or by using the Web Portal online system.

Centres must ensure that learner official photo ID is also uploaded onto the system at the time of registration.

Tutors and examination officers should ensure that learners are registered onto the Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance qualification and that all assessment documentation for teaching and administration with VetSkill is used.

4.2 Certification

The award of full certificates (or unit certificates) will be provided to candidates on receipt of a valid claim from the centre. Candidates must have completed all units and passed all specified assessments in order to achieve the full qualification (or unit).

A Quality Visitor must sample completed portfolios and approve the centre to be able to claim certificates for successful learners.

5. Delivering the qualification

Centre staff may undertake more than one role, e.g. tutor and assessor or internal quality assurer, but cannot internally quality assure their own assessments.

5.1 Tutors/ Delivery staff

Staff delivering this qualification must:

- hold at least a Level 3 qualification in Information, Advice or Guidance or other relevant Level 3 business administration or communication qualifications. Qualifications in Management or Coaching may also have included elements of Information, Advice or Guidance.
- be occupationally knowledgeable in the area of providing information advice or guidance for which they are delivering training. This knowledge must be at least to the same level as the training being delivered
- have credible experience of providing training.
- be technically competent in the area and subject for which they are delivering training and have credible experience of providing training both theoretical and practical.
- have recent relevant experience in the specific area they will be delivering and assessing

5.2 Support materials

VetSkill provides the following publications and resources specifically for this qualification:

- Teaching and delivery support
- Assessment guide

5.3 Sources of additional information

Matrix standard <http://www.matrixstandard.com>

Citizens Advice Bureau <http://www.adviceguide.org.uk>

6. Assessment

6.1 Assessors

Assessors must be occupationally competent and must be qualified to level 3 or above in Information, Advice or Guidance or other relevant qualification. Assessors:

- must have significant current experience of working in the industry at this level and
- should also hold A1 or TAQA qualification for assessors or
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for assessors

6.2 Internal quality assurers

Internal quality assurers/qualification co-ordinators must be occupationally competent, either qualified to at least level 3 or above. IQA's:

- must have significant and current experience of working in the industry at this level
- should hold assessor qualifications, as above, and hold V1 or TAQA qualification for IQA's or
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for IQA's

6.3 Continuing professional development (CPD)

Centres are expected to support their staff in ensuring that their knowledge of the occupational area and of best practice in delivery, mentoring, training, assessment and internal quality assurance remains current, and that it takes account of any national or legislative developments.

6.4 Physical resources

This qualification requires learners to be in employment (paid or unpaid) or volunteering in a role providing information, advice or guidance in order to learn and demonstrate competence in the knowledge and practical skills required of this qualification.

6.5 External quality assurance

Centres will be subject to a minimum of one external quality assurance visit annually by a VetSkill Quality Visitor. The frequency of visits and monitoring will be determined in accordance with VetSkill's risk policy. During visits, audits will take place of programme delivery and administrative systems including the quality of record keeping, assessments, learner support and training practice.

Centres conducting examinations (MCQ, practical or written) may be subject to an exam monitoring visit by a quality visitor which may be scheduled with the centre or unannounced.

6.6 Confidentiality and privacy

At all times clients rights to confidentiality, dignity and privacy must be maintained. All clients' records presented as learners evidence must be stored in the usual location within the workplace. Client's confidential records regardless of format must not be put into the learners' portfolio.

Where observations of a learner's performance are carried out by persons not part of the provision of information, advice or guidance service, this must only be undertaken with the consent of the client.

7. Units

Unit IAG01 – Introduction to Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 12
 Total Unit Time 30

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand the distinction between information, advice and guidance	1.a	Explain the differences between information, advice and guidance
	1.b	Describe information, advice and guidance arrangements in own organisation
2. Understand ways of meeting information, advice or guidance requirements for a range of clients	2.a	Identify the information, advice or guidance requirements for a range of clients
	2.b	Explain ways of meeting the identified requirements for a range of clients
	2.c	State ways in which clients can be supported to begin further action
3. Know own level of authority in meeting information, advice or guidance requirements for a range of clients	3.a	Describe the limitations of own role in meeting the information, advice or guidance requirements for a range of clients
	3.b	Explain the internal signposting and referral protocol
	3.c	List a range of potential external agencies for signposting or referral
4. Understand the purpose of accurate record keeping	4.a	Identify how clients records are kept
	4.b	Explain why it is important to maintain confidentiality of records
	4.c	Describe the purpose of accurate record keeping to fulfil good practice guidelines

Unit IAG01 – Introduction to Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit Aim

This unit is designed to provide learners with the understanding of the differences between information, advice and guidance, and how it applies to their organisation and job role.

It will enable learners to identify the requirements of clients and how those needs can be met. Boundaries and limitations will be explored, helping learners understand confidentiality issues relevant to their work setting. Knowledge of relevant internal and external individuals and agencies should be explored and how to signpost or refer a client. The purpose of accurate record keeping and complying with relevant legislation is also key to this unit.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

Guidance on delivery can be found in the Teaching and Delivery Support Guide

Assessment

This unit will be assessed through the collection of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes

Unit IAG02 – Developing communication skills when providing Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 12
 Total Unit Time 30

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know how to communicate with a range of clients	1.a	Explain appropriate communication methods when interacting with a range of clients
	1.b	Identify a logical approach to communicating with a range of clients
	1.c	Understand how to reach a shared agreement with a range of clients
2. Understand the importance of effective communication skills when providing Information, Advice or Guidance	2.a	Describe a range of appropriate questioning styles to encourage communication with a range of clients
	2.b	State a range of effective listening skills when communicating with a range of clients
	2.c	Describe a range of effective non-verbal communication skills
3. Understand how own values, beliefs and attitudes may affect communication with a range of clients	3.a	Give examples of how own values, beliefs and attitudes may affect communication with a range of clients
	3.b	Explain how to work with a range of clients in a supportive and non-discriminatory manner
4. Know the importance of confidentiality and equality in communicating with a range of clients	4.a	Describe how confidentiality and data protection are met when communicating with a range of clients
	4.b	Describe how equality is maintained when communicating with a range of clients
5. Know own strengths and development needs when communicating with a range clients	5.a	List the methods available to identify own personal strengths and development needs that support communicating with a range of clients

	5.b	Identify own strengths and personal development needs in communicating with a range of clients
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Unit IAG02 – Developing communication skills when providing Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit Aim

This unit is intended to provide an understanding of how to interact with clients, including appropriate and effective question styles, listening skills and non-verbal communication, the use of a structured approach to client interactions and exploring how to reach agreements with clients. Discrimination will be considered, and learners own beliefs, values and attitudes discussed to understand how this may impact on communication with clients. Confidentiality and data protection will also be taught in this unit. It will also help learners to identify their own personal strengths and development needs to support the provision of providing information, advice or guidance to a range of clients.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

Guidance on delivery can be found in the Teaching and Delivery Support Guide

Assessment

This unit will be assessed through the collection of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes.

Unit IAG03 – Client choices and potential barriers when providing Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 12
 Total Unit Time 30

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand how to explore choices and options available with a range of clients	1.a	Explain how different clients can be supported to make appropriate choices and options
	1.b	Identify a range of factors which may affect the client and the choices they make
	1.c	Describe the different ways in which individuals and groups are able to explore their choices and options
2. Understand the range of potential barriers which may prevent clients from accessing information, advice or guidance	2.a	Describe potential barriers for clients in achieving their required outcome
	2.b	Explain how to overcome identified potential barriers for clients
3. Understand how clients can challenge discriminatory behaviour	3.a	Explain how discriminatory behaviour and practice impacts clients
	3.b	Describe how prejudice and stereotyping can be challenged by a range of clients

Unit IAG03 – Client choices and potential barriers when providing Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit Aim

This unit will look at factors that affect client choice and options available to them. It will also help learners consider how best to help clients explore their options when faced with potential barriers, that may prevent clients from achieving their desired outcomes. It will determine how best to overcome identified potential barriers whilst considering prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping and how this affects the client.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

Guidance on delivery can be found in the Teaching and Delivery Support Guide

Assessment

This unit will be assessed through the collection of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes.

Unit IAG04 – Signposting and referral in Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 12
 Total Unit Time 30

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand the difference between signposting and referral	1.a	Describe the differences between signposting and referral
	1.b	Identify the benefits of signposting or referral to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the client • the organisation
2. Know good practice when signposting or referring a range of clients and how to monitor and evaluate their progress	2.a	Explain the organisations protocol for internal and external signposting and referral and how it complies with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation • Codes of Practice • Ethical requirements
	2.b	State the process for monitoring and evaluating clients who are signposted or referred internally
	2.c	Explain the systems used for monitoring and evaluating clients who are signposted or referred externally
	2.d	Identify how to obtain and record feedback from internal and external clients following signposting or referral

Unit IAG04– Signposting and referral in Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit Aim

The aim of this unit is to help learners identify the difference between signposting and referral and the benefits this has on the client and the organisation. It will also help learners recognise good practice when signposting or referring clients and how it complies with Legislation, Codes of Practice and Ethical requirements. Learners will then explore how to monitor and evaluate the progress of clients following signposting or referral.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

Guidance on delivery can be found in the Teaching and Delivery Support Guide

Assessment

This unit will be assessed through the collection of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes.

Unit IAG05 – Providing Information, Advice or Guidance to clients

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours 12
 Total Unit Time 30

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Be able to comply with national requirements when providing information, advice or guidance to a range of clients	1.a	Describe the national requirements for providing information, advice or guidance in your sector
	1.b	Give examples of the implications of the national requirements when providing information, advice or guidance in your sector
2. Be able to demonstrate providing information, advice and guidance in your sector	2.a	Provide information to a range of clients
	2.b	Provide advice to a range of clients
	2.c	Provide guidance to a range of clients
	2.d	Create and store appropriate client records following the provision of information, advice or guidance to clients
3. Be able to demonstrate signposting and referring a range of clients	3.a	Signpost or refer a range of clients internally to meet their requirements
	3.b	Signpost or refer a range of clients externally to meet their requirements
4. Be able to demonstrate the monitoring and evaluating of clients who are signposted or referred	4.a	Monitor and evaluate a range of clients following signposting or referral
	4.b	Obtain and record feedback from a range of clients following signposting or referral

Unit IAG05 – Providing Information, Advice or Guidance to clients

Unit Aim

The aim of this unit is for learners to show how they comply with national requirements when giving information, advice or guidance to a range of clients. Learners will also be able to demonstrate how they follow procedures for internal and external signposting or referral and how it meets the needs of clients. Learners will also be able to apply and show the process for monitoring and evaluating clients who have been signposted or referred.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

Guidance on delivery can be found in the Teaching and Delivery Support Guide

Assessment

This unit will be assessed through the collection of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the learning outcomes.