



**IQ IAM Level 4 Certificate in Office and Administration Management  
Specification**

**Regulation Number: 601/8983/6**

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## Industry Qualifications

IQ is approved by the UK's national regulator of qualifications Ofqual and by the Scottish regulator SQA Accreditation. It was launched in 2011 to provide users and learners with the objective of achieving the highest levels of assessment integrity, customer service and sector engagement. Uniquely, it is a membership based awarding organisation bringing together the best of UK vocational education in a not for profit environment.

Further information can be found on the IQ website [www.industryqualifications.org.uk](http://www.industryqualifications.org.uk)

IQ acquired the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM) in January 2014. The Institute has been re-registered and will focus on membership services. IQ uses the IAM brand for its suite of management qualifications.

## Introduction

This specification is intended for trainers, centres and learners. General information regarding centre approval, registration, IQR (IQ's candidate management system), assessment papers, certification, reasonable adjustments, special consideration, appeals procedures, are available from the website. This document should be read in conjunction with the IQ QMS Centre guide available from the website.

Website: [www.industryqualifications.org.uk](http://www.industryqualifications.org.uk)

Enquiries: 01952 457452

## Version number

Please ensure that you have the latest and most up to date version of documents. Please check the website for the most up to date version. To check which version you have please see the footer which will give you the version number.

## About this Qualification

The IQ IAM Level 4 Certificate in Office and Administration Management has been specifically designed for experienced Personal Assistants, Executive Personal Assistants and Office and Administration Managers, who are already operating at a more senior level and want to gain formal recognition of their skills. It is also ideal for those aspiring to move into a more senior role within office and administration management. Depending upon the choice of optional units, learners can cover the essentials of management skills for senior administration staff, commercial and business awareness, the role of the executive personal assistant and effective office management.

## Objective

Supporting a role in the workplace.

## Purpose

B. Prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area  
B2. Develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area

## Sector

15.3 - Business management

## Structure

To achieve the IQ IAM Level 4 Certificate in Office and Administration Management learners must achieve three of the optional units.

No of units	Unit Number	Unit Title	Level	Estimated TQT*	Estimated GLH**
<b>Optional Units Group</b>					
1	H/507/1310	Management Skills for Senior Administration Staff	4	44	12
2	M/507/1312	Commercial and Business Awareness for Senior Administration Staff	4	44	12
3	T/507/1313	The Role of the Executive Personal Assistant	4	45	12
4	K/507/1311	Effective Office Management	4	45	12
Total				133	36

## Delivery

### Total Qualification Time (TQT)\*

This is an estimate of the total length of time it is expected that a learner will typically take to achieve and demonstrate the level of attainment necessary for the award of the qualification i.e. to achieve all learning outcomes.

TQT is comprised of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and an estimate of the number of hours a learner is likely to spend in preparation, study or any other learning including assessment, which takes place as directed by, but not under the supervision of a lecturer, supervisor or tutor. If a credit value is assigned to a qualification it is determined by TQT, as one credit corresponds to 10 hours of learning.

## Guided Learning Hours (GLH)\*\*

It is the responsibility of training centres to decide the appropriate course duration, based on their learners' ability and level of existing knowledge. It is possible, therefore, that the number of GLH can vary from one training centre to another according to learners' needs. GLH are all times when a member of provider staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied on the programme. This definition includes examinations, lectures, tutorials, and supervised study. It does not include hours where supervision or assistance is of a general nature and is not specific to the study of the learners.

## Assessment

This qualification will be assessed through three written assignments. The type of written assignment depends on the units that have been chosen. Each unit is assessed by its own individual assignment. Assessment types include: case studies, reports, project plans, work-based evidence, tasks, reflective statements or a personal development plan. Some assignments may include a combination of assessment methods. They are designed to be practical and work-based, so learners can apply learning and new skills to their job role.

Assignment briefs and mark schemes, which include marking guidance, are available to download from the secure area of the website / on request. All the units in this qualification are knowledge-based, but may ask learners to refer to their current employment, previous employment or roles at organisations which they will be able to research. Evidence for this qualification must be the learners own work and learners must submit a signed statement confirming this.

Each assignment brief covers 100% of relevant unit assessment criteria; to meet each unit candidates must achieve 65% of marks available for the relevant unit in the assignment brief. Each unit is weighted equally within the qualification and any three units must be met.

Centres may use their own assignments, however these need to be submitted and approved by IQ prior to use. An approval charge per assignment will apply.

## Moderation

Assignments are internally marked and verified and externally moderated by IQ.

Once the candidate has completed the assignment for each unit, this must be internally marked by the centre using the mark scheme and guidance provided. Assignments must be internally verified by the centre as per IV procedures. Marked assignments are liable to be moderated by IQ; a sample may be selected for moderation when centres claim certificates on IQR as normal. This may trigger a request from IQ for a sample of marked scripts for moderation. However, a centre's first cohort will always be moderated. Once moderated, the results will be sent to the centre and relevant certificates will be issued.

To claim certificates/trigger moderation:

Please claim certificates on IQR, this may trigger a request for a sample. Requests for samples will be made twice a month (at the beginning and middle of the month). Instructions for submitting the sample will be included in the sample request.

Results will be issued approximately 10 working days from receipt of sample (provided no issues arise) and certificates for candidates who have successfully completed will be automatically issued to the centre.

This qualification is not graded. Successful learners achieve a pass.

## Access to the externally set and internally marked assessment

Once centres have been approved to offer this qualification they will be given access to a secure portal from where they can download the question paper, Mark scheme and guidance.

## Word Count

In each assignment brief the word count is clearly indicated; in the absence of a word count, none applies. For example, those tasks featuring a series of brief questions often do not specify a word count. On the other hand, for example where a writing sample is required, a word limit will be formally stipulated.

The word count does not include referencing, repeating the question/s or the learning outcomes and or assessment criteria. It only applies to the actual answer submitted by the candidate.

Submissions that are under or over the word count will have marks deducted on a sliding scale.

## Age Range and Geographical Coverage

This qualification is approved for learners 18 plus in England only.

## Learner Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements. However, learners should be able to work at Level 3 or above and have good literacy and numeracy skills with confidence in their writing ability. Entrants at Level 4 will normally be either experienced personal assistants, office managers or administrators.

## Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification can progress to a range of apprenticeship qualifications such as:

The Higher Apprenticeship in Business and Professional Administration:

Competence component - IQ IAM Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Business Administration (QCF)

Knowledge component - IQ IAM Level 4 Certificate in Principles of Business Administration (QCF)

The Higher Apprenticeship in Management:

Competence component - IQ IAM Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Management (QCF)

Knowledge component – IQ IAM Level 4 Diploma in Business and Administrative Management (VRQ)

The Higher Apprenticeship in Leadership and Management:

Competence component - IQ IAM Level 5 NVQ Diploma in Business and Leadership (QCF)

Knowledge component - IQ IAM Level 5 Diploma in Business and Administrative Management (VRQ)

## Tutor Requirements

All trainers delivering this qualification must have an appropriate teaching qualification e.g. Level 3 Award in Education and Training or above. They should have a working experience in this sector and/or hold a relevant Level 4 or Level 5 qualification e.g. in business administration, management or as a personal assistant.

## Centre Requirements

Centres must be approved by IQ in order to offer this qualification and must meet the required criteria and satisfy IQ that their tutorial staff, learning resources and quality systems comply with IQ quality standards.

For further information or to find out more about how to apply to become an IQ IAM centre, please contact [info@industryqualifications.org.uk](mailto:info@industryqualifications.org.uk)

## Assessment Terminology

The table below includes the terminology used in all types of assessment. It includes IQ's explanation of the meaning of these terms in the context of assessments.

Knowledge/understanding	
<p>These are foundation skills.</p> <p>Assessment tasks in this category require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the required subject content. They assess basic learning.</p>	<p>define</p> <p>describe</p> <p>list</p> <p>name</p> <p>outline</p> <p>state</p>
Application	
<p>Candidates must show an ability to demonstrate the understanding of the specified knowledge content in practical business contexts.</p> <p>Assessment tasks in this category require candidates, for example, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make a practical decision</li> <li>• demonstrate the required knowledge, understanding, and skills in organisational contexts.</li> </ul>	<p>apply</p> <p>calculate</p> <p>create (in an applied context)</p> <p>demonstrate/ demonstrate how</p> <p>design</p> <p>estimate</p> <p>investigate</p> <p>plan</p> <p>prepare</p> <p>propose</p> <p>use</p>
Analysis	
<p>Candidates must be able to break down situations, statements, theory, and numerical and non-numerical data into components or essential features.</p> <p>For higher level analysis candidates should incorporate relevant concepts and theory into their arguments.</p> <p>Assessment tasks in this category require candidates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select data relevant to tasks</li> <li>• organise data relevant to tasks</li> <li>• break down data/texts to their elements</li> <li>• respond to data/text that contains several elements</li> </ul>	<p>analyse / critically analyse</p> <p>clarify</p> <p>compare</p> <p>differentiate between</p> <p>examine</p> <p>explain</p> <p>identify why, how, reasons, characteristics</p> <p>investigate</p> <p>select</p> <p>summarise</p>
Evaluation	
<p>The most advanced cognitive skill is that of evaluation.</p> <p>At this level, candidates make connections, present judgements, and opinions and draw conclusions that are supported by valid reasons and evidence.</p> <p>Evaluation involves reflective thinking.</p> <p>Assessment tasks in this category require candidates to give detailed responses and while doing so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide supported decisions or conclusions</li> <li>• make a reasoned case</li> <li>• make comparisons based on valid and relevant reasons and evidence</li> <li>• set up arguments based on valid reasons and evidence</li> </ul>	<p>advise</p> <p>argue for and against</p> <p>compare, contrast and reach a judgement</p> <p>criticise</p> <p>discuss</p> <p>evaluate</p> <p>identify the most important</p> <p>interpret</p> <p>investigate e.g. the effectiveness of</p> <p>justify</p> <p>reason for and against</p> <p>recommend</p> <p>solve</p> <p>summarise</p> <p>...to what extent?</p>

## Plagiarism Guide to Centres, Assessors, Examiners and Candidates

Candidates commit plagiarism when they copy, very closely imitate, paraphrase or cut and paste someone else's work, ideas, and/or language and present it as their own.

It is the centres responsibility to:

- explain what plagiarism is and why it is wrong to plagiarise
- explain the concept of intellectual property; the ownership of words, concepts, electronic materials, etc.
- develop centre policies to prevent plagiarism
- explain the consequences of committing plagiarism
- explain the importance of referencing and teach the use of referencing systems
- set differentiated, individual assignments for each candidate

When writing assignments, candidates need to be aware that they can quote from other texts but that these must be referenced to where the quotes have been obtained from. However, intentional use of other people's work without providing references is classed as plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism is not permitted and if plagiarism is detected this will result in a fail and penalties may be imposed. Examiners and moderators are well aware of this issue and they are experts in their subject matter. Therefore they are very likely to recognise any extensive passage, which has been taken from a book, journal, website etc. There are also a number of computer programmes that can detect plagiarism.

It could be argued that the biggest issue with plagiarism is that students who do this are denying themselves the opportunity to better themselves. By using other people's work, they are not developing themselves as reflective learners. From a tutor's point of view, this is very frustrating as their job is to help students to become analytical and reflective learners, not cutting and pasting experts.

IQ puts scripts through a plagiarism checker programme and any scripts that contain plagiarised sections (paragraphs or quotes that are not referenced appropriately) will be treated as such and this will result in a fail and penalties may be imposed.

## IAM Membership

The IAM is the only professional body in the United Kingdom specialising in the promotion of Administrative Management.

Our membership includes directors, accountants and company secretaries, people concerned with specialist functions, general managers and executives with operational and administrative responsibilities in both the public and private sector.

## Student Membership

By being enrolled on an IQ IAM qualification learners are entitled to apply for a year's free student membership of the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM). For more information on what this entails and how to claim your membership, contact the IAM or visit [www.instam.org/](http://www.instam.org/)

## Membership Benefits

Our range of membership benefits include:

- post-nominal designatory letters
- access to top academic journals
- continuing professional development (CPD)
- discounts on our events and online learning courses
- eligible to countersign passports
- membership card



- newsletters to keep you up to date on sector developments
- UK tax relief
- plus many more!

(Benefits may vary depending on the level of membership you apply for)

#### Membership routes and routes

There are two routes into professional membership of the IQ IAM, based on:

- taking IQ IAM professional qualifications
- previous experience and knowledge

Both routes have equal status and all members are encouraged to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

There are several grades of membership please see IAM website for details:

<http://www.instam.org/membership/membership-levels>

- Student
- Affiliate
- Associate (AInstAM)
- Member (MInstAM)
- Fellow (FInstAM)

**Unit 1: Management Skills for Senior Administration Staff H/507/1310**

Estimated TQT: 44  
 Estimated GLH: 12  
 Level: 4

Unit grid: Learning outcomes/Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcome - The learner will:	Assessment Criteria - The learner can:		Indicative Contents:
1. Understand an organisation's structure and management	1.1	Outline the characteristics of different types of organisational structure	<b>Types of organisational structure:</b> E.g. line, staff/functional, committee, divisional, project, matrix, hybrid etc.
	1.2	Outline the advantages and disadvantages of different types of organisational structure	<b>Advantages:</b> E.g. simplifying lines of authority, ease of decision-making, delegating, efficient interaction, defining/aligning specific goals/targets, co-ordination, responsiveness, flexibility etc. <b>Disadvantages:</b> E.g. disagreements between departments, administrative burdens, slow responsiveness, lack of control, discouraging innovative thinking etc.
	1.3	Explain the factors that influence the choice of structure for an organisation	<b>External factors:</b> Economic, social, political, nature of competition etc. <b>Internal factors:</b> Purpose of the organisation (e.g. profit motive, social aims), size, industry sector, business strategy, resources available to organisation, interests of stakeholders etc.
2. Understand the principles of management for senior administration staff	2.1	Evaluate the management processes by which senior administration staff enable an organisation to achieve its goals	<b>Management processes for achieving organisational goals:</b> Covering operational and administrative processes; e.g. devolving decision-making, organising staff training/appraisals (linking performance directly to achievement of goals), clarifying and aligning individual/team objectives with organisational goals, integration, encouraging communication between staff and managers, setting SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) objectives etc.
	2.2	Analyse the principles, characteristics and application of goal setting theory	<b>Goal setting theory:</b> E.g. according to Locke and Latham's theory; specific/challenging goals lead to higher performance than general/easier goals; the five principles: clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback and task complexity; examples include asking an employee to

			achieve more than last time rather than to do their best etc.
	2.3	Explain the knowledge, skills, personal attributes and behaviour needed for management	<b>Needs for management:</b> Commitment, leadership, transparency, consistency, treating all staff equally, being a role model, encouraging developmental feedback and innovation, recognising success, developing trust between individuals, empowering staff, seeking feedback from customers, adopting a positive approach to/instigating change, technical/bespoke skills, strategic awareness etc.
	2.4	Explain how the roles and responsibilities of a leader differ from those of a manager	<b>Leader:</b> Setting direction, developing long-term vision and aligning people to it, facilitating decisions, creating changes etc.; being charismatic, motivational, inspirational, transformational, people focused and comfortable with risk. <b>Manager:</b> Maintaining stability, achieving short-term goals, making decisions, planning and budgeting, staffing, clarifying jobs, measuring performance, problem-solving etc.; being authoritative, work focused and avoiding risks.
	2.5	Outline the characteristics and application of the principal theories of leadership and management	<b>Theories of leadership and management:</b> E.g. Classical Management Theory, Human Relations Theory, Neo-Human Relations Theory, Systems Theory, Chaos Theory, trait theories, behavioural theories, contingency theories and power and influence theories etc.
3. Understand the impact of communication and interpersonal relationships on performance in the workplace	3.1	Define the characteristics of effective working relationships	<b>Effective working relationships:</b> Diversity, trust, interrelatedness, respect, varied interaction, effective communication, inclusivity etc.
	3.2	Identify the nature of barriers to communication and interpersonal relationships across an organisation	<b>Barriers to communication/relationships:</b> Covering: the use of jargon, personal problems/emotions, distractions, slang, cultural differences, sensory impairment, physical barriers to the use of body language (remote working), accents, mixed/contradictory messages, disinterest/lack of motivation, assumptions/prejudices, distorted focus, lack of time etc.

	3.3	Analyse strategies for overcoming barriers to communication and interpersonal relationships	<b>Overcoming barriers:</b> Attention-Interest-Desire-Action; sharing information, being polite, showing appreciation/ praising achievements, following through on agreed actions, avoiding agreements/promises which cannot be kept, showing empathy, using appropriate media/technology, appropriate complexity of language, body language which correlates with verbal communication, clarity, politeness, answering/ asking questions directly, volunteering information, negotiating, removing differences in perception etc.
	3.4	Explain the importance of giving structured feedback	<b>Importance of structured feedback:</b> Providing motivation, identifying SMART objectives rather than general feedback, developing performance, ensuring feedback includes praise and developmental feedback, feedback as a learning tool, ensuring the recipient can internalise and act upon feedback rather than just understand it etc.
	3.5	Analyse the characteristics and use of delegation to enhance performance	<b>Purpose of delegation:</b> More effective time management for managers, providing learning/ development opportunities for supervisors, ensuring targets are achieved, mapping skill sets to tasks etc. <b>Characteristics of delegation:</b> Arranging regular appraisal/ catch-up meetings, monitoring progress, setting clear lines of authority/ communication, delineating responsibilities to avoid confusion/ duplication, identifying and resolving conflicts etc.
4. Understand the relationship between motivation and personal performance in the workplace	4.1	Outline the characteristics and application of the principal theories of motivation	<b>Theories of motivation:</b> E.g. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, McClellan's Acquired Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Equity Theory, Reinforcement Theory etc.; covering: prioritisation of goals/activities, esteem, intrinsic motivation (e.g. sense of achievement/responsibility), extrinsic motivation (e.g. bonuses, promotions) etc.
	4.2	Analyse the relationship between motivation and individual performance	<b>Relationship between motivation and individual performance:</b> Ensuring motivations across individuals/teams aspire to aligned objectives, increasing attendance/retention, persistence, productivity, innovative thinking, stronger relationships with clients/customers etc.

	4.3	Analyse the impact of motivation on team dynamics	<b>Impact of motivation on team dynamics:</b> Dependent upon how far motivations of individuals align with one another, considering individual/team strengths/weaknesses and goals etc.
	4.4	Identify the characteristics of effective teams	<b>Characteristics:</b> Trusting one another, regular communication, common purpose, utilising the unique skills/perspectives of each member, clarity of perspectives, friendly and focused working environment etc.
5. Be able to solve problems and manage conflicts within the scope of a senior PA	5.1	Evaluate different problem solving processes, tools and techniques	<b>Problem solving processes, tools and techniques:</b> Covering: identifying the nature/cause of the problem, analysing the problem, developing potential solutions/alternatives, selecting an appropriate solution, implementation and evaluation; e.g. SWOT analysis, PEST analysis etc.
	5.2	Identify the source and nature of conflicts within an organisation	<b>Source/nature of conflicts within an organisation:</b> Interpersonal (e.g. values, interests, personality), communication barriers, organisational (e.g. hierarchical, interdepartmental), change-related (e.g. new technology/methods), stress, lack of resources/resource competition, external factors (e.g. recession, political pressure) etc.
	5.3	Analyse the characteristics of the principal theories of conflict management	<b>Characteristics of theories of conflict management:</b> E.g. Khun and Poole's model, DeChurch and Marks's meta-taxonomy, Rahim's meta-model etc.; covering: resolution, organisational learning, negative aspects of conflict, positive aspects of conflict (e.g. the potential to improve group outcomes) etc.
	5.4	Explain the use of conflict resolution, prevention, processes and techniques	<b>Use of conflict resolution/prevention:</b> E.g. competing, compromising, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating (as stated by Thomas and Kilmann) etc.

## Unit 1 Guidance on Delivery and Assessment

### Delivery

This unit will suit experienced PAs or senior administrators who work closely with their organisation's senior management team, and who either already have management responsibility for junior staff or plan to take on this level of responsibility in the future.

It covers fundamental people management skills and the contextual positioning of managers within an organisation. Learners will also learn how to motivate staff and communicate with people at all levels, including techniques to delegate tasks and manage difficult responses. It will give learners the skills to solve problems, deal with interpersonal conflict, and influence a range of organisational stakeholders towards their point of view. It also helps them to identify key areas for personal development to improve their managerial effectiveness.

### Assessment

This unit must be assessed by completing the relevant written assignment, in accordance with requirements in the introduction of this specification, the guidance on word count and plagiarism.

The assignment brief and mark scheme, which includes marking guidance, are available to download from the secure area of the website / on request. This unit is knowledge-based, but may ask learners to refer to their current employment, previous employment or roles at organisations which they will be able to research. Evidence for this unit must be the learners own work and learners must submit a signed statement confirming this.

Once the candidate has completed the assignment, this must be marked by the centre using the mark scheme and guidance provided. The assignment and the completed mark scheme are externally verified by IQ.

**Unit 2: Commercial and Business Awareness for Senior Administration Staff M/507/1312**

Estimated TQT: 44  
 Estimated GLH: 12  
 Level: 4

Unit grid: Learning outcomes/Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcome - The learner will:	Assessment Criteria - The learner can:		Indicative Contents:
1. Understand how an organisation develops its role and purpose at a strategic level	1.1	Define an organisation's role, purpose and culture	<p><b>Role/purpose:</b> Profitability, cash flow customer satisfaction, stakeholder value, public service, employee growth, research and development etc.</p> <p><b>Culture:</b> Definition of organisational culture, types of organisational culture e.g. Handy's power, role, task and person or other suitable simple model of culture.</p>
	1.2	Describe the tools used by an organisation to communicate its role, purpose and culture	<p><b>Tools:</b> E.g. organisation's mission statement, press releases, newsletters, articles, social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.), forums, exhibitions, open days etc.</p>
	1.3	Analyse the purpose of different stakeholders to organisations	<p><b>Purpose of stakeholders:</b> Including: investors, employees, business partners, board of directors, creditors, suppliers, unions, the wider community etc.; covering: providing finance, decision-making, management, operations, paying for products/services, acting as 'watchdog' etc.</p>
2. Understand how an organisation uses strategy to drive performance	2.1	Define the role of strategy in organisational performance	<p><b>Role of strategy in organisational performance:</b> Focusing upon important/urgent issues as priority, setting SMART objectives, promoting adaptive thinking, aligning departments/teams, defining and setting underlying processes, allocating resources effectively etc.; how ineffective strategies can damage organisational performance.</p>
	2.2	Analyse the role of strategic analysis in the commercial environment	<p><b>Role of strategic analysis in the commercial environment:</b> To formulate strategy/strategic recommendations, plan to deal with change, identify most efficient/least resistant approaches, self-evaluation, understanding competitors, seize business opportunities etc.</p>

	2.3	Explain the application of strategic analytical models to an organisation	<b>Application of strategic analytical models:</b> E.g. SWOT analysis, PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental) analysis, Porter's Five Forces, Critical Success Factor Analysis etc.
	2.4	Evaluate the use of strategic planning tools to develop organisational strategy	<b>Use of strategic planning tools to develop organisational strategy:</b> PESTLE, scenario planning, Porter's Five Force analysis, SWOT analysis, growth-share mix, The Nine Steps to Success
	2.5	Explain the purpose and scope of benchmarking	<b>Purpose/scope of benchmarking:</b> Comparing business processes/performance metrics to competitors/industry practices, focusing on best practices, partnering to share information, allowing the organisation to evaluate practices, identifying shortcomings, targeting future performance, adjusting goals etc.
	2.6	Identify the contribution of senior administration staff to organisational strategy	<b>Contribution of senior administration staff to organisational strategy:</b> Performing a tactical role in support of overall strategy, use of soft skills, execution/implementation (rather than choosing/planning) of organisational strategy at the team level, acting as both leaders and followers, improving effectiveness at the operational level etc.
	2.7	Analyse how the external environment affects organisational strategy	<b>How external environment affects organisational strategy:</b> PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal) factors and how they affect strategy
3. Understand the impact of change on individuals and organisations	3.1	Evaluate the features of theories of organisational change	<b>Theories of organisational change:</b> E.g. Lewin's Model of Change (unfreeze, transition, freeze); Kotter's Eight Step Change Model (creating urgency, forming a coalition, creating a vision, communicating the vision, removing obstacles, seeking immediate successes for motivation, building on change, making the change core to the organisation); Schein's Cognitive Redefinition (motivation, change, making it permanent); Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory; Prochaska and DiClemente's Change Theory etc.
	3.2	Explain the importance of reviewing and adapting organisational strategy	<b>Reviewing/adapting organisational strategy:</b> Measuring progress towards strategic aims/objectives, ensuring activities are within parameters of the aims/objectives, minimising disruption caused by changes in the internal/external environment, allowing flexibility and input from employees, implementing alternative processes etc.



	3.3	Analyse the factors that drive organisational change	<b>Factors driving organisational change:</b> E.g. competition, technology, management, organisational culture, regulations, growth/decline, new processes, employee morale, customer/client demands, stakeholders etc.
	3.4	Describe the challenges to be overcome in response to change	<b>Challenges in response to change:</b> E.g. lack of skills/expertise in-house, resource limitations, habits/employee resistance to change, fear of the unknown, inadequate communication regarding the nature of changes, unforeseen costs of changes etc.
	3.5	Analyse the features and benefits of coaching techniques used to support change and periods of transition	<b>Features/benefits of coaching techniques to support change/transition:</b> E.g. model-based, time-based, one-to-one, on-going, based upon SMART objectives etc.; covering: costs, time-scales, use of external coaches etc.
	3.6	Evaluate the role of senior administration staff in supporting the management of change	<b>Role of senior administration staff in supporting change:</b> Financial planning, restructuring teams, recordkeeping, seeking employee feedback/input, monitoring performance, maintaining an overview of changing business trends, communicating changes set by senior management, problem-solving etc.
4. Understand the importance of brand to an organisation	4.1	Evaluate the scope, definition and power of brands	<b>Scope, definition and power of brands:</b> E.g. initialism, alliteration, use of puns, names of founders/geographical locations, logos, graphics, taglines, catchphrases, brand performance (functionality of product/service), brand identity (emotive/symbolic) etc.; covering: brand trust, parity, social media branding, crowd sourcing, multi-brands, derived brands, commercial/cultural impact etc.
	4.2	Explain how organisations develop a vision and brand	<b>Developing vision/brand:</b> With reference to target market, mission statement, organisational strategy, benefits/features of product/service, existing consumer perceptions of organisation etc.
	4.3	Analyse the communication of an organisation's vision and brand	<b>Communication of organisation's vision/brand:</b> Brand integration, logos, promotional materials, packaging, social media/online presence, advertising, articles, reviews, exhibitions, forums etc.

## Unit 2 Guidance on Delivery and Assessment

### Delivery

This unit is ideal for experienced PAs seeking to develop their commercial awareness and strategic thinking to improve personal confidence and engagement with senior managers. It provides learners with an understanding of the critical issues affecting their organisation and how being commercially aware can increase overall business performance and their career prospects. Learners will cover how to analyse the commercial environment in which they work and draw conclusions about how this affects change and the identity of an organisation.

### Assessment

This unit must be assessed by completing the relevant written assignment, in accordance with requirements in the introduction of this specification the guidance on word count and plagiarism.

The assignment brief and mark scheme, which includes marking guidance, are available to download from the secure area of the website / on request. This unit is knowledge-based, but may ask learners to refer to their current employment, previous employment or roles at organisations which they will be able to research. Evidence for this unit must be the learners own work and learners must submit a signed statement confirming this.

Once the candidate has completed the assignment, this must be marked by the centre using the mark scheme and guidance provided. The assignment and the completed mark scheme are externally verified by IQ.

**Unit 3: The Role of the Executive Personal Assistant T/507/1313**

Estimated TQT: 45  
 Estimated GLH: 12  
 Level: 4

Unit grid: Learning outcomes/Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcome - The learner will:	Assessment Criteria - The learner can:		Indicative Contents:
1. Understand the executive Personal Assistant's (PA) role within a senior management team	1.1	Explain the role, purpose and responsibilities of an executive PA	<b>Role, purpose and responsibilities:</b> Managing projects, understanding and working towards organisational strategies, introducing/streamlining processes, liaising with clients/stakeholders, managing budgets, writing executive summaries, organising travel and communication, maintaining websites, conducting research, attending meetings on behalf of managers etc.
	1.2	Identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of an executive PA	<b>Skills, knowledge and behaviours:</b> Self-motivation, communication, organisation, interpersonal skills, IT systems literacy, assertiveness, expertise on departments, organisation and wider sector, understanding and appreciation of personalities or managers/clients, patience, empathy, innovative approach, fast-thinking, attentive to detail etc.
	1.3	Identify how an executive PA works in partnership with a senior manager	<b>Partnership with senior managers:</b> Deputising, delegating workloads, making decision/representing if absent, providing advice based upon practical expertise, making joint decisions, managing personal diaries etc.
	1.4	Explain different senior management work styles	<b>Work styles:</b> E.g. autocratic, consultative, persuasive, democratic/participative, chaotic, laissez-faire, paternalistic, directive, coaching etc.
	1.5	Identify strategies for working with different senior management work styles	<b>Ways to work with any management style:</b> Being proactive with communication, accepting developmental feedback, setting boundaries/explaining if certain tasks are unrealistic, adapting for different management styles e.g. for an autocratic style, trying to understand their main objective and strive towards it etc.

2. Understand the principles of communication skills for executive PAs	2.1	Analyse the impact of barriers to communication	<b>Impact of barriers to communication:</b> Misleading/confusing expectations, misunderstanding of organisational objectives, reduced employee morale, conflict between employees, breakdown of processes, inefficient delivery of products and services, lack of public/client understanding of organisational mission/vision etc.
	2.2	Describe the characteristics of listening and questioning	<b>Characteristics of listening/questioning:</b> Active listening, summarising, paraphrasing, probing, focusing attention, displaying empathetic body language while listening etc.
	2.3	Evaluate the advantages, disadvantages and application of different methods of communication	<b>Communication methods including:</b> <b>Spoken and body language in person:</b> Covering: tone, volume, nodding, smiling, active listening; including: shop floors, visits and product fairs. <b>In writing:</b> Email, memos, formal letters dealing with customer's problems and information leaflets. <b>Phone calls:</b> Staff on standby/ making follow up calls; extension numbers, accessing computerised information during calls etc. <b>Covering:</b> Audience (age, numbers, linguistic barriers), location (virtual space/ long distance, meeting rooms, offices) timescales (level of urgency, conflicting priorities, response time) etc.
	2.4	Evaluate the effects of aggressive, passive and assertive communication	<b>Effects of communication:</b> Covering: misinterpreting/mistaking one form of communication for another, reconciliation/increased conflict, gradually releasing/building up frustration, gaining/losing the respect of colleagues, increasing/reducing cooperation, workforce morale, bullying, self-esteem etc.
	2.5	Develop approaches to counter aggressive and passive behaviour	<b>Approaches to counter aggressive/passive behaviour:</b> Encouraging inclusion and an open working environment, monitoring the performance of individuals, promoting accountability, ensuring employees know the consequences of behaviours, recognising the potential/early warning signs for conflict and removing it, following the policies and procedures of the organisation, mediating, seeking professional advice/ support to manage disagreements, applying disciplinary actions etc.

3. Understand the executive PA's role in project management	3.1	Identify the characteristics of a project	<b>Characteristics of a project:</b> These will be specific to the project; temporary (with a start date and agreed/projected end date), deliver something unique (unlike a process/task), structured, purposeful etc.
	3.2	Explain the reasons for project failure	<b>Reason for failure:</b> Communication barriers, ill-defined objectives at the outset, unclear lines of authority, lack of resources, unforeseen challenges, overspending, conflicting/changing priorities, lack of/failure to meet interim deadlines, knock-on effect of failure in one area upon the rest of the project, duplication, lack of motivation etc.
	3.3	Identify the characteristics of a successful project	<b>Characteristics of a successful project:</b> Strong lines of communication/authority, clarity of purpose and defined SMART objectives at the outset, working within resource limitations, contingency planning, risk control, adaptability, delegation, controls etc.
	3.4	Explain the importance of dependency sequencing	<b>Importance of dependency sequencing:</b> Identifying the constraints between different tasks/order they must be undertaken to ensure project success e.g. creating a project network diagram; covering: technical, management, inter-project and scheduling constraints according to Wysocki; mandatory, discretionary and external dependencies etc.
	3.5	Explain the importance of evaluation criteria to a project	<b>Importance of evaluation criteria:</b> To measure success of a project against specific benchmarks, ensuring all stakeholders agree to the criteria, feeding back to stakeholders with reference to criteria etc.; covering: return on investment, profitability, social objectives/values, strategic relevance, durability etc.
4. Understand the principles of working practice for executive PAs	4.1	Explain the principles and benefits of time management	<p><b>Principles:</b> Distinguishing between urgent and important, avoiding over-commitment, setting SMART objectives, delegating, preparing for unexpected obstacles, completing tasks before moving to another, developing processes and ensuring they are followed, minimising distractions</p> <p><b>Benefits:</b> Meeting multiple demands from management/clients, accomplishing more with less effort, ability to make better decisions, focusing upon important/urgent tasks, reducing stress for self/others, producing higher quality work, increasing confidence and professional reputation of self/organisation etc.</p>

	4.2	Explain techniques to analyse the use of time	<b>Analysing the use of time:</b> Software/applications for monitoring use of computers/the internet, activity logs, planning work daily and weekly schedules with personal deadlines in advance etc.
	4.3	Identify ways that executive PAs improve the use of work management systems	<b>Improving use of work management systems:</b> Software for establishing and monitoring defined sequences of tasks, collaborative/automated processes etc.; covering: removing redundant tasks, identifying problems, ensuring staff can access remotely (e.g. Cloud), setting up email notifications, RAG indicators, availability of templates to save time on recurring tasks, reassigning people and tasks, use of graphics/visual progress reports etc.
5. Understand the executive PA's role in supporting business meetings and events	5.1	Describe the characteristics and requirements of different types of meeting	<b>Types of meetings:</b> Annual General Meeting (AGM), Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), committee, project, steering group, board, departmental, briefings etc. <b>Characteristics/requirements:</b> Internal/external, formal/informal, ensuring all stakeholders are represented, agreeing agendas etc.
	5.2	Explain an executive PA's contribution to meetings and events	<b>Contribution to meetings/events:</b> Ensuring they will bring the maximum value for the CEO/management, representing the CEO/management, scheduling and planning meetings, developing/circulating agendas beforehand, identifying any queries which can be resolved prior to the meeting, chairing/steering etc.
	5.3	Identify the responsibilities of an executive PA in planning and supporting meeting and events	<b>Responsibilities in planning and supporting meetings/events:</b> With reference to assessment criteria 5.2; e.g. ensuring those involved know what is expected of them, timing, preparing materials, contingencies, agreeing objectives beforehand, identifying success criteria, costs, sales, leads etc.

6. Understand personal development for executive PAs	6.1	Explain the purpose and requirements of an appraisal process	<b>Purpose/requirements of appraisal process:</b> Identifying skill/ knowledge gaps, ensuring objectives are met, being consistent toward staff, providing opportunities for staff comments/feedback on own performance, continuous professional development, reviewing past performance, predicting/determining future performance, offering advice, praise or developmental feedback to staff, deciding upon promotions, setting new objectives, mutually agreeing training methods to benefit staff and the organisation etc.
	6.2	Explain the importance of preparing for a performance review	<b>Preparing for a performance review:</b> Ensuring achievement is recognised; ensuring the review will bring the maximum benefit/be an effective use of time by: analysing shortcomings beforehand to improve performance going forward, identifying gaps in own knowledge to use opportunity to ask questions of appraiser, predicting/ensuring up to date knowledge relevant to likely topics etc.
	6.3	Analyse the purpose and process of objective setting	<b>Objective setting:</b> Ensuring goals align with those of the manager/organisation, dividing goals into smaller objectives which are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound), anticipating problems and solving them etc.
	6.4	Analyse the importance of identifying learning and development opportunities that are consistent with identified development objectives	<b>Identifying learning/development opportunities consistent with development objectives:</b> Using learning needs analysis (LNA), to maintain motivation/engagement, currency of technical expertise, ensuring gaps in future skills/capability requirements are minimised, ensuring learning and development will benefit both individuals and the wider organisation, avoiding learning/development which is counter to the values of the organisation etc.
	6.5	Identify and evaluate opportunities for learning and development	<b>Identifying/evaluating opportunities for learning and development:</b> With reference to assessment criteria 6.4.

	6.6	Explain the importance of networking to business efficiency and career progression	<p><b>Importance of networking:</b></p> <p><b>Business efficiency:</b> Building business partnerships, developing sales leads/referrals, raising the positive profile of the organisation, influencing the decisions of other organisations favourably, collaborating with those who face similar obstacles (e.g. regulatory, logistical), learning from the mistakes of others, establishing best practices, improving knowledge of sector/competitors etc.</p> <p><b>Career progression:</b> Seeking opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD), identifying/utilising networks to become more of asset to organisation, improve job security and opportunities for promotion, accessing the 'hidden' job market etc.</p>
	6.7	Explain the importance of periodic reviews of progress against agreed development objectives for professional development purposes	<p><b>Importance of periodic reviews of progress:</b> To determine whether the objectives are still valid and relevant, identify issues at their early stage/potential issues and address them, be able to update the CEO etc.; covering: benchmarking, obtaining qualitative/quantitative information, feedback from colleagues, managers and clients, appraisals, comments boxes, self-reflection etc.</p>



### Unit 3 Guidance on Delivery and Assessment

#### Delivery

This unit will develop the learners' knowledge and understanding of the role of the executive personal assistant. It covers the role of an executive personal assistant within senior management teams, the principles of communication, project management, working practice and supporting business meetings and events. Learners will also develop their understanding of personal development for executive personal assistants.

#### Assessment

This unit must be assessed by completing the relevant written assignment, in accordance with requirements in the introduction of this specification the guidance on word count and plagiarism.

The assignment brief and mark scheme, which includes marking guidance, are available to download from the secure area of the website / on request. This unit is knowledge-based, but may ask learners to refer to their current employment, previous employment or roles at organisations which they will be able to research. Evidence for this unit must be the learners own work and learners must submit a signed statement confirming this.

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**Unit 4: Effective Office Management K/507/1311**

Estimated TQT: 45  
 Estimated GLH: 12  
 Level: 4

Unit grid: Learning outcomes/Assessment Criteria

Learning Outcome - The learner will:	Assessment Criteria - The learner can:		Indicative Contents:
1. Understand the role of senior administration staff in managing work	1.1	Define the role of senior administration staff	<b>Role of senior administration staff:</b> Understanding and working towards organisational strategies, introducing/streamlining administrative processes, liaising with clients/stakeholders, managing budgets, writing executive summaries, organising travel and communication, maintaining websites, conducting research, attending/chairing meetings etc.
	1.2	Evaluate the contribution of senior office managers to the efficiency and overall success of an organisation	<b>Contribution of senior office managers:</b> Specific to organisation; typically involving: daily running of the office, establishing/prioritising objectives, supervising and motivating staff, setting budgets, communicating and monitoring goals, implementing and reviewing office policies and procedures, producing reports for board members etc.
2. Understand techniques for planning and prioritising work and projects under the control of senior administration staff	2.1	Explain the importance of distinguishing between urgent and important work	<b>Important:</b> Those activities which are of high value to self/organisation. They might not have a particular timescale attached to them and could be ongoing. <b>Urgent:</b> Tasks which require completion in accordance with an imminent deadline. They might not be of high value to self/organisation. The definitions are distinct but not mutually exclusive; some work can be both important and urgent while some work falls into neither category.
	2.2	Evaluate the use of tools and techniques to prioritise work in the short, medium and long term	<b>Tools/techniques to prioritise work:</b> Maintaining a log, multitasking effectively, structuring workload to take into account interruptions/changing priorities, using schedules, regularly reviewing workload, taking into account own/others current workloads, using the organisational strategy, mission and vision as a benchmark for prioritising activities etc.

	2.3	Evaluate the characteristics of planning	<p><b>Planning:</b> Covering: goals/scope, SMART objectives, deliverables, schedules, dependencies between tasks, supporting plans (e.g. human resources, communications, risk management), delegating etc.; purpose/benefits of planning: e.g. those involved know what is expected of them, timing, what materials to prepare, contingencies, lines of communication and objectives established and shared, ensuring efficiency etc.</p>
	2.4	Analyse the link between goals and objectives and work efficiency	<p><b>Goals:</b> Outcome statements relating to the aspirations/future of the organisation; align with mission/vision; specific as opposed to emotive; provide a reference point for managers.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Steps which work towards the achievement of goals; they should be SMART as opposed to emotive.</p> <p><b>Efficiency:</b> Dependent upon objectives being clearly defined to all individuals involved, prioritising them, mapping activities to them and gauging performance.</p>
3. Understand techniques for managing work and projects under the control of senior administration staff	3.1	Evaluate the benefits and limitations of systems to manage work and projects	<p><b>Evaluating systems to manage work/projects:</b> E.g. 'bring-forward' systems, in-trays, pending trays, rotas etc.; the benefits and limitations of each.</p>
	3.2	Evaluate the effectiveness of work measurement systems	<p><b>Work measurement systems:</b> Covering: productivity, quality, quantity, deadlines, core competencies of employees, subjective criteria (e.g. the importance of building client relationships over the long term), the limitations of input-output measurements in the knowledge sector, considering how objectives are met and not just whether they are met etc.</p>
	3.3	Assess the effectiveness of techniques and processes for planning and organising projects	<p><b>Techniques/processes for planning and organising projects:</b> E.g. Gantt Charts, Network diagrams, Critical Path Analysis diagrams, Fishbone diagrams, collaborative planning (within department, interdepartmental, external to organisation), working 'backwards' when planning each stage, referring to the business case to determine the rationale of the plan etc.; covering: timescales, risk management, resource requirements, budgets, communication channels, delegation, monitoring systems, designing subsidiary activities etc.</p>

	3.4	Explain the scope for delegation as a work management tool	<p><b>Delegation as a work management tool:</b> Using the support of someone experienced in a task will save time, division of labour reduces time spent switching between tasks, ensuring colleagues feel value, using different levels of empowerment, strengthening relationships, using the ABCD structure of delegation etc.; limitations/disadvantages depend upon the situation: adding a burden to employees, increasing/spreading risk, some tasks cannot be delegated (e.g. a statutory activity assigned to a role) etc.</p>
	3.5	Evaluate decision making tools, processes and techniques and their applications	<p><b>Evaluating decision making tools, processes and techniques:</b> E.g. DECIDE model (define the problem, establish the criteria, consider the alternatives, identify the best alternative, develop and implement a plan of action, evaluate and monitor the solution), Decision Trees, Pareto Analysis, Decision Matrix, Multivoting, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Conjoint Analysis etc.; shortcomings e.g. relying upon/overlooking the opinions of others, reaching conclusions too quickly, procrastination, misidentifying the problem to be solved etc.</p>
4. Understand the role of senior administration staff in managing people	4.1	Analyse the characteristics, advantages, disadvantages and application of management styles	<p><b>Management styles:</b> E.g. autocratic, consultative, persuasive, democratic/participative, chaotic, laissez-faire, paternalistic, directive, coaching etc.</p> <p><b>Characteristics, advantages, disadvantages and application:</b> Varies widely between styles e.g. the authoritative style is effective with tight deadlines or fast decision-making but could stifle the innovation of subordinates, the laissez-faire style encourages innovation but could delay decision-making processes etc.</p>
	4.2	Identify the nature, scope and effects of stress in the workplace	<p><b>Nature, scope and effects of stress:</b> E.g. poor motivation, emotional unpredictability, ill-health, tiredness, confusion, lateness, absenteeism, poor appearance etc. leading to reduced productivity, strained relationships, stress spreading to colleagues, communication difficulties/delays, damage to reputation, loss of business etc.</p>

	<p>4.3 Evaluate ways of preventing and controlling stress in the workplace</p>	<p><b>Techniques to prevent/control:</b> Encouraging open discussion, recognising warning signs, taking own care/encouraging others to take care of themselves, prioritising/organising as a team, deferring to others if problems need assistance/are insurmountable, sharing leisure time/cultivating a social climate, appreciating the concerns of others, praising good work etc.</p>
	<p>4.4 Evaluate the characteristics and effects of passive, aggressive and assertive behaviour</p>	<p><b>Characteristics and effects of behaviours:</b> Misinterpreting/mistaking one form for another; covering: reconciliation/increased conflict, gradually releasing/building up frustration, gaining/losing the respect of colleagues, increasing/reducing cooperation, workforce morale, bullying, self-esteem etc.</p>
	<p>4.5 Explain the features and advantages of assertiveness techniques</p>	<p><b>Assertiveness techniques:</b> E.g. being able to say 'no', use of 'I' statements to show confidence/responsibility, accepting reasonable levels of risk, appropriate volume, asking questions to ensure understanding, staying on topic, avoiding repetition, setting listeners at ease, keeping emails concise, using fonts/formatting to emphasise actions/dates etc.</p> <p><b>Advantages:</b> Dependent upon the nature of the work scenario and technique used e.g. avoiding failure of task completion/misleading others as to what is achievable, focusing upon the valuable/urgent tasks as priority, ensuring a high quality of work rather than multiple incomplete/poor quality outcomes, reducing stress, creating a working environment of mutual respect etc.</p>

## Unit 4 Guidance on Delivery and Assessment

### Delivery

This unit will develop the learners' knowledge and understanding of effective office management. It covers the role of senior administration staff in managing work and techniques for planning, prioritising and managing work and projects. The learners will also develop their understanding of the role of senior administration staff in managing people.

### Assessment

This unit must be assessed by completing the relevant written assignment, in accordance with requirements in the introduction of this specification the guidance on word count and plagiarism.

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## Resources

### Training Resources

Centres may use their own, or published learner support materials in delivering the qualification. Whatever support materials centres choose to use, they should ensure that their delivery methodology adequately prepares the learner for assessment.

IQ endorses published training resources and learner support materials by submitting the materials to a rigorous and robust quality assurance process, thus ensuring such materials are relevant, valid and appropriately support the qualification.

### Resources and Useful websites

Health and Safety Executive	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>
Skills CfA (Council for Administration)	<a href="http://www.skillsca.org/standards-qualifications.html">www.skillsca.org/standards-qualifications.html</a>
e-Skills UK (Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology)	<a href="http://www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/">www.e-skills.com/about-e-skills-uk/</a>
Equalities and Human Rights Commissions	<a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com">www.equalityhumanrights.com</a>
The National Archives (For all UK legislation)	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk">www.legislation.gov.uk</a>
The Institute of Customer Service	<a href="http://www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/">www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/</a>