



Qualification Specification

GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology

610/0055/1

This qualification is subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny and General Moderation policy.

Section 1: Qualification Overview

1.1 Introduction: About this Qualification

Gatehouse Awards (GA) qualifications are designed to give candidates the skills to be active in the modern labour market and progress in their career and/or into higher level study.

This specification covers the Diploma-sized qualification in Zoology at Level 3.

This document provides centre staff, candidates and employers with an overview of the qualification content as well as the assessment and quality assurance requirements for this qualification.

This qualification is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) in England and is part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). All versions of this qualification are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is operated by Ofqual at <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

This qualification is not designed to replace any existing qualifications.

1.2 Qualification Titles, Qualification Numbers and Important Dates

Qualification Title and Level	Qualification Number	Operational Start Date	Operational Review Date
GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology	610/0055/1	18-10-2021	Oct 2026

1.3 Qualification Aims and Objectives

This qualification is an ideal qualification which will enhance candidates' job prospects and provide the underpinning knowledge for a successful career in a zoology-related role.

In the GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology, learners will gain knowledge of evolutionary theory and natural selection, and how these theories have informed our understanding of diversity within the animal world. Learners will gain knowledge of the evolution and biology of mammals as well as the form and function of other types of animals and how their organ systems work to sustain life. Learners will also develop an understanding of how and why animals consume different types of food and how their bodies have adapted to feed as well as how animals reproduce and choose their mates. In addition, learners will develop an in-depth understanding of habitat, including habitats in extreme environments and the impact of urbanisation on the animal world.

This qualification can be relied upon by employers to indicate that an individual has the knowledge and understanding to undertake a specific role in the workplace.

1.4 Qualification Structure and Overview: Units, GLH, TQT, Level and Credit Value

The structure of this qualification is as follows:

GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology				
Mandatory Units	Unit Reference	Credits	GLH*	Study Time*
1. Origin of Life and Evolutionary Theory	L/650/0281	5	40	10
2. Animal Diversity	M/650/0282	5	30	20
3. The Study of Mammals	R/650/0283	5	30	20
4. Animal Form and Function	T/650/0284	6	40	20
5. Animal Diet and Feeding Strategies	Y/650/0285	6	40	20
6. Animal Reproduction	A/650/0286	5	40	10
7. Animals and their Environments	D/650/0321	5	40	10

Total Credits	Total GLH*	TQT*
37	260	370 (GLH + 110 Study Hours)

*Guided Learning Hours (GLH): Definition

The activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

****Total Qualification Time (TQT): Definition**

The number of Guided Learning Hours assigned, plus an estimate of the number of study hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

The number of study hours a learner is expected to undertake in order to complete each unit is expressed in the 'Study Time' above. This, including the GLH, provides the Total Qualification Time, or TQT, and represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of this qualification.

The estimates for Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time above have been produced with due regard to information gathered from those with experience in education and training and is in line with guidance published by Ofqual on the allocation and expression of Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours.

Level

The qualifications within this specification are designated at Level 3 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) according to the Level Descriptors for knowledge and understanding, which build on those used within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This means that this qualification is considered by GA to lead to the outcome as follows:

Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas, and reflects an awareness of the nature of the area of study or work and different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

1.5 Rules of Combination

This qualification consists of seven mandatory units. There are no optional units.

The mandatory units within each qualification are detailed in Section 1.4 above. Candidates must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria within the mandatory units.

The learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit are provided in Section 4 below.

There are no further rules of combination.

1.6 Intended Audience, Age and Entry Requirements

This qualification is ideal for learners who work in, or intend to enter, a zoology related career.

This qualification is intended for learners aged 16 and above.

There are other no formal entry requirements for this qualification; however, due to the nature of the qualification content, those undertaking the qualification must have a proficient level of spoken and written English (e.g. GCSE Grade C / Grade 4 or above) or equivalent).

It is recommended that prior to commencing a programme of study leading to this qualification, candidates receive detailed advice and guidance from the training provider in order to ensure the programme and qualification will meet their needs.

1.7 Recognition of Prior Learning and Transfer of Credits

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessing whether a learner's previous experience and achievements meet the standard requirements of a GA unit or units prior to the candidate taking the assessment for the qualification, or part of the qualification, they are registered for.

Any prior learning must be relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and GA will subsequently amend the requirements which a candidate must have satisfied before they are assessed as eligible to be awarded the qualification.

Where there is evidence that the candidate's knowledge and skills are current, valid and sufficient the use of RPL may be acceptable for recognising achievement of a unit, units or whole qualification. The requirement for RPL in such instances will include a consideration of the currency of the knowledge gained by the candidate at the time they undertook the prior learning. RPL cannot be guaranteed in instances where industry practice or legislation has significantly changed in the time since the prior learning was undertaken / a previous award was issued.

No transfer of credits is permitted.

1.8 Relationship to Other Qualifications & Progression Opportunities

The GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology is an ideal qualification from which a learner might progress onto higher level study, practical occupational training or a career in a zoology-related role.

Careers in this sector also include animal welfare officers, ecologists and a wide range of careers in research-based and conservation roles.

1.9 Language of Assessment

This qualification is offered in English.

Further information concerning the provision of qualification and assessment materials in other languages may be obtained from GA.

1.10 Grading

All learning outcomes and assessment requirements must be met before a learner can be considered having achieved this qualification.

This qualification is not graded on a scale. Learners are assessed as Pass or Fail. Learners who aren't successful can resubmit work within the registration period.

1.11 Qualification Availability

This qualification is available via GA Approved Centres in the UK and internationally. If you would like further information on offering this qualification, please contact us.

Our contact details appear on our website, www.gatehouseawards.org

Section 2: Qualification Delivery, Assessment & Quality Assurance Model

2.1 Teaching and Learning Requirements

Courses leading to this qualification may consist of e-learning courses or classroom-based courses, or a blended option.

Learners can therefore undertake learning and assessment on a flexible basis.

Candidates must have suitable access to teaching and assessment staff as well as technical support. Specialist staff, high quality learning materials and access to assessment opportunities are essential for all centres.

Further details and guidance on the content of teaching and learning for each unit can be accessed by approved GA centres, or upon request.

2.2 Assessment and Quality Assurance Model

This qualification is delivered in-centre, where learners' work is internally assessed and internally moderated by centre staff to clearly show where learners have achieved the learning outcomes and qualification requirements. There is no requirement for external assessment.

Assessment, internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and quality assurance conducted by GA. Centres operating this model are subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny (CASS) and General Moderation Policy.

2.3 Registering Candidates & Unique Learner Numbers

Candidates must be registered through the Ark, the GA online Learner Management System.

Owing to the Total Qualification Time of this qualification, the validity period of registrations made will be 2 years. Should a candidate not have achieved in the timescale, a new registration is required.

Each approved GA centre is provided with a user account to allow approved staff access to the online system.

Where the Unique Learner Number (ULN) of a candidate is known, this should be provided at the point of registration in order for GA to issue updates to the Learner Record Service.

2.4 ID Requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to confirm each learner's identity.

Learners are required to declare that all work submitted for assessment is their own work.

2.5 Record Keeping

Records of learner's details, their work and any records of Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and records containing learners' personal details must be kept by the centre in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR and all relevant privacy regulations) for a minimum of 2 years.

The centre must operate a safe and effective system of care and comply with clinical and information governance requirements, with appropriate policies and procedures in place to maintain confidentiality related to clients, staff and learners.

All records must be easily retrievable and made available to GA or the Regulator upon request.

Portfolios must be retained until the following External Quality Assurance visit to allow them to be sampled. Following external moderation and the award of a qualification by GA, centres may return portfolios to learners.

Records of all internal quality assurance and moderation activity undertaken must be kept and made available to GA upon request.

Section 3 – Centre Requirements: Assessment & Quality Assurance

Course providers offering these GA qualifications must ensure that they have the following resources in place.

3.1 Staff

The knowledge and experience of all staff involved in the teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification will be considered during the approval and re-approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

The course provider must ensure that they hold up-to-date and detailed information about the staff involved with the delivery and quality assurance of this qualification and must make records available to GA upon request. The information GA expects the course provider to hold for each member of staff includes, as a minimum:

- current up to date CV
- copies of relevant qualification certificates
- relevant and up to date CPD (Continuous Professional Development) records

The course provider must also ensure that they have the management and administrative arrangements in place which are suitable to support the registration of candidates and the qualification delivery.

Requirements for Teachers and Assessors

Those delivering and assessing this qualification must hold relevant qualifications.

Teachers and Assessors must hold relevant qualifications and have relevant expertise and experience.

GA recommends that Assessors hold relevant teaching or assessing qualifications suitable to support the making of appropriate and consistent assessment decisions.

Suitable teaching and assessing qualifications may include:

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- Level 3 or 4 PTLLS, or above (i.e. CTLLS or DTLLS)
- Level 3 or 4 Award/Certificate in Education and Training, Cert. Ed or PGCE
- Degree in Education
- Level 3 or 4 NVQ in Training and/or Learning & Development.

Assessors may be working towards a relevant equivalent teaching/assessing qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified, experienced Assessor and their Internal Verifier.

Where a Teacher or Assessor does not hold teaching or assessing qualifications, they must ensure that they are able to demonstrate that they have delivered a minimum of 30 hours of teaching or assessing.

All staff involved with the delivery and assessment of this qualification must also be able to demonstrate ongoing professional development relevant to the sector subject area.

Requirements for Internal Moderators (also referred to as an Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs)

Assessors may have one or several appointed Internal Moderators.

This qualification are assessed by an Assessor and internally moderated and quality assured by an Internal Moderator to ensure standardisation, reliability, validity and sufficiency of the Assessor's assessment decisions.

Internal Moderators therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as sufficient technical understanding related to the qualifications that they are internally quality assuring. It is the centre's responsibility to select and appoint Internal Moderators.

To be able to perform the internal moderation and quality assurance role, an Internal Moderator must:

- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of the specific occupational field
- have up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in assessment and quality assurance
- hold one of the following Assessor qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
 - Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
 - Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
 - A1 Assess candidate performance using a range of methods
 - D32 Assess candidate performance and D33 Assess candidate using differing sources of evidence
- hold one of the following internal quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
 - Level 4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process
 - D34 Internally verify the assessment process
- show current evidence of continuing professional development in assessment and quality assurance.
- In addition, Internal Moderators must be familiar with GA's qualification requirements.

Internal Moderators may be working towards a relevant equivalent quality assurance qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Internal Moderator.

The Internal Moderator must have relevant occupational experience and hold relevant qualifications in the particular subject area being assessed. They must hold a regulated qualification at least at the level of the qualification they are assessing.

The knowledge and experience of Teachers, Assessors and Internal Moderators will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

External Moderation (also referred to as External Quality Assurance or EQA)

Assessment and internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and wider scrutiny and centre controls as per GA's quality assurance arrangements for centre-assessed qualifications

3.2 Assessment of Candidates

The centre must ensure that Assessors meet the requirements listed in Section 3.1 above in order to make assessment decisions leading to the award of these GA qualifications.

Candidates are assessed on the evidence contained within their portfolio.

3.3 Portfolio Requirements

Learners are expected to build a portfolio of evidence, clearly demonstrating where they have met the learning outcomes and qualification requirements.

Various types of evidence may be used, for example:

- essays/assignments
- short questions and answers
- workbooks
- professional discussions
- observations of performance in the workplace
- product evidence
- reflective accounts
- witness testimony
- records of questioning

Evidence in the portfolio should be mapped against the learning outcomes, reflect the type of evidence supplied and indicate its location within the portfolio. By using portfolio reference numbers, it will enable the learner, assessor, IQA and EQA to quickly locate the evidence submitted.

All evidence must meet CRAVES requirements.

3.4 CRAVES Requirements

Assessors must ensure that all evidence within the learner's portfolio judged to meet GA's 'CRAVES' requirements is:

- **current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **authentic:** the work is the candidate's own work
- **valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner
- **sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.5 Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Internal Moderators (also known as Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs) ensure that Assessors are assessing to the same standards, i.e. consistently and reliably, and that assessment decisions are correct. IQA activities will include:

- ensuring Assessors are suitably experienced and qualified in line with the qualification requirements
- sampling assessments and assessment decisions
- ensuring that assessment decisions meet the GA 'CRAVES' requirements (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- conducting standardisation and moderation of assessment decisions
- providing Assessors with clear and constructive feedback
- supporting Assessors and providing training and development where appropriate
- ensuring any stimulus or materials used for the purposes of assessment are fit for purpose.

Sampling of assessment will be planned and carried out in line with a clear IQA and moderation strategy, which incorporates the number of learners, number of Assessors, and the experience and competency of Assessors.

Centre IQAs may wish to refer to the guidance documents provided by GA to approved centres (available on the Ark) in order to formulate an appropriate Sampling Strategy.

3.6 External Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

All GA Approved Centres are entitled to two EQA visits per year. Additional visits can be requested, for which there may be an additional charge.

EQA activities will focus on the centre's continuing adherence to and maintenance of the GA *Centre Approval Criteria* and the criteria and requirements for the specific qualifications for which it holds approval. These include:

- checking that the management of the centre and the management arrangements relating to the qualification are sufficient
- checking that resources to support the delivery of the qualifications, including physical resources and staffing, are in place and sufficient
- ensuring that the centre has appropriate policies and procedures in place relevant to the organisation and to the delivery and quality assurance of the qualifications
- the use of assessment materials and the arrangements in place to ensure that evidence for assessment is 'CRAVES' (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- sampling assessment decisions against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- the internal moderation and quality assurance arrangements
- sampling internal moderation records against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- administrative arrangements
- ensuring that any actions from moderation and wider quality assurance activity have been carried out by the centre
- confirming any claims for RPL, reasonable adjustments or special considerations

Through discussions with centre staff, examining learner's work, moderation of assessment, talking to learners and reviewing documentation and systems, the GA EQA will provide the centre with full support, advice and guidance as necessary.

3.7 Venue Requirements

When training premises are used in the delivery of teaching and assessment of this qualification, centres should, wherever possible, provide suitable access in line with Disability Discrimination, Diversity & Equality law and regulations and any other regulations which apply.

3.8 Equipment

Centres must ensure that all products and equipment used in the delivery and assessment of this qualification must be authorised by GA and confirmed as fit for purpose and compliant with current Health and Safety legislation and any other relevant regulations. This will be considered at approval and during the on-going monitoring of centres.

Where specific products and equipment are required for the delivery and assessment of a GA qualification, the suitability of the products and equipment at the centre will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

3.9 Teaching and Learning Resources

GA does not prescribe the use of set course books, workbooks or other materials but expects that centres providing such courses should use relevant and up-to-date, high-quality teaching and learning materials which allow candidates to adequately prepare for assessment.

All delivery and assessment resources should be inclusive of the principles of equality and diversity and the safeguarding of candidates.

GA provides additional resources for this qualification on the relevant qualification page of the website: www.gatehouseawards.org

Please note, any references to books, journals, websites or other third-party materials and publications made in this Qualification Specification are made in good faith only and Gatehouse Awards does not accept responsibility for the content of such materials or any opinions expressed within them.

3.11 Results

Centres may make claims for certification via the Ark when learners complete and the Assessor and Internal Moderator have confirmed achievement. Such claims for certification are subject to successful external moderation (EQA). Following the External Moderator's confirmation of a learner's achievement, GA will authorise claims for the certification of learners, details of which will be visible to the centre in the centre's Ark account. Certificates are usually issued within 10 working days of the award of the qualification.

3.12 Certificates

The qualification certificate will indicate both the title and the level at which the qualification is achieved.

Certificates will only be issued to learners who have achieved sufficient credits and met the rules of combination for the qualification they are registered for. If a learner has not achieved sufficient credits or failed to meet the rules of combination, the qualification certificate will not be issued.

Replacement certificates are available upon request.

Amendments to certificates are available upon request but may require the centre to provide evidence of the need for any amendment (e.g. learner proof of identification) and will involve the return of the original certificate. Replacements and amendments may incur an additional charge.

3.13 Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claims Status is not available for this qualification.

3.14 Appeals and Enquiries

GA has an appeals procedure in accordance with the arrangements for regulated qualifications.

General enquiries can be made at any time and should be directed to a GA Centre Administrator.

3.11 Ongoing Support

There are a number of documents on the GA website that centres and candidates may find useful: www.gatehouseawards.org

The website is updated regularly with news, information about all GA qualifications, sample materials, updates on regulations and other important notices.

Within the centre, a named Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that all information and documents provided to centre staff and candidates are correct and up to date.

GA must be kept up to date with contact details of all changes of personnel so centres can be provided with the best level of support and guidance.

At the time of approval, centres are assigned a designated Centre Administrator who is their primary point of contact for all aspects of service or support.

Learners should always speak to a member of staff at the centre for information relating to GA and our qualifications prior to approaching GA directly.

Contact details for GA can be found on the GA website www.gatehouseawards.org.

Section 4: Unit Specifications

4.1 GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology (610/0055/1)

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
1	Origin of Life and Evolutionary Theory	40	5	L/650/0281
Learners will develop an understanding of the formation of Earth and why life began on Earth, the main events that led to life evolving and the key figures in evolutionary theory and the significance of their work. Learners will also understand natural selection and how traits are inherited.				
Assessment Guidance				
No additional assessment guidance is available for this unit.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand the formation of Earth and why life began on Earth	1.1 Explain how the Earth was made within the context of the formation of the solar system
	1.2 identify the specific conditions that led to the beginning of life
	1.3 Explain the experiment that recreated the conditions that allowed for the beginning of life
	1.4 Identify what the first life on Earth would have looked like
2 understand the main events that led to life evolving	2.1 Outline the key geological and biological events that allowed for life to evolve
	2.2 Explain how fossils are made
	2.3 Describe what the first multi-cellular life would have look like
	2.4 Describe the significance of the Ediacaran and Cambrian periods in the context of the origins of life
	2.5 Explain why fossil records from the Ediacaran and Cambrian periods help us to better understand the origins of life

3 understand key figures in evolutionary theory and the significance of their work	3.1 Name the leading figures of evolutionary theory
	3.2 Explain what made the work of these naturalists so significant
	3.3 Explain how the work of these naturalists helped develop our understanding of species and evolution
	3.4 Describe how Alfred Russel Wallace and Charles Darwin came to create the theory of natural selection
4 understand natural selection and how traits are inherited	4.1 Explain natural selection
	4.2 Explain how a species finding itself in a new habitat might lead to it becoming a different, new species
	4.3 Outline the work of Gregor Mendel
	4.5 Explain how Mendels' discoveries of heredity help better an understanding of natural selection

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
2	Animal Diversity	30	5	M/650/0282
Learners will develop an understanding of animal diversity through establishing why animals are organised into their different phyla and the main invertebrate phyla. Learners will also understand phylum Chordata and the evolution of the vertebrate classes.				
Assessment Guidance				
No additional assessment guidance is available for this unit.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand why animals are organised into their different phyla	1.1 Name the Linnaeus method's seven levels of animal classification using an example for each
	1.2 Explain the difficulties of defining the term 'species'
	1.3 Describe parazoa and eumetazoa
	1.4 Explain radial and bilateral symmetry and name the phyla which demonstrate both
	1.5 Explain what a coelom is
	1.6 Explain why a coelom is an important feature in distinguishing animal phyla
2 understand the main invertebrate phyla	2.1 Identify some of the members of the following phyla: • Arthropoda • Mollusca • Annelida • Echinodermata • Cnideria • Porifera
	2.2 Explain ecdysis and for which phyla it is a significant feature
	2.3 Explain totipotent in relation to Phylum Porifera

	2.4 Outline the key characteristics of Phylum Mollusca, explaining the terms: • hemocoel • mantle • foot
	2.5 Describe the Phylum Echinoderm
	2.5 Describe how the Phylum Echinoderm develops their calcareous endoskeleton
	2.6 Identify why Annelids are different to other phyla of similar appearance
3 understand phylum Chordata and the evolution of the vertebrate classes	3.1 Name the five defining features of Phylum Chordata
	3.2 Outline how vertebrate evolution occurred through changing of features, using examples from the three classes of fish
	3.3 Explain how the first land colonising animals moved out of the oceans, with reference to the features of amphibians
	3.4 List the four amniote skull conditions and the animals which persisted in each line
	3.5 Outline the features that allowed reptiles to lose their dependency on water
	3.6 Describe how flight and feathers helped birds to adapt to various environments

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
3	The Study of Mammals	30	5	R/650/0283
Learners will develop an understanding of how mammals evolved and the sub-classes of mammals and their distinguishing features. Learners will also understand how their features make mammals the dominant vertebrate.				
Assessment Guidance				
Assessment Criteria 1.1 must include reference to both synapsids and therapsids.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand how mammals evolved	1.1 Explain, step-by-step, the evolutionary process by which mammals came to be
	1.2 Identify the common ancestor of mammals and what it would have looked like
	1.3 Explain why the common ancestor of mammals survived at times of mass extinction
2 understand the sub-classes of mammals and their distinguishing features	2.1 Describe the features which make monotremes the intermediary phase between reptiles and eutherian mammals
	2.2 Outline the characteristics of marsupials
	2.3 Describe how marsupials differ from eutherian mammals
	2.4 Explain the term 'placental' mammals
	2.5 Name the most distinguishable orders within eutherian mammals
3 understand how their features make mammals the dominant vertebrate	3.1 Explain the term endothermic
	3.2 List the adaptations which allow mammals to increase their supply of oxygen
	3.3 Explain the benefits associated with mammals having: - specialised teeth - a singular jawbone

	• muscular cheeks
	3.4 Explain how most mammals feed their new-born offspring
	3.5 Outline, using examples, of how having a complex central nervous system has led to mammals being capable of: • learning • co-operation • parental care

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
4	Animal Form and Function	40	6	T/650/0284
Learners will develop an understanding of how the requirements of a multicellular animal permit it to function and understand the organ systems, particularly those belonging to mammals. Learners will also understand how animal organ systems work together and perform homeostasis.				
Assessment Guidance				
No additional assessment guidance is available for this unit.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand the requirements of a multicellular animal to allow it to function	1.1 Explain how physical constraints can determine an animal's body shape and size
	1.2 Explain convergent evolution and why it is so common in aquatic animals
	1.3 Outline the limitations on animals in terms of growing larger
	1.4 Describe how simplistic and more complex animals are adapted for exchanging materials with their environment
	1.5 Describe the different levels in the hierarchical organisation of body plans
	1.6 List and explain the different types of tissue in the animal body
2 understand the organ systems in mammals	2.1 Describe the digestive systems, from the simple gastrovascular cavity to the complex vertebrate digestive system
	2.2 Explain how ruminant animals are designed to better digest plant material
	2.3 Explain diffusion and name the phyla that use diffusion to respire
	2.4 Explain the insect tracheal system
	2.5 Describe the different respiratory systems of vertebrates

	2.6 Outline the difference between an open and a closed circulatory system
	2.7 Describe the physiological differences between the vertebrate circulatory systems
3 understand how animal organ systems work together and perform homeostasis	3.1 Explain how the endocrine system and the nervous system allow for communication between the body's organs and tissues
	3.2 Describe homeostasis and the mechanisms involved in maintaining the body's internal environment
	3.3 Explain ectotherms and endotherms, using examples
	3.4 Explain thermoregulation and the adaptations taken by animals to maintain a consistent body temperature, using examples

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
5	Animal Diet and Feeding Strategies	40	6	Y/650/0285
Learners will understand why animals need to eat and how they eat, examining different animal feeding strategies. They will come to understand how herbivores have adapted to consume plant matter and how carnivores have adapted to consume prey. In addition, Learners will also develop an understanding of the ways prey has evolved to avoid predation.				
Assessment Guidance				
Assessment Criteria 5.3 should include examples of animals using camouflage, counter-shading, disruption and incident light.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand why animals need to eat	1.1 Explain autotroph and heterotroph
	1.2 Describe the interactions of an autotroph and heterotroph in a food web
	1.3 Explain the term nutrition
	1.4 Name the raw ingredients and essential nutrients that animal bodies cannot synthesize within their bodies, giving examples of each
2 understand animal feeding strategies	2.1 Give five examples of different animals which use the filter feeding strategy
	2.2 Outline the different hosts a fluid feeder might feed from
	2.3 Identify the types of animals that are most likely to be substrate feeders
	2.4 Describe why substrate feeding is a good strategy for these animals
3 understand how herbivores have adapted to consume plant matter	3.1 Explain how herbivore dentition and mouthparts have evolved to better enable feeding on plant matter
	3.2 Give examples of how the digestive systems of different herbivores have evolved to break down and gain nutrients from low-nutrient vegetation
	3.3 Explain how herbivores and plants have co-evolved, as plants adapt new methods of defence and herbivores overcome these defences, giving examples

4 understand how carnivores have adapted to consume prey	4.1 Explain how camouflage may help a predator catch and consume prey
	4.2 Name animals which use venom to kill prey, explaining how this is an effective method of hunting
	4.3 Explain how speed can be both beneficial and detrimental to an animal hunting prey
	4.4 Outline how hunting in numbers can help increase an animals' chances of catching prey
5 understand the ways prey have evolved to avoid predation	5.1 Give examples of animals which use crypsis to hide from predators
	5.2 Outline how animals evolved to use crypsis
	5.3 Explain how an animal uses colouration to escape predation, giving examples
	5.4 Outline the purpose of aposematism
	5.5 Give an example of Batesian mimicry and explain why it occurs
	5.6 Describe why living in groups is beneficial for predator defence

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
6	Animal Reproduction	40	5	A/650/0286
Learners will develop an understanding of sexual and asexual reproduction in animals and the different types of mating systems used by different types of animals. Learners will also understand how animals choose a mate and how animals ensure fertilization. In addition, Learners will also understand how intersexual conflict can occur.				
Assessment Guidance				
No additional assessment guidance is available for this unit.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand sexual and asexual reproduction	1.1 Describe methods of asexual reproduction used by animals
	1.2 Explain why asexual reproduction may not be the most evolutionarily advantageous method of reproducing
	1.3 Describe the differences between internal and external reproduction, giving examples of each
	1.4 Explain the terms haploid and diploid in relation to sexual reproduction
	1.5 Outline how stationary animals have adapted to sexually reproduce
2 understand different types of mating systems and how animals choose a mate	2.1 Name the four types of mating systems, giving examples of each
	2.2 Outline the criteria an animal must meet before they can be considered an acceptable mate
	2.3 Explain the difference between intersexual and intrasexual selection, giving examples
	2.4 Outline how sexual selection is a form of natural selection, thus driving evolution
	2.5 Outline the two theories on how mate choice evolved
3 understand how animals ensure	3.1 Outline methods in which male animals ensure that their sperm successfully fertilizes the egg, giving examples

fertilization and how intersexual conflict can occur	3.2 Explain the term sperm competition
	3.3 Explain how the differences between the ways male and female animals maximise their fitness leads to intersexual conflict
	3.4 Explain how both male and female ducks have adapted certain traits to ensure fertilization and choose a mate respectively

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
7	Animals and their Environments	40	5	D/650/0321
Learners will develop an understanding of the different animal habitats and why animals might choose to live in a certain place. Learners will understand the factors that impact species distribution, and further develop their understanding of how animals adapt to different extreme environments including extreme hot and cold-weather environments and deep sea environments. In addition, Learners will understand the impact of urbanisation and how animals have adapted to urban habitats.				
Assessment Guidance				
No additional assessment guidance is available for this unit.				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to	The learner can
1 understand different habitats and why animals might choose to live in a certain place	1.1 Explain what a habitat is
	1.2 Give examples of habitats that some animals might live in
	1.3 Explain why an animal might choose a particular area to live in
2 understand factors that impact species distribution	2.1 Define the difference between abiotic and biotic factors
	2.2 List the abiotic and biotic factors that impact species distribution
	2.3 Identify where most of the animals in the world are found and why this might be the case
3 understand how animals adapt to different extreme environments	3.1 Describe how animals that live in polar climates are adapted to live through the intense cold, giving examples from the Arctic or Antarctic
	3.2 Explain why although life on land at the Antarctic is almost inhospitable, the ocean flourishes with life
	3.3 Explain how animals are adapted to increase their heat dissipation in desert environments
	3.4 Identify behavioural changes animals have made to survive life in the desert

	3.5 Explain what is meant by a deep-sea environment
	3.6 List the adaptations needed for animals to survive in the deep-sea, giving examples
4 understand the impact of urbanisation and how animals have adapted to urban habitats	4.1 Describe the impact of urbanisation on natural habitats
	4.2 Outline the meaning and effects of the following terms: • habitat degradation • habitat fragmentation • habitat destruction • invasive species
	4.3 Describe how animals can adapt to life in an urban environment, giving examples

Appendix 1: Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidance

3.1 Introduction to Internal Moderation

Internal Moderation is a centre's internal system that ensures learner evidence is complete and genuinely meets all the required criteria by which the learner is judged to have met in order to be awarded a qualification. The process involves regularly sampling and evaluating the centre's assessment practices and decisions, and it is the Internal Moderator's responsibility to act on their findings to ensure consistency and fairness.

Ensuring quality standards are maintained and are consistent within and across a centre's provision is the responsibility of the head of centre, who must ensure that suitable staff are in place to act as Internal Moderator(s) and provide full support and standards scrutiny of the centre's Assessment decisions.

3.2 Internal Moderation Processes

Internal Moderation involves three key processes: co-ordination of the assessment process, standardisation of assessment practice, and sampling of assessed work.

These processes are conducted by one Internal Moderator or, if there is more than one, a team of Internal Moderators who are under the direction of a Lead Internal Moderator.

Information about the experience and qualification requirements for Internal Moderators is provided in the *Qualification Specification*.

3.3. Co-ordination of the Assessment Process

Prior to delivery commencing, it is the Internal Moderator who will confirm that assessment tasks are appropriate. This may involve checking that proposed assessment activities, plans for practical assessments, or the briefs of any assignments or reports are fit for purpose. It may also include checking that internal tests or examination materials are fit for purpose.

In order to ensure that the planned assessment activities and materials are fit for purpose, the Internal Moderator will consider and judge whether the activities and materials provide inclusive opportunities for all learners to meet the assessment objectives and generate evidence which is current, reliable, authentic, valid, able to be evaluated and sufficient to meet the requirements of the qualification.

During delivery of assessment, Internal Moderators will work with the Assessment team, ensuring that assessment practices are being carried out correctly. This may involve observing assessment taking place.

3.4 Standardisation of Assessment

The standardisation process helps to ensure that all centre staff involved in the delivery, assessment and quality assurance are consistent and fair to all learners and interpret and follow the requirements of the qualification in the same way.

Internal Moderators are expected to ensure high levels of consistency across Assessors and centre delivery sites through sharing good practice and providing feedback and support, doing so accurately and in good time. The internal Moderator may highlight areas for further CPD or additional training as necessary.

3.5. Sampling Process

When planning and carrying out internal moderation activities, it is important that the Internal Moderator works to a sound sampling strategy to ensure that standardisation of assessment decisions can take place.

A centre's sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of Assessor's judgements, which will include reviewing learner work.

The learner work may be sampled before the learner has completed the full qualification, for example by sampling one or two assignments, topic areas or units, as the learner completes them.

The Internal Moderator should check that planning and reviewing has taken place and feedback is given to learners by the Assessor. The Internal Moderator will also check and confirm the accuracy of the application of any mark schemes, guidance and overall assessment decisions.

The Internal Moderator will therefore be able to evaluate the quality and consistency of the Assessor's assessment decisions and be able to identify any problems at an early stage. It will highlight individual Assessor training and development needs, which in turn can inform the programme of CPD for the assessment team as a whole.

The Internal Moderator must plan their sampling activities as outlined below.

3.6 Establishing a Sampling Strategy

Sampling should enable the Internal Moderator to evaluate how Assessors have reached their decisions. They must be able to follow documentation which clearly shows that Assessors have checked that the evidence presented meets the rules of evidence.

Evidence must be confirmed by Assessors as 'CRAVES'

- **Current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **Reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **Authentic:** the work is the learner's own work
- **Valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **Evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner resulting in improvements in knowledge or competency leading to the award
- **Sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.7 Planning Sampling Activities

The Internal Moderator should consider the following when considering the volume of work that they should sample:

- the learners' ethnic origin, age and gender to ensure a representative range of learners are sampled
- the Assessors' experience and qualifications, workload and their occupational competence. For example, if Assessors are qualified and experienced it may not be necessary to look at everything in a learner's portfolio. If Assessors have less than 12 months' experience, are new to the centre or a particular qualification, or perhaps have not assessed for a length of time, the Internal Moderator will need to sample substantially more of their decisions for the first 6 - 12 months
- the full range of assessment methods used for any one qualification, for example observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, assignments, products, RPL, simulation, etc and ensure a good, representative range of assessment evidence is sampled
- previous feedback to Assessors regarding good practice and/or involved highlighting development needs, for example If the Internal Moderator has a particular concern regarding the assessment decisions of a particular Assessor they should focus on increasing the volume of work from that Assessor to continue increased monitoring and evaluation of risk
- whether any changes have been implemented relating to the assessment of the qualification or its units, for example if there have been amendments to the qualification specification, or instances where industry practice or legislation has changed
- the range of locations where assessments have taken place
- the sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as '10%.'

3.8 Producing a Sampling Plan

The Internal Moderator must develop a sampling plan at the beginning of the learner's (or cohort's) programme and record, on the plan, which topic areas/assessment methods they plan to sample, and when.

Copies of sampling plans should be made available to other Internal Moderators and the assessment team, and sampling carried out according to the plan.

Where variations are made, these should be recorded on the plan.

3.9 Completing a Sample Record

The Internal Moderator should record the quality assurance sampling activities on a Sample Record. As a minimum, this record must indicate the Assessor's decision, the content of the sample, the Internal Moderator's decision and relevant feedback to the Assessor.

Where the Internal Moderator agrees with the assessment decisions, certification claims can go ahead.

Where the Internal Moderator does not agree with the assessment decisions, full feedback must be given to the Assessor, with action points agreed which relate to the Assessor's areas for improvement and instructions for how the learner can be supported to produce the required evidence of knowledge and skills.

Sampling must take place before any certification claims are made by the centre and all records, including those of standardisation meetings, feedback to Assessors and CPD activity should be made available to the GA-appointed External Moderator (also referred to as the EQA) upon request.

Document Specification:					
Purpose:	To detail the specification of the GA Level 3 Diploma in Zoology qualification				
Accountability:	GA Governing Body		Responsibility:	GA Quality Assurance Manager	
Version:	1.1	Effective From:	April 2022	Indicative Review Date:	Jan 2027
Links to Ofqual GCR	E3; G6; G7	Other relevant documents:	GA Centre Handbook GA Candidate Access Policy GA Malpractice & Maladministration Policy GA CASS & General Moderation Policy		