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# Handbook

DDCA3 – VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 3 Award in Dealing with  
Difficult Conversations (RQF)

603/3441/1

Version 2.0

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# About Skillsfirst

VTCT is a market-leading Awarding, Assessment and End-point Assessment (EPA) Organisation offering vocational and technical qualifications in a range of 'services to people' sectors.

The VTCT group of companies are comprised of three innovative awarding brands: VTCT, ITEC and Skillsfirst. Together they have over 2,500 approved centres in over 40 countries across the world.

The qualifications suite offered by VTCT (Skillsfirst) spans a range of sectors including Childcare, Business Services, Health & Social Care, Recruitment and Social Media.

For more information visit us at [www.vtct.org.uk](http://www.vtct.org.uk) and [www.skillsfirst.co.uk](http://www.skillsfirst.co.uk), contact our dedicated Customer Support Team via email at [customersupport@vtct.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@vtct.org.uk) and [customerservices@skillsfirst.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@skillsfirst.co.uk) or call 0121 270 5100

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# 1 Qualification at a glance

<b>Qualification title</b>	VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 3 Award in Dealing with Difficult Conversations (RQF)
<b>Qualification number</b>	603/3441/1
<b>Product code</b>	DDCA3
<b>Age range</b>	There are no age limits attached to learners undertaking this qualification, unless this is a legal requirement of the process or the environment.
<b>Total Qualification Time (TQT)</b>	70
<b>Guided Learning (GL) hours</b>	51
<b>Assessment</b>	To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Portfolio of evidence</li></ul>
<b>Entry requirements</b>	There are no formal entry requirements for learners undertaking this qualification; however, centres must ensure that learners have the potential and opportunity to gain evidence for the qualification in the work place.
<b>Legal considerations</b>	There are no formal entry requirements for learners undertaking this qualification however, centres must ensure that learners have the potential and opportunity to gain evidence for the qualification in the work place
<b>Support materials</b>	Support materials can be found on the website (if applicable)

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## 2 Qualification information

### 2.1 Qualification aim and design

This qualification has been developed for police officers, loss prevention agents, detectives or other private or public sector investigators. It is designed to meet the needs of those learners who wish to seek, gain and retain employment or to accredit their existing knowledge of investigative techniques for CPD purposes.

### 2.2 Progression opportunities

Learners achieving these qualifications can progress onto the Level 3 Certificate in Investigative Interviewing (RQF), onto further learning, or into specific vocational employment.

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## 3 Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT (Skillsfirst) Level 3 Award in Dealing with Difficult Conversations (RQF) learners must achieve all mandatory units.

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is **70**.

Product code	Unit title	Level	GLH	Unit reference number
<b>Mandatory units (Group M):</b>				
II1	Understanding investigative interviewing	3	51	A/507/9770

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## 4 Centre requirements

### 4.1 Resources

Centres must possess the physical resources needed to support the delivery of the programme and the assessment of knowledge and skills, which should therefore be of industry standard. Where specific resources are required these have been indicated in individual units.

### 4.2 Occupational expertise of those who deliver, provide expert witness, assess performance, moderate and verify assessments

Assessors and those responsible for internal quality assurance are appointed by the recognised centre and approved by Skillsfirst through the external verifier

### 4.3 Occupational competence

To be occupationally competent, an assessor must be capable of carrying out the full requirements within the competence unit/s they are assessing. Occupational competence must be at the unit level. Being occupationally competent means that the assessor is also occupationally knowledgeable. This occupational competence should be maintained through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development. This can be demonstrated through current statutory professional registration.

### 4.4 Occupational knowledge

To be occupationally knowledgeable, each assessor should possess knowledge and understanding relevant to the qualifications and/or units they are assessing. Occupationally knowledgeable assessors may assess at unit level for specialist areas within a qualification, while the final assessment decision for a qualification remains with the lead assessor. Those carrying out internal quality assurance must be occupationally knowledgeable in the unit they are assuring and be qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

This occupational knowledge should be maintained annually through clearly demonstrable continuing learning and professional development.

### 4.5 Qualification requirements of those involved in assessment and internal quality assurance

While the Assessor/Verifier (A/V) and the Assessor/Internal Quality Assurance (TAQA) units are valued as qualifications for centre staff, they are not currently a requirement for this qualification. It is strongly recommended, however, that staff must be able to show occupational competence, through mapping their competences and knowledge against the relevant NOS and the assessor and verifier requirements.

Centre staff should have verifiable relevant experience and current knowledge of the occupational working area at, or above, the level they are assessing or verifying. This experience and knowledge must be of sufficient depth to be effective and reliable when judging learner competence or verifying assessment processes and decisions. This could be verified by:

- curriculum vitae and references
- possession of a relevant qualification
- corporate membership of a relevant professional institution

Centre staff may undertake more than one role, e.g. tutor and assessor or moderator/IV, but must never internally verify their own assessments

## 4.6 Expert witnesses

### 4.6.1 Overview

Where the assessor is not occupationally competent in a specialist area, expert witnesses can be used for direct observation where they have occupational expertise in the specialist area. The use of expert witnesses should be determined and agreed by the assessor, in line with internal quality assurance arrangements and Skillsfirst's requirements for the assessment of units within the qualification and the sector. The assessor remains responsible for the final assessment decision.

### 4.6.2 Requirements for expert witnesses

An expert witness must:

- have a working knowledge of the units for which they are providing expert testimony
- be occupationally competent in the area for which they are providing expert testimony
- have EITHER any qualification in assessment of workplace performance OR a work role which involves evaluating the everyday practice of staff within their area of expertise.

## 4.7 Continuous professional development (CPD)

Centres are responsible for ensuring that deliverers, assessors and those responsible for internal quality assurance plan and maintain their CPD. Centres are expected to support their deliverers, assessors and IQAs in ensuring that their knowledge remains current of the occupational area and of best practice in delivery, mentoring, training, assessment and verification, and that it takes account of any national or legislative developments. Centres may have generic criteria and personnel specifications in addition to these requirements.

## 4.8 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Each qualification has a Total Qualification Time (TQT) value based on the total number of hours learning required to achieve it. The TQT value reflects the number of supervised learning hours required to achieve the knowledge and assessment requirements, plus the length of time a learner would need to take to achieve the skills and capabilities to be deemed competent. All RQF qualifications are subject to an evaluation process to determine their fitness-for-purpose.



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# 5 Assessment

## 5.1 Summary of assessment methods

This qualification will be assessed by an internally-set questionnaire, which will be marked by centre staff. This will then be sampled and moderated by Skillsfirst Awards Limited. All aspects of the learning outcomes will be tested in every questionnaire although details will vary between questionnaires.

## 5.2 Assessment principles

Learners must be registered with Skillsfirst before formal assessment commences.

The questionnaires will be multiple choice/short-answer, all of which should be completed by the learner, but the order in which they are undertaken will not be specified.

Centres should ensure they are familiar with all requirements for the conduct of using written examinations prior to offering the assessments.

Centres must retain copies of learner assessment records for at least three years after certification.

Qualification certificates will be issued to learners who have met the full requirements of the qualification and successfully achieved the requirements of the qualification.

## 5.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a component of a qualification through knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning. Should any opportunities for RPL be identified, it is important that a complete process of recognising prior experience and learning is undertaken, by ensuring that:

- it covers relevant or appropriate experience for previous activities, as well as accredited learning and qualifications
- it is incorporated into the assessment planning, with details of how this will take place
- mapping of prior learning to the national occupational standards to identify gaps is documented and auditable
- assessment methods or processes for recognising prior experience and learning, are documented and made available to the external verifier
- the audit trail covers the whole process and methodology of RPL
- the authenticity and currency of presented evidence is established by the assessor

This evidence will need to be referenced clearly on recording documentation and will need to be appropriately authenticated and validated, perhaps by an employer or expert witness.

Assessment must be valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award. The evidence gathered must meet the standards of the qualification or component and the assessment process must be subject to the same quality assurance procedures as any other assessment process. In summary, evidence submitted to the RPL process must:

- be authentic and prove conclusively that RPL is based on the learner's own work;
- meet the requirements of the current the skills and knowledge requirements and be appropriate to the content of the component or qualification being considered for RPL;
- be sufficient to conclusively prove consistency of learner performance in meeting the skills and knowledge requirements.

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# 6 Units

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# Unit Handbook

## II1 – Understanding investigative interviewing

Unit reference number: A/507/9770

**Level: 3**

**Credit value: 7**

**Guided Learning (GL) hours: 51**

### Unit aim

This unit will give the learner the knowledge of how to carry out an investigative interview, the range of questioning techniques, the key features of legislation relating to investigative techniques and the roles and responsibilities of an investigative interviewer. The learner will also gain a knowledge of the purposes, uses, methods and techniques of cognitive interviewing.

### Learning outcomes

There are two outcomes to this unit. The learner will:

LO1 Understand the principles of investigative interviewing

LO2 Understand cognitive interviewing

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# Unit content

## Evidence requirements

Learners must provide a portfolio of evidence for this unit.

# Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO1 Understand the principles of investigative interviewing	1.1 Explain the principles and process of investigative interviewing
	1.2 Describe the different types and uses of questions
	1.3 Explain the importance of environment and equipment for investigative interviewing
	1.4 Describe the role and responsibilities of an investigator during an interview
	1.5 Describe the information to be given to a suspect prior to, during and at the end of an interview
	1.6 Explain the legislation relating to investigative interviewing
	1.7 Describe the methods and techniques used in relation to investigative interviewing

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria
LO2 Understand cognitive interviewing	2.1 Explain the purpose and uses of cognitive interviewing
	2.2 Describe the methods and techniques used in carrying out a cognitive interview
	2.3 Explain the roles and responsibilities of an investigator in a cognitive interview
	2.4 Describe the methods and techniques of conversation management
	2.5 Explain the different types of questioning techniques and how they are used
	2.6 Explain how to summarise and conclude an interview

## II1 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	31/01/2023	Re-branded	Qualification Administrator

### DDCA3 Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v2.0	31/03/2023	Formatting and re-branding. No content amendment.	Data Administrator