



Qualification Specification

STA Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer

This qualification is regulated by Ofqual (England)

STA Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer

Qualification Number: 610/7795/1

Unit Structure

This qualification consists of 1 mandatory unit.

Unit Title	Code	Unit Level	GLH
Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of a Designated Safeguarding Officer	K/652/3032	3	14

GLH = Guided learning hours

Total Qualification Time: 20 hours

Qualification Delivery

The recommended contact hours for this qualification are 14 hours, which includes direct teaching and assessing but excludes breaks. The course may be run over 2 days, depending on the number of learners, delivery method and course facilities.

The course can be delivered:

- Fully face-to-face, 14 hours
- Via blended learning using the STA Designated Safeguarding Officer blended learning and 7 hours / 1 day tutor led.

Note: Blended learning must be completed prior to the tutor-led element and case studies will be completed post-course.

The ratio for this qualification is a maximum of 12 learners to 1 tutor.

Introduction

A Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for leading and coordinating safeguarding within an organisation, ensuring that children and adults at risk are protected from harm. The role involves recognising safeguarding concerns, responding appropriately to disclosures, managing referrals to relevant agencies and maintaining accurate, confidential records. The DSO is responsible for promoting a culture of safeguarding, providing advice and support to staff and volunteers, ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively, and liaising with statutory agencies and other organisations to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met in line with current legislation and best practice.

Throughout the qualification, the term Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is used; however, this is interchangeable with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Welfare Officer and Safeguarding Lead, as all refer to the same safeguarding role and responsibilities.

Qualification Objective

The STA Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer aims to equip learners with the knowledge, understanding, and practical skills required to allow them to effectively manage safeguarding responsibilities, respond appropriately to concerns, and promote a safe and supportive environment in line with current legislation and best practice.

Target Learners

This qualification is for learners who currently work with children or adults at risk in a sport, physical activity or leisure environment and who have, or are preparing to take on, the role of Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

It is suitable for individuals who are responsible for leading safeguarding within their organisation, club or setting. The qualification may also be appropriate for safeguarding leads, welfare officers, club managers and others with delegated safeguarding responsibilities who require the knowledge and skills to fulfil the DSO role effectively.

Progression

Following achievement of this qualification, learners may wish to progress into more specialist or strategic safeguarding roles within their organisation, developing expertise in areas such as in early years, supervision training, or schools and colleges. Alternatively, experienced learners may choose to become an STA Tutor, enabling them to deliver Designated Safeguarding Officer qualifications and support the development of future safeguarding professionals.

Industry Standards

STA Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer references the following industry guidance documents:

- CIMSPA Technical Specialism Professional Standard: Safeguarding and Protecting Children
 - CIMSPA Technical Specialism Professional Standard: Safeguarding Adults
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees
 - After-School Clubs, Community Activities and Tuition
 - STA Swimming Teacher Code of Practice.
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Entry Requirements

- Be 18 years of age or older at time of assessment.

It is advisable that learners have:

- A minimum of level 1 in literacy and numeracy or equivalent
 - Hold STA Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk CPD certificate (or acceptable equivalent).
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Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policies

Safety Training Awards is committed to ensuring individuals with additional needs, disabilities, temporary illness or injury, or other adverse circumstance outside their control, are not unfairly disadvantaged when undertaking qualifications or assessments. For further information, please refer to the policies section on the Safety Training Awards website: <https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk/policies/>.

Awarding Organisation Policies

A full list of awarding organisation policies are available on the website: <https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk>

Assessment Format

Pass / Fail.

Any Other Requirements / Revalidation Requirements

To ensure knowledge and practice remain current and reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and best practice, it is recommended that learners refresh their Designated Safeguarding Officer knowledge every two years.

Two years after completing the qualification, learners are advised to complete the STA Designated Safeguarding Officer Revalidation Online Programme to update and reinforce their knowledge.

Assessment Methods

The STA Designated Safeguarding Officer qualification is tutor assessed through the completion of 2 case studies. Both case studies must be submitted no later than 4 weeks after the final date of the course. Learners are permitted up to three submission attempts if the required standard is not achieved. Case studies must be marked as competent no later than 6 weeks after the final date of the course.

All learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the units must be achieved in order for the learner to be deemed competent and pass the course.

Tutors should refer to the STA Designated Safeguarding Officer Assessment Strategy document for detailed guidance on the assessment process.

Re-Assessment

If a learner is unsuccessful in the course assessment, the learner is only required to re-sit the required assessment element, for example, if a learner fails a case study from category one, they are only required to re-sit a case study from that category.

The re-sit of an assessment must be completed within 6 weeks from the failure date. All re-takes must be registered with Safety Training Awards.

Safety Training Awards only permit 1 assessment re-sit. If a learner has been unsuccessful following a re-sit, the learner must undertake another full course of instruction.

Tutor / Assessor Requirements

All tutors must have the skills, knowledge and experience to be able to teach and demonstrate the subject.

Tutors / assessors must be approved by Safety Training Awards and provide evidence of:

1. Holding the STA Designated Safeguarding Officer qualification (or acceptable equivalent)
 2. Holding STA Level 3 Award in Education and Training (or acceptable equivalent)
 3. Experience acting as a Designated Safeguarding Officer
 4. Maintaining occupational competency by providing evidence of continuing professional development (CPD).
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IQA Requirements

Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) of this qualification must have knowledge and competency in safeguarding as well as knowledge and competency in internal quality assurance.

IQAs must be approved by Safety Training Awards and provide evidence of:

1. Holding STA Designated Safeguarding Officer qualification (or acceptable equivalent)
2. Holding STA Level 3 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (or acceptable equivalent), or have completed STA Internal Quality Assurance CPD.

Note: IQAs cannot quality assure a course for which they were a learner, the tutor and / or assessor.

Resource Requirements

Course resource:

- STA Designated Safeguarding Officer resource manual – each learner is required to have their own copy of the resource manual to keep during and after the course, in order to have access to the theoretical knowledge of the qualification.

Unit Specification

Unit 1	Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of a Designated Safeguarding Officer
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand the role and responsibilities of a Designated Safeguarding Officer	1.1 Identify the role and responsibilities of a designated safeguarding officer 1.2 Identify professional boundaries for a designated safeguarding officer 1.3 Identify the meaning of a position of trust
2. Understand legislation and guidance related to safeguarding	2.1 Identify legislation and statutory guidance relevant to safeguarding 2.2 Identify guidance documents a designated safeguarding officer should be aware of 2.3 Identify how data should be kept in line with relevant legislation
3. Understand safeguarding concerns	3.1 Explain how contextual factors may influence safeguarding risks 3.2 Recognise the indicators of grooming 3.3 Identify factors that can increase vulnerability to abuse
4. Understand how to promote a strong safeguarding culture	4.1 Describe how to promote a strong culture of safeguarding 4.2 Demonstrate the meaning of professional curiosity 4.3 Identify key elements of the safer recruitment process
5. Understand how to respond to safeguarding concerns	5.1 Explain the behaviours a designated safeguarding officer should exhibit when a safeguarding disclosure or concern is raised 5.2 Recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns involving: • Complaints • Whistleblowing • Poor practice
6. Understand how to report and record safeguarding concerns	6.1 Describe when consent should be obtained when sharing information about adults at risk 6.2 Recognise key information that should be included when recording concerns 6.3 Explain the process of determining next steps following a concern 6.4 Explain when it is appropriate to refer a safeguarding concern to: • Police • Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) • Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) • Children social care • Adult social care • Internal departments
7. Understand the importance of multi-agency working	7.1 Recognise the importance of information sharing 7.2 Identify key aspects of the threshold levels in the continuum of need: • Level 1 – Universal services • Level 2 – Early help • Level 3 – Targeted support • Level 4 – Statutory support