



Chartered
Institute of
Housing
Awarding
organisation

Qualification specification

CIH Level 5 Diploma in Housing

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation.

The CIH Awarding Organisation (AO) provides nationally recognised housing qualifications, regulated by The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), Scottish Qualifications Authority Accreditation (SQA Accreditation), Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment Regulation (CCEA Regulation) and Qualifications Wales (QW). We are dedicated to providing the highest quality, relevant and up-to-date qualifications for aspiring professionals in the sector.

The purpose of the qualification specification is to provide the user with information about the units which make up this qualification, the qualification structure, assessment methods and quality assurance requirements associated with the qualification.

The qualification reference number is 601/8133/3.

The operational start date is 1 December 2015.

The registration end date is 1 March 2026.

The certification end date is 1 March 2029.

CIH scheme code: 5H01.

Contact us

For any queries relating to the qualification specification e-mail
awarding.organisation@cih.org.

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
March 2024	0324	Information on student membership removed.
September 2024	0924	Template updated. Information on quality assurance process updated. Assessment method guidance updated. Information on other relevant documents updated. Staffing guidance updated.
November 2024	1124	Reference to CCEA updated to CCEA Regulation.
January 2025	0125	Registration and certification end dates updated on page 1.

About the qualification

The qualification is a level 5 vocationally related qualification for the housing sector, regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA Regulation.

The objective of this qualification is to provide individuals with the knowledge and understanding across the key areas of housing practice at a recognised professional standard. The qualification considers areas of ethics, leadership, strategic planning for housing and relationships.

The qualification aims to

- provide the knowledge and skills required for a strategic housing management role
- prepare learners for further study in housing related qualifications at level 6 / under graduate level
- meet the expectations for CIH chartered membership on completion of the additional unit professional practice skills for housing

The qualification is suitable for learners who are

- working or resident in the UK and Ireland
- aspiring to or working in a strategic housing management role
- that already have a level 4 qualification and/or experience of working in a management / strategic role in housing

Entry requirements

CIH AO do not set entry requirements. CIH AO suggest it may be beneficial for the learner to have one or some of the following:

- The potential and opportunity to gain the qualification
- Two years experience working in housing or a housing related industry, at a supervisory or management level
- Completed the CIH level 4 certificate in housing or a comparable/equivalent qualification.

Further details of the level that the learner needs to be able to achieve are provided in the section on level 5 descriptors.

Progression routes

The learner may wish to progress onto further learning

- at level 6 / undergraduate level – if the learner has extensive housing experience and has previously studied at level 4 or 5, they may be able to progress to an undergraduate course at university
- on completion of the level 5 diploma in housing including the level 4 professional practice skills for housing unit a learner can achieve CIH chartered member status. Chartered status is a demonstration of your housing expertise, commitment and ethical standards

Level 5 descriptors

The level 5 descriptors indicate the level that a learner must be working at in order to achieve the qualification. They are not to be used as marking criteria, but may be used as an initial assessment tool to determine the level of learners.

Knowledge descriptor (the holder...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can...)
Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts.	Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems.
Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas.	Use relevant research or development to inform actions.
Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work.	Evaluate actions, methods and results.
Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.	

For a comparison of qualification levels across the UK see <https://scqf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/qualifications-can-cross-boundaries-aug-23.pdf>

Apprenticeship

The units from the qualification have been sign posted to the Apprenticeship Standard: Senior Housing / Property Management England. See Annex 1.

Qualification structure

Qualification title: CIH Level 5 Diploma in Housing

Learners must achieve a minimum of 32 credits, from all 5 mandatory units, in order to be awarded the qualification.

The recommended guided learning hours for the qualification are 64-79. CIH AO expects that education centres may deliver the qualification in more or less time according to the plan they have approved by CIH AO prior to the start of the course. The units may be delivered in any order. The total qualification time will be 320 hours.

The qualification is awarded on the basis of Pass / Refer / Fail.

Mandatory units

The qualification contains the following 5 mandatory units, 32 credits must be achieved from this group:

Unit title	Credits	Level	Page
Ethical practice in housing Unit number M/507/9233	4	5	11
Leadership and management in housing Unit number K/507/9232	8	5	12
Strategic and business planning for housing organisations Unit number T/507/9234	6	5	13
Housing in context Unit number A/507/9235	8	5	14
Managing relationships in housing Unit number F/507/9236	6	5	15

Optional units

The qualification contains the following additional unit:

Unit title	Credits	Level	Page
Professional practice skills for housing Unit number F/507/9169	6	4	16

Delivering the qualification

Approval to deliver the qualification

As an approved CIH AO centre, you must be approved by CIH AO to deliver the qualification. Delivery must not commence, and learner registrations will not be accepted until this process is complete.

Registering learners and fees

Prior to the delivery of the qualification, you must register each learner with CIH AO. A fee is payable for each learner.

The list of fees is available on our website at the following link:

www.cih.org/education/qualifications/deliver-our-qualifications.

For more information on terms of payment please refer to our invoicing policy.

Equality and diversity

Equality diversity and inclusion (ED&I) considerations were made during the development of this qualification to promote access and minimise bias. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that ED&I considerations are made as part of the delivery and assessment of this qualification.

CIH AO expect ED&I to be integrated into the delivery process for every learning outcome even where there are no specific assessment criteria for ED&I.

Contextualisation of learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Centres must contextualise the delivery and assessment of units according to the local and sectoral circumstances of the group of learners they are delivering to (e.g. teaching and assessment of law is applied to the law of the country in which the group of learners operate).

Staff occupational competency requirements

Assessments for CIH qualifications are designed (subject to review) and implemented by approved centre staff. It is the responsibility of the approved centre to establish and maintain a suitably experienced and qualified staffing base.

While there is an expectation that, in most cases, staff are equipped with the experience and qualifications indicative of their role, a degree of flexibility can be permitted where the centre can demonstrate the requirements across the staffing base more broadly, indicating that sufficient support and oversight can be applied as needed. This approach may be implemented where staff are studying towards additional qualifications.

Sector Experience Requirements (all staff roles)

All centre staff roles (Tutor, Assessor, IQA) must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

- A recognised Housing, or Housing-related qualification at level 5 or above, or;
- Enrolment and completion of a recognised Housing or Housing-related qualification at level 5 or above within an agreed time period, or;
- Minimum 2-years' experience of working in a Housing or Housing-related organisation at Management level or above, or;
- Professional-level membership of a recognised Housing professional body.

Indicative Role-Specific Requirements

Role*	Indicative Responsibilities	Indicative Requirements
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of programme content • Interpretation of unit assessment criteria • Facilitating learning • Lesson planning • Learner support and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised L3 Teaching qualification, e.g., L3 Award in Education and Training (or equivalent PTLLS) or • 12 months' teaching experience
Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and development of assessment materials • Evaluating learner achievement against learning outcomes and assessment criteria • Learner support and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised L3 Assessor qualification (part of the Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance qualifications framework), e.g. L3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement (or equivalent A1 Award / D32/D33 Units)
IQA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and oversight of IQA strategy • Sampling assessor judgements to ensure accuracy and consistency • Observation of teaching • Monitoring assessment practices • Assessor support and feedback • Coordinating / overseeing standardisation activity • Sharing best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised L4 IQA qualification, e.g., L4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (or equivalent V1 Internal Verifier Award / D34)

*It is understood that, in many cases, centre staff will undertake more than one role, e.g., Tutor and Assessor. Note that an IQA must not be involved in the delivery or assessment of any qualification / unit they review.

Further details on current teaching and assessing qualifications available can be found at:

England, Wales & Northern Ireland: www.register.ofqual.gov.uk

Scotland: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/64775.html

Trainee staff

Trainee Tutors, Assessors and IQAs must complete a relevant qualification within one year of commencing in the role. Any trainee staff should be subject to increased internal sampling and supervision until the role requirements are fully satisfied.

Continued Professional Development

All centre staff must keep an ongoing accurate record of any CPD activities in the Housing or Housing-related sector, as well as any activity relating to assessment and IQA. Records of CPD activities may be requested at any time.

Assessment

Centres must refer to the CIH AO centre handbook prior to developing their courses and associated assessments.

The purpose of assessment is to provide a consistent and valid judgement that learners have met the standard required to achieve the qualification. The assessment criteria contained in each unit indicate the evidence learners will need to produce in order to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes.

All assessment for the qualification is devised by the centre, marked by the centre and then must be internally quality assured (by the centre) and externally quality assured by CIH AO.

Centre devised assessments

CIH AO's approach to the assessment of qualifications is to enable centres to devise the assessments. This is to allow for appropriate assessment that reflects the unique learning experience and local circumstances of specific groups of learners.

Centres are expected to create assessment strategies that directly meet the needs of their learner groups and consider the requirements of local employers.

Assessment principles

In devising and delivering assessments the following principles must be followed.

Validity

An assessment is valid if it is clear and unambiguous 'does what it says on the tin', if it is fit for purpose, and the assessment outcomes meet their intended uses.

Reliability

An assessment is reliable if its results are not influenced by chance, and the assessment process generates outcomes which would be replicated were the assessment repeated.

Comparability

The assessment outcomes are comparable in standards between assessments within a qualification, between similar qualifications, with other awarding organisations, and over time.

Manageability

The assessment is easily managed, and the management process is one which places reasonable demands on centres and learners. Reasonableness will be based on the scale of the assessment process balanced by the usefulness of the outcomes.

Minimise bias

An assessment does not produce unreasonably adverse outcomes for learners who share a common attribute (and) is related to fairness to all learners and statutory equality duties.

Assessment methods

CIH AO encourage the use of a range of assessment methods to be included in your assessment strategy and associated assessment briefs, providing that they meet the assessment principles outlined above, and are appropriate to the assessment criteria. Suitable assessment methods could include:

- Coursework
- Portfolio of evidence
- E-assessment
- Practical demonstration/assignment
- Presentation
- Professional interview/ discussion.

Guidance on the use of assessment methods can be found in the centre handbook. If you have additional or innovative assessment methods that you would like to employ, please contact us for further advice.

Special considerations and reasonable adjustments

CIH AO requires centres to be compliant with the CIH AO special considerations and reasonable adjustments policy. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes. The centre is required to implement the adjustments to assessment and to notify CIH AO of this.

A special consideration may be given to a learner following a scheduled assessment, for example:

- If the learner misses part of the assessment due to circumstances beyond their control
Or
- The learner is present for the assessment but may have been disadvantaged by:
 - Temporary illness
 - Injury
 - Adverse circumstances which arose at or near the time of assessment.

If the centre approves or rejects a special consideration (such as a small post assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner or an adjustment to the assessment submission date) it must retain evidence of its decision for scrutiny by the CIH AO.

External quality assurance

As an Awarding Organisation, CIH must ensure that all programme delivery, assessment, and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) practices undertaken by approved Centres is subject to external scrutiny to verify that reliable, consistent and compliant practices are in place.

All approved CIH centres are subject to a range of External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes and procedures, including an annual quality assurance audit, ongoing assessment sampling, and regular review of the conditions of Centre Approval.

CIH's EQA strategy is designed to be responsive to centre-risk characteristics, and to variations in centre delivery models and qualification size and level.

Specific details about how EQA processes are applied to each centre will be communicated by the CIH Quality Assurance Team.

For further information, please consult the CIH Centre Handbook or contact the QA Team at the following address: quality.assurance@cih.org

Other documents of relevance

CIH AO have a number of policies, and other guidance documents that your centre must be familiar with alongside this qualification specification to support the design, delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of CIH AO qualifications.

These documents can be found in our centre administration system Parnassus.

If you require a login or support to access Parnassus contact awarding.organisation@cih.org.

Centres seeking approval by CIH AO can gain access to these documents on request where needed to support with the approval process, by contacting awarding.organisation@cih.org.

Ethical practice in housing

Unit level: 5
Unit credit value: 4
Unit reference number: M/507/9233
CIH AO reference number: H501
Unit status: Mandatory

Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide the learner with an understanding of ethical practice and how this applies to housing organisations and housing professionals.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand ethical practice.	1.1 Discuss the theory of ethical practice. 1.2 Critically compare approaches to ethical practice.
2. Understand how ethical practices apply to housing organisations.	2.1 Evaluate the degree to which a housing organisation complies with a code of ethics. 2.2 Explain how business objectives and culture are affected by ethical considerations. 2.3 Evaluate the implications for a housing organisation and its stakeholders of operating ethically.
3. Understand how ethical practices apply to a housing professional.	3.1 Explain a current ethical issue affecting a housing professional. 3.2 Apply the CIH ethical decision making process to the issue. 3.3 Evaluate the impact of the decision making process.

Leadership and management in housing

Unit level:	5
Unit credit value:	8
Unit reference number:	K/507/9232
CIH AO reference number:	H502
Unit status:	Mandatory

Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide the learner with an understanding of leadership and management styles and their role in creating organisational values and achieving organisational objectives.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand the relationship between management and leadership.	1.1 Critically discuss theories of management and leadership. 1.2 Evaluate the nature of the relationship between management and leadership in different housing provider contexts.
2. Understand how leadership styles impact on the achievement of organisational objectives.	2.1 Assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours of successful leaders. 2.2 Analyse the role of leadership in contributing to the creation of the organisations vision and the communication of the vision to others. 2.3 Justify the most effective leadership style for achieving organisational objectives in housing organisations.
3. Understand the skills and attributes required to be an effective manager.	3.1 Discuss the knowledge, skills and attributes required to be an effective manager. 3.2 Evaluate the impact on the housing organisation. 3.3 Reflect on your ability to be an effective manager.

Strategic and business planning for housing organisations

Unit level:	5
Unit credit value:	6
Unit reference number:	T/507/9234
CIH AO reference number:	H503
Unit status:	Mandatory

Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide the learner with an understanding of the role, purpose and complexity of a housing organisation in order to apply strategic thinking to the development, implementation and monitoring of a business plan.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand the role, purpose and complexity of a housing organisation.	1.1 Critically evaluate the role and purpose of a housing organisation. 1.2 Critically evaluate the social identity of a housing organisation against their role as commercial businesses.
2. Understand theories to enable strategy development in a housing organisation.	2.1 Evaluate theories of strategy development. 2.2 Apply a theory of strategic thinking to develop a vision for a housing service.
3. Be able to apply strategic planning techniques to develop a business plan for a housing organisation.	3.1 Develop a business plan for a housing service using strategic planning.
4. Understand how to implement and monitor a business plan.	4.1 Develop a strategy for the implementation of the business plan. 4.2 Identify the critical stages for monitoring the business plan following implementation.

Housing in context

Unit level:	5
Unit credit value:	8
Unit reference number:	A/507/9235
CIH AO reference number:	H504
Unit status:	Mandatory

Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide the learner with an opportunity to understand the context of housing through a comparative study between the country of operation and another. For the purpose of this assessment, learners must agree with their tutor the element of housing that they will study (e.g. homelessness, social housing, private rented sector, tenant and resident involvement) and the country which they will be using as a comparative study.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Be able to undertake a comparative study of one aspect of housing policy.	1.1 Critically summarise theoretical discourses about comparative housing studies.
2. Understand the social, cultural and historical development of one aspect of housing policy.	2.1 Critically discuss the social and cultural context of housing policy. 2.2 Critically discuss the historical development of housing policy.
3. Understand the political and economic context of housing with particular regard to one aspect of housing policy.	3.1 Examine the influence of political ideology on the evolution of the housing policy. 3.2 Discuss the implications of the political and economic environment on the housing policy.
4. Understand the law in relation to one aspect of housing policy.	4.1 Compare and contrast the law in relation to one aspect of housing policy.
5. Be able to make a case for future trends in one aspect of housing policy.	5.1 Apply conclusions drawn from the comparative housing study. 5.2 Identify any lessons learned from the comparative study which can be taken forward for the nation in which you operate.

Managing relationships in housing

Unit level: 5
Unit credit value: 6
Unit reference number: F/507/9236
CIH AO reference number: H505
Unit status: Mandatory

Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of the customers and partners involved in delivering a successful housing service.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand how the changing profile of housing customers impacts on the delivery of housing services.	1.1 Compare methods for profiling and segmenting housing customers. 1.2 Evaluate how the changing customer profile impacts on the housing service delivered. 1.3 Evaluate how housing organisations can use customer profiling and segmentation to tailor the service they provide. 1.4 Discuss the implications of the diversification of housing services.
2. Understand how to communicate with housing customers.	2.1 Evaluate methodology for understanding housing customers' wants and needs. 2.2 Analyse a customer communications strategy. 2.3 Explain how the principles of data protection apply in relation to customer communication.
3. Understand the variety of partners involved in the delivery of housing services.	3.1 Explore the variety of partners that a housing organisation will work with to deliver services. 3.2 Explain the skills and techniques required to influence a partner to deliver a service. 3.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of a partner relationship on the delivery of a housing service.
4. Understand the principles of contract management in the delivery of a housing service.	4.1 Examine methods for procuring and mobilising contracts for a housing service. 4.2 Critically assess the delivery of the housing service in relationship to the performance of the contract management.

Professional practice skills for housing

Unit level:	4
Unit credit value:	6
Unit reference number:	F/507/9169
CIH AO reference number:	H401
Unit status:	Optional
Unit purpose/aim	

The unit aims to give learners the understanding and skills to progress at management level in housing. It does so by helping them to become more 'reflective practitioners'. It emphasises the importance of relating individual skills and performance to the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole, and being proactive in their own professional development.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand the concepts of being a member of a profession and acting professionally.	1.1 Distinguish between being a member of a profession and acting professionally.
2. Understand the skills required to be a housing professional.	2.1 Analyse a range of key skills required to be a housing professional. 2.2 Explain what 'professionalism' means in a housing context with reference to the CIH Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics.
3. Be able to assess own professional performance.	3.1 Explain the concept of reflective practice with reference to theory. 3.2 Apply reflective practice techniques to own performance. 3.3 Explain how own performance is monitored. 3.4 Evaluate how own performance impacts on organisational performance.
4. Be able to manage own professional development.	4.1 Use a professional development plan to plan own training and professional development to meet current and future challenges.

Mapping to chartered member expectations

Day one expectations from a Chartered Member	CIH qualification unit
Be able to...lead, provide vision and innovate in meeting objectives for an organisation.	Level 5 Leadership and management in housing K/507/9232
Be able to...communicate effectively with housing customers and colleagues. (implicitly)	Level 5 Managing relationships in housing F/507/9236
Be able to...find out what housing customers want.	
Be able to...talk to, understand and work with those who deliver and design related services which impact on housing.	
Be able to...support housing customers in securing homes and the resources to maintain their homes.	
Know...why good housing is critical to the health and well being of a community.	
Demonstrate...decision making based on fair, accurate and appropriate information.	Level 5 Ethical practice in housing M/507/9233
Demonstrate...impartiality in delivering a service.	
Demonstrate...resilience, honesty and integrity.	
Demonstrate...non-discrimination in his/her attitude to delivering a service.	Embedded in all appropriate units
Demonstrate...continuing professional development through a personal development plan to build, maintain and learn new skills and knowledge.	Level 4 Professional practice skills for housing F/507/9169
Demonstrate...working according to the CIH code of professional conduct.	
Know...how is housing delivered, regulated and financed through those organisations set up to achieve this.	Level 5 Strategic and business planning for housing organisations T/507/9234
Demonstrate...a belief in the objectives of delivering affordable, good quality homes to all in need.	
Know...the social, legal, cultural, economic and political context in which housing services are delivered and monitored.	Level 5 Housing in context A/507/9235
Know...the background to the provision and access to housing in the UK.	

Exemption

The following units are deemed to be allowed as exemption from the achievement of certain units of this qualification because they cover at least 80% of the assessment criteria. This is to support transition and to avoid the unnecessary burden of duplication of learning while upholding the validity of the qualification.

Unit title	Exemption
Professional practice skills for housing F/507/9169	Professional practice skills for housing R/503/5242

Annex 1

This is an Indication of how the qualification may link to the Apprenticeship Standard: Senior Housing and Property Management, England.

The linkages shown are neither exhaustive, nor conclusive, as in some cases it will depend on what is taught as part of the course, and to what depth (e.g. the teaching of professional practice skills for housing may provide learners with opportunities to explore the skills that are detailed as part of the apprenticeship standard).

If the qualification is being used as part or an apprenticeship the deliverer will be required to complete their own detailed mapping.

The employer and training provider are responsible for the delivery of the apprenticeship standard are required to ensure that their course content covers the apprenticeship standard and prepares learners for the end point assessment.

Knowledge	Legislation and regulation	Organisation background information and business planning	Assets	Customers and stakeholders	Context	Range of services	Organisational policies
Ethical practice in housing		✓		✓	✓		
Leadership and management in housing		✓					✓
Strategic and business planning for housing organisations		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Housing in context	✓				✓	✓	
Managing relationships in housing	✓			✓		✓	✓
Professional practice skills for housing					✓		

Skills	Customer service	Communication	Collaborative working	Respond to vulnerability	Information collection and sharing	Influencing and negotiating	Financial management	People management	Performance and project management	Decision making and prioritising	Tools and equipment
Ethical practice in housing	✓			✓		✓				✓	
Leadership and management in housing		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Strategic and business planning for housing organisations		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing in context					✓						✓
Managing relationships in housing	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Professional practice skills for housing	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	

Behaviours	Responsive	Trust and dependability	Adaptability	Self motivation	Resilience	Leadership	Personal development	Customer care	Team work
Ethical practice in housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Leadership and management in housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Strategic and business planning for housing organisations			✓			✓		✓	✓
Housing in context			✓	✓		✓			
Managing relationships in housing	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Professional practice skills for housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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