



# Qualification specification

## CIH Certificate in Housing Practice at SCQF level 5

### 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 R598 04.  
The operational start date is 03 April 2019.  
The CIH scheme code is 5S07.

### Contact us

For any queries relating to the qualification specification e-mail [awarding.organisation@cih.org](mailto:awarding.organisation@cih.org).

Date	Version	Summary of Changes
March 2024	0324	Information on student membership removed.
September 2024	0924	CIH unit codes updated. Approval and registration information updated. Assessment method guidance updated. Information on quality assurance process updated. Other related documents information updated. Phone number updated in footer. Staffing guidance updated.
November 2024	1124	Reference to CCEA updated to CCEA Regulation.

## About the qualification

The qualification is a SCQF level 5 vocationally related qualification for the housing sector, regulated by SQA Accreditation.

The objective of this qualification is to provide learners with an introduction to housing and to working in housing.

The qualification aims to:

- Provide learners with a basic understanding of housing
- Introduce some of the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in housing related activities whether paid or voluntary
- Prepare learners for further study.

The qualification is suitable for learners who are:

- New to housing or work in a front-line position and want to improve their general awareness of housing
- Not currently working in housing but considering a front-line housing position as a career option
- Tenants, residents and board members wishing to enhance their personal involvement and understanding of housing
- Working in housing and wish to attain an initial qualification in housing
- Aged 14+ (if you are offering the qualification to pre-16's please contact [awarding.organisation@cih.org](mailto:awarding.organisation@cih.org), to enable us to monitor take-up and delivery).

## Entry requirements

CIH AO do not set entry requirements. CIH AO recommend that to pursue achievement of the qualification, the learner will:

- Have the potential and opportunity to gain the qualification.

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

## Progression routes

The learner may wish to progress onto:

- Further learning at level 3 (SCQF level 6/7) in housing
- If the learner has housing experience, supervisory or management experience, they may be able to progress to the CIH Level 3 Certificate in Housing Practice.

## SCQF Level 5 descriptors

The SCQF 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. National 5, Modern Apprenticeship and SVQ 2 are examples of qualifications at this level.

Characteristic		The following descriptions are for guidance only-it is not expected that every point will be covered
1	<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	Demonstrate and/or work with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic knowledge</li> <li>• A range of simple facts, ideas and theories in, about, and associated with, a subject/discipline/sector</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of basic processes, materials and terminology.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Practice: applied knowledge, skills and understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relate knowledge and ideas to personal and/or practical contexts</li> <li>• Use a range of skills associated with the subject/discipline/sector to complete some routine and non-routine tasks</li> <li>• Plan and organise both familiar and unfamiliar tasks</li> <li>• Select appropriate tools and materials and use them safely and effectively</li> <li>• Adjust tools where necessary following safe practices.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Generic cognitive skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a process to deal with a problem, situation or issue that is straightforward</li> <li>• Operate in a familiar context, but where there is a need to take account of or use additional information of different kinds, some of which will be theoretical or hypothetical.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Communication, ICT and numeracy skills</b>	Use a range of routine skills, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce and respond to detailed written and oral communication in familiar contexts</li> <li>• Use standard ICT applications to process, obtain and combine information</li> <li>• Use a range of numerical and graphical data in routine contexts that may have some non-routine elements.</li> </ul>

Characteristic		The following descriptions are for guidance only-it is not expected that every point will be covered
5	<b>Autonomy, accountability and working with others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work alone or with others on tasks with minimum directive supervision</li> <li>• Agree goals and responsibilities for self and/or work team</li> <li>• Take lead responsibility for some tasks</li> <li>• Show an awareness of own and/or others' roles, responsibilities and requirements in carrying out work and contribute to the evaluation and improvement of practices and processes.</li> </ul>

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

This qualification is a mandatory enhancement in the Housing at SCQF level 6 modern apprenticeship. For more information on the apprenticeship see the framework document, <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/apprenticeships/modern-apprenticeships/modern-apprenticeship-frameworks/other-services/>.

## Qualification structure

Qualification title: CIH Certificate in Housing Practice at SCQF level 5

Learners must achieve a minimum of 14 credits from 4 mandatory units in order to be awarded the qualification.

CIH AO expects that 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 qualification is awarded on the basis of Pass / Refer / Fail.

### Mandatory units

The qualification contains the following 4 mandatory units, 14 credits must be achieved from this group:

Unit title	SCQF Credits	SCQF Level	Page
<a href="#">Housing provision and housing organisations</a> Unit number UM82 04	3	5	13
<a href="#">Customer service for housing</a> Unit number UM83 04	5	5	14
<a href="#">Professional development in housing</a> Unit number UM85 04	3	5	15
<a href="#">Assets, repairs and maintenance</a> Unit number UM86 04	3	5	16

## Delivering the qualification

### Approval to deliver the qualification

CIH AO centres must be approved by CIH AO to deliver the qualification. 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](http://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. a question relating to law would be applied to the law of the country in which the 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 SCQF level 5 (RQF level 2) or above, or;
- Enrolment and completion of a recognised Housing or Housing-related qualification at SCQF level 5 (RQF level 2) or above, within an agreed time period, or;
- Minimum 2-years' experience of working in a Housing or Housing-related organisation at Officer-level or above, or;
- Professional-level membership of a recognised Housing professional body.

## Indicative Role-Specific Requirements

Role*	Indicative Responsibilities	Indicative Requirements
<b>Tutor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of programme content</li> <li>• Interpretation of unit assessment criteria</li> <li>• Facilitating learning</li> <li>• Lesson planning</li> <li>• Learner support and feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A recognised L3 Teaching qualification, e.g., L3 Award in Education and Training (or equivalent PTLLS) <b>or</b></li> <li>• 12 months' teaching experience</li> </ul>
<b>Assessor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and development of assessment materials</li> <li>• Evaluating learner achievement against learning outcomes and assessment criteria</li> <li>• Learner support and feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>
<b>IQA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and oversight of IQA strategy</li> <li>• Sampling assessor judgements to ensure accuracy and consistency</li> <li>• Observation of teaching</li> <li>• Monitoring assessment practices</li> <li>• Assessor support and feedback</li> <li>• Coordinating / overseeing standardisation activity</li> <li>• Sharing best practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>

\*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](http://www.register.ofqual.gov.uk)

**Scotland:** [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/64775.html](http://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 the CIH AO).

### 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.

## Centre devised assessments

The 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 take into account the requirements of local employers.

## 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
- Task based assessments
- E-assessment
- Demonstration/ assignment
- Professional discussion interview
- Presentation.

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

Centres must 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 (e.g. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:awarding.organisation@cih.org).

## Housing provision and housing organisations

<b>SCQF unit level:</b>	5
<b>Unit credit value:</b>	3
<b>Unit reference number:</b>	UM82 04
<b>CIH AO reference number:</b>	HP201S
<b>Unit status:</b>	Mandatory

### Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of how housing is provided. Learners will consider different types of landlords, the range of services they offer, how they finance housing and the relationship between landlord and tenant.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand housing provision and tenure in the context of trends in the housing market.	1.1 Outline key trends in the housing market. 1.2 Describe different types of housing tenures. 1.3 Explain the key features of the main tenures.
2. Know about the relationship between landlord and tenant.	2.1 Describe the different types of landlord in the rental sector. 2.2 Describe the range of services landlords and/or housing organisations provide. 2.3 Describe the rights and responsibilities of different types of landlord and their tenants.
3. Know about the partnerships and collaborative working housing organisations engage in to provide services.	3.1 Identify partners, contractors and volunteers that work with housing providers to deliver services. 3.2 Outline the kinds of services provided by these partners, contractors and volunteers. 3.3 Explain the roles and responsibilities of housing organisations and their partners, contractors and volunteers in providing these services.
4. Know how housing organisations are regulated and funded.	4.1 Identify the role of the regulator/s in housing. 4.2 Identify ways housing organisations finance their housing operations.

## Customer service for housing

<b>SCQF unit level:</b>	5
<b>Unit credit value:</b>	5
<b>Unit reference number:</b>	UM83 04
<b>CIH AO reference number:</b>	HP202S
<b>Unit status:</b>	Mandatory

### Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of customer service including equality and diversity and an awareness of the needs of different customers within the housing context.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Understand the principles of customer service.	1.1 Describe the principles of customer service. 1.2 Explain the importance of confidentiality in customer service. 1.3 Describe appropriate ways of responding to customers in difficult circumstances.
2. Know the diverse range and needs of housing customers.	2.1 List the different customers of a housing organisation. 2.2 Identify the different needs of these customers.
3. Understand the principles of equality and diversity.	3.1 Explain the principles of equality and diversity. 3.2 Outline the main provisions of equality and diversity policy and legislation.

## Professional development in housing

<b>SCQF unit level:</b>	5
<b>Unit credit value:</b>	3
<b>Unit reference number:</b>	UM85 04
<b>CIH AO reference number:</b>	HP203S
<b>Unit status:</b>	Mandatory

### Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of different roles within a housing context and the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to fulfil them. The learner will also explore their personal professional development.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Know about paid and voluntary roles in the housing sector.	1.1 Identify paid and voluntary roles within the housing sector. 1.2 Describe different roles within the housing sector, both paid and voluntary.
2. Understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to work within the housing sector.	2.1 Explore the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary for a particular role, in the housing sector. 2.2 Compare own knowledge, skills and behaviours to those required by a particular role. 2.3 Define ethics and professionalism in housing.
3. Be able to plan personal professional development.	3.1 Identify individual knowledge and skills needs. 3.2 Outline the qualifications, training and development opportunities that would be suitable to meet individual knowledge and skills needs.

## Assets, repairs and maintenance

<b>SCQF unit level:</b>	5
<b>Unit credit value:</b>	3
<b>Unit reference number:</b>	UM86 04
<b>CIH AO reference number:</b>	HP204S
<b>Unit status:</b>	Mandatory

### Unit purpose/aim

The unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of main types of dwellings and how they are maintained and repaired.

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1. Know the main types of dwellings across the housing stock.	1.1 Describe the main types of construction of housing stock and how it has changed over time. 1.2 Summarise the main structural features of a typical dwelling. 1.3 Identify the utilities provided to a typical dwelling.
2. Understand the concept of asset management for housing organisations.	2.1 Summarise the purpose of asset management in housing. 2.2 Identify types of activity included in asset management.
3. Understand the process for managing repairs and maintenance of housing stock.	3.1 Describe the process used to deliver a responsive repairs service. 3.2 Describe the process used to deliver planned programmes of work.



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