

## Qualification Specification for:

# KPA Level 3 Certificate In Pensions Administration (RQF)

Qualification Number: 600/4971/6

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## 1. Introduction

#### **About KPA**

Kaplan Professional Awards (KPA) is a nationally recognised Awarding Organisation which offers high quality accredited qualifications. KPA works with national and local organisations to develop and widen access to high quality and flexible education and learning.

Our mission is to offer the best possible qualifications and resources, and to put these opportunities in the hands of as many people as possible.

#### **KPA Qualifications**

KPA Qualifications are developed to ensure they provide a clear measure of the individuals' achievement while highlighting their ability to meet the requirements of the industry in which they wish to operate. KPA work with industry specialists to ensure the qualification modules/units and their assessments are set at a suitable level for the age range and industry requirements.

## 2. Qualification summary

This specification will provide key information about the KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration (RQF) qualification.

This qualification is regulated by Ofqual and listed on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications:

Qualification title	Qualification number
KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration (RQF)	600/4971/6

The KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration (RQF) qualification has seven mandatory units. The qualification has a total credit value of 18 credits assigned for completion of the full qualification.

This qualification has been developed with pension practitioners to ensure it meets the needs of the industry. Given the legislative changes impacting on pensions, there is more of a requirement than ever for businesses to ensure their employees are equipped with the necessary pension knowledge and practical skills to ensure this crucial process is carried out accurately and efficiently.

The structure is set at seven mandatory units with one examination and six projects identified as the assessment methodology. The learners will be able to demonstrate their level of knowledge and understanding while achieving the qualification as a pass/fail.

This qualification provides a clear opportunity for learners to develop and demonstrate their level of knowledge, understanding and application of job roles in the pensions industry. Learners will undertake seven key areas related to pension administration, assessment of these areas will include written assignments and an exam. Upon successful completion, learners will achieve a nationally recognised KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration.

The qualification is graded at pass or fail.

#### **Qualification Target Group**

The KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration (RQF) qualification is suitable for individuals who either currently work or want to work within the following job roles:

- Pensions Supervisor
- Pensions Manager
- Pensions Team Leader
- Pensions Clerk

- Pensions Assistant
- Pensions Administrator

#### **Progression opportunities**

The CIPP Foundation Degree in Pensions Administration and Management.

#### **Entry Requirements**

KPA qualifications are designed for learners who are typically 16 years of age or older.

#### **Exemptions and/or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

There are no exemptions for this qualification.

#### **Delivery Languages**

This qualification is available in English only at this time.

## 3. Structure and Content

This qualification is composed of 7 units. The individual must successfully complete all required assessments to obtain the qualification certification. The total qualification time is 175 hours.

The Qualification consists of the following Mandatory Units:

Qualification Structure	Number of mandatory and or optional units			
Module/Unit title	Assessment method	Mandatory /Optional	Level	GLH
Transferring into and out of Pension Schemes	Assignment	Mandatory	3	20
Overview of UK Pension Schemes	Assignment	Mandatory	3	20
Providing Pension Scheme Information	Assignment	Mandatory	3	20
Creating and Maintaining Pension Scheme Member Records	Assignment	Mandatory	3	20
Payment of Scheme Benefits to Pensioners	Assignment	Mandatory	3	20
Amend Pension Records to Reflect a Member's Change of Circumstances	Assignment	Mandatory	3	40
Working as a Member of the Pensions Team	Computer based exam	Mandatory	3	20

#### **Rules of Combination**

This qualification is composed of 7 units. The learner must successfully complete all 7 units to achieve this qualification.

The units can be taken in any order.

#### **Offering the Qualification**

This qualification is only available through KPA recognised centres. If you would like to find out more about either becoming a recognised centre or working in partnership with a recognised centre please access the 'Become a KPA Recognised Centre' tab <u>by clicking here</u>, or emailing <u>kpaenquiries@kaplan.co.uk</u>.

#### **Becoming an approved KPA centre**

To become an approved KPA centre you will be required to meet both general and specific requirements to ensure the standard and quality of the qualification delivery is maintained year on year.

All approved centres will be subject to KPA's ongoing quality assurance processes including centre visits which will focus on the internal quality assurance process, management of the qualification delivery and the service provided to the student.

#### 4. Units

#### How the qualification works

This qualification is made up of unit(s) representing a small block of learning focusing on a particular topic or area of study relevant to the qualification.

#### Each unit includes a:

- 1. Level which indicates the unit difficulty
- 2. Total Qualification Time (TQT) the total amount of time a typical learner would take to complete the different activities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes of a whole qualification. TQT includes guided learning hours (GLH) plus tutor directed unsupervised learning and assessment activities.
- 3. Learning outcome statement of our expectations of the learner and what the learner can expect to know, understand or do as a result of a process of learning.
  - a. Each learning outcome is linked to a number of assessment criteria.
- 4. Assessment criteria descriptions of the requirements a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved

#### **Understanding learning outcomes**

There are two main types of learning outcome:

- skills that can be performed
- knowledge that can be learned

It's possible that they can cover a combination of the two.

#### **Competence/Skills based learning outcomes:**

• Linked to a practical skill that can demonstrate competence and/or performance of a specific activity or skill.

#### **Knowledge based learning outcomes:**

• Reflects evidence that can be recorded in ways other than observation.

#### **Achievement at level 3**

#### **Knowledge descriptor (the learner...)**

Has 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.

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Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.

Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work.

Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

#### Skills descriptor (the learner can...)

Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.

Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.

Review how effective methods and actions have been.

Unit 1: Transferring into and out of Pension Schemes						
Level	3		Code	PE301		
GLH	20		тот	22		
	ı					
Learning outcome	Asse	essment crite	ria			
The learner will:	The	learner can:				
1. Understand the regulations and	1.1	•	importance of applyi regulations after rece			
requirements placed on pension schemes when dealing with	1.2		ne information req a transfer into or ou	•		
transfers.	1.3	Describe the limitations and consequences around financial issues when dealing with groups or individuals in relation to pension schemes.				
	1.4	Explain the need to have complete security and confidentiality of all data and information including consequences of failure to do so.				
	1.5	Explain the importance of applying the regulatory and scheme regulations after receiving a request.				
2. Be able to meet all requirements and verify all data to	2.1	Describe how to verify that all data received or issued is complete, and in the appropriate format for transfers both into and out of a pension scheme.				
enable pension transfers both into and out of a pension scheme.	2.2	Explain the implications of working with documents and forms documents and forms which are not duly authorised, or a scheme which is not HMRC registered.				
	2.3	with regula	nd communicate transations, organisational including service la opriate.)	processes and		
	2.4	Discuss the process of making amendments including requesting additional information.				
	2.5 Explain the need to have complete secu confidentiality of all data and info including consequences of failure to do so.					

	2.6	Review, interpret and enter the transfer into a pensions system to enable the valuation to take place.
Assessment method	Cent	re-devised assignment

Unit 2: Overview o	Unit 2: Overview of UK Pension Schemes							
Level	3		Code	PE300				
GLH	20		тQТ	22				
	•							
Learning outcome	Asse	ssment criter	ria					
The learner will:	The	learner can:						
1. Know the different types of	1.1		aspects used to differ pension provision avai					
Pensions available in the UK.	1.2	Explain the schemes.	e structure of occup	ational pension				
	1.3	.3 Describe the main alternatives to an occupational pension scheme.						
	1.4	Discuss the general interactions between the state pension scheme and the alternatives.						
	1.5	Describe the funding and benefit structures of various UK pension schemes.						
2. Understand the role of the HMRC, the Pension	2.1	Discuss the role and impact of HMRC legislation on contributions and benefits relating to occupational pension schemes.						
regulators and other key groups and individuals in relation to UK	2.2	Identify the bodies involved in advising, administering, governing, regulating and protecting UK pension schemes.						
pension schemes.	2.3							
	2.4 Undertake appropriate research to find necessary information relating to different pe schemes and individuals.							
3. Know the annual and triennial requirements HMRC apply to UK	3.1	Explain the annual reporting requirements relating to pension schemes in the UK.						
	3.2	Describe the information and content required for all types of reports.						
pension schemes including the	3.3	•	nature of the trienni K pension schemes.	al requirements				

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reporting requirements.	3.4	Discuss the impact on an organisation if they are non-compliant with the UK pension scheme requirements.
Assessment method	Cent	re-devised assignment

Unit 3: Providing Pension Scheme Information								
Level	3	Code	PE302					
GLH	20	тQт	22					
Learning outcome	Assessment crite	ria						
The learner will:	The learner can:							
1. Know the criteria for	1.1 Explain the individual to jo	eligibility criteria req oin UK pension schemes						
membership of UK pension scheme/s.	•	formation provided be a UK pension scheme.	y individuals					
2. Be able to	2.1 Identify the be	est fit pension scheme fo	r individuals.					
provide information to potential members	2.2 Describe the requirements of pension schemes to achieve maximum return.							
of UK pension schemes.								
3. Be able to provide	•	oncept of pension transefit some individuals.	sfers and how					
information to members where their changing		options for increasing service by dditional years.						
circumstances can impact on their potential pension	3.3 Describe the various additional volunta contribution schemes enabling maximum return for the member.							
benefits/rights.	3.4 Identify changes in circumstance and describe the implication these might have on pension rights.							
	3.5 Explain the im for an individu	nplications of leaving a poul	ension scheme					
Assessment method	Centre-devised as	ssignment						

Unit 4: Creating a	nd M	aintaining I	Pension Scheme	Member Reco	ords		
Level	3		Code	PE303			
GLH	20		TQT	22			
Learning outcome	Asse	ssment criter	ria				
The learner will:	The	learner can:					
1. Understand the scheme rules and organisational	1.1		e organisation's pr e regulations for	•			
procedures for creating and amending member pension scheme	1.2	•	organisation's pro e regulations for	· •			
records.	1.3	Discuss the need for signatories and authorisations in relation to both internal and scheme policies and procedures.					
	1.4	1.4 Communicate the scheme requirement medical evidence (if any) to a member scheme.					
2. Be able to complete the new member process within the relevant	new record on the scheme database appropriate pension administration syst						
timescales.	2.2	status wit	new member of hin the required hal service level agr	d scheme ar	nable nd/or		
	2.3	Discuss the importance of maintaining and updating the information on the scheme database.					
3. Be able to investigate and	3.1	Discuss the importance of maintaining and updating the information on the scheme database			and base.		
where possible resolve discrepancies in new member applications.	3.2	Describe how you would ascertain whether the error is within the limits of your remit or whether requires a more senior member of staff to intervene to resolve the error.					
аррисацопз.	3.2		e discrepancies colve these discrepa				

				organisational processes.	and	regulatory
Assessment method	Cent	re-dev	ised assign	ment		

Unit 5: Payment of Scheme Benefits to Pensioners							
Level	3		Code	PE304			
GLH	20		тот	22			
Learning outcome	Asse	ssment criter	ria				
The learner will:	The	learner can:					
1. Understand the scheme and regulatory rules	1.1	that the so	cheme and regulatory oftware used for paym n line with current legis	nent of pension			
relating to the data required to set up a pensioner payroll database.	1.2	•	Explain the importance of ensuring a member's record is amended to accurately reflect the current				
	1.3	Explain how the scheme's processes and procedures ensure that all data received is authorised as required before processing for payment takes place.					
	1.4	Discuss the separation of duties and provide the appropriate audit trail to confirm actions taker which lessen the instances of fraud.					
2. Understand the scheme and regulatory rules	2.1	Explain the payment methods and frequency to administrators and those members receiving payments.					
relating to the calculations and processes involved		Describe how you would deal effectively and efficiently with returned payments (e.g. BACS failure, returned cheques etc.)					
in processing a pensioner payroll.	2.3	Discuss the need to monitor bank reconciliation to review outstanding payments and any link this may have to protecting the fund from fraud.					
	2.4	Discuss the level of specialist knowledge required to evaluate the impact of applying Pay As You Earn (PAYE) income tax rules on pension payments.					
	2.5	member's e	alculate payments due estate and ensure tha n the payment system.				

	2.6	Manually calculate payments due to a deceased member's estate and ensure that all entries are made within the payment system.
	2.7	Discuss the need to ensure that any payments made are in line with current PAYE and other legislation which is applicable to the payment of pension benefits.
	2.8	Describe the need to ensure that all statutory deadlines and returns are made to HMRC as set out for the schemes.
3. Understand the scheme and regulatory rules for determination of continued payment of pension benefits.	3.1	Discuss how to determine which scheme member needs to provide evidence that they are still alive and the frequency of existence checks.
	3.2	Explain the need to collate and manage the return of the required evidence.
	3.3	Describe the process to be followed if you arrange for payment to be suspended prior to investigations into the last whereabouts of the member.
4. Be able to communicate with the pension member in line with scheme, regulatory rules, organisational processes and procedures and service level agreements as required.	4.1	Describe a typical process to be followed once all required information has been accepted in relation to the payment suspension.
	4.2	Explain how to commence investigations into the last whereabouts of the member for the pension benefit before any recommencement of payments.
	4.3	Explain how to ensure the member's record is accurately amended to reflect the current position of the member.
Assessment method	Centre-devised assignment	

Unit 6: Amend Pension Records to Reflect Member's Change in Circumstances						
Level	3		Code	PE305		
GLH	40		ТQТ	43		
Learning outcome	Assessment criteria					
The learner will:	The	learner can:				
1. Know the regulatory and scheme rules relating to a member leaving the scheme before retirement.	1.1	Describe the requirements placed on a pension scheme by the regulator when they are notified that a member is leaving.				
	1.2	Identify potential reasons for an individual deciding to leave a pension scheme before retirement.				
	1.3	Explain the reasons for providing financial information only, while showing awareness of the consequences of non-compliance.				
	1.4	Identify the potential of deferred benefits that may be accrued.				
	1.5	pensionable	he former mene status within the	required scheme		
	1.6		d resolve discrep with scheme, org nents.			
2. Understand the regulatory and scheme rules relating to various circumstances which impact on pension benefits.	2.1	Discuss the circumstances other than 'norma retirement when other pension benefits migh become payable in line with the regulatory and scheme rules and the benefits payable.				
	2.2	pension b become pa	circumstances whe enefits (redundan yable in line with t es and the benefits p	cy/efficiency) may the regulatory and		
	2.3	an employe such aware	e types of discretioner may award, the disciplination in the with the sand the benefits p	circumstances of ne regulatory and		

	2.4	Identify a member's entitlement to long-term pension benefits, in line with the regulatory and scheme rules and the benefits payable. Interpret the scheme and regulatory rules to determine the type of benefit payable in the event of a member's death.
3. Understand the various circumstances dictating the type of death benefits in line with the scheme and regulatory rules.	3.1	Describe the type of death benefits under the following circumstances:  a) In service b) While receiving pension payments c) After a divorce
	3.2	Explain the sequence of data gathering to ensure that all information required is available to ensure that no unnecessary delay occurs.
	3.3	Provide information and communicate with the member's executor in relation to the amount of benefits payable.
	3.4	Discuss the reason for:  a) Not giving financial advice  b) Giving financial information only  c) Being fully aware of the consequences for non-compliance
	3.5	Identify the splitting of pension benefits on divorce, in line with the regulatory and scheme rules and the benefits payable.
	3.6	Explain the conditions relating to dependants' benefits, identifying the type of benefit (s), the method of calculation and their duration.
4. Be able to calculate and communicate pension benefits while using the organisational processes and procedures to meet agreed service levels with	4.1	Review, interpret and enter the benefit data into a pension's administration system to enable the calculation to take place.
	4.2	Identify where corrections need to be made, request further information if necessary, then update the system and recalculate.
	4.3	Arrange for the commencement of payment of pension benefits once all required information has been received/accepted.
all requirements.	4.4	Ensure that the member's record is amended as appropriate and that the information held

		accurately reflects the current position of the member.
	4.5	Calculate the value of the refunds, deferred pensions and transfer values.
	4.6	Describe the method of communicating the calculation of any deferred benefits that may be accrued to the member.
	4.7	Discuss the circumstances when an entitlement to a transfer value may be acquired and the methods of its calculation.
Assessment method	Cent	re-devised assignment

Unit 7: Working as	s a Me	mbei	r of the Pen	sions Team		
Level	3		Code	PE306		
GLH	20		тот	22		
Learning outcome	Assessment criteria					
The learner will:	The le	earner	can: learning	outcome		
1. Be able to work effectively as	1.1	Describe how an individual could operate effectively within the team environment.				
part of a pensions team	1.2	1.2 Explain the processes and deadlines a member of the pensions team needs to understand.				
	1.3	1.3 Discuss the importance of communication within the pension's team including communicating with the team leader/manager.				
2. Understand the importance of	2.1	.1 Describe the possible ways to communicate effectively with scheme members.				
clear and timely communication with scheme members.	2.2	Discuss the various methods that they could use to provide a response to a question/query and give three clear examples of the methods they have used.				
	2.3		understand		nember ensuring being relayed to	
	2.4	style form	and tone o	f the pension communication	wing the house scheme with all (including email	
3. Be able to consistently meet the customer service standards defined for the pension's team.	3.1	Explain the importance of providing a response to enquiries while meeting expectations set by the service standards.				
	3.2	lang	_	e the enquirer	the appropriate understands the	
	3.3		•	pact of poor co	ommunication in progress.	

Assessment	1.5 hour computer-based test
method	

## 5. Quality Assurance Processes

#### **Assessment**

KPA will put in place a system of QA which allows it to maintain a high level of control over the development, delivery and awarding of the qualification. In particular it will require centres to meet the particular requirements for each type of assessment. KPA External Quality Advisors will be responsible for ensuring centres meet the approved centre requirements relating to specific types of assessment and/or examination delivery.

#### **Centre Resources**

KPA approved centres are required to provide the right human and physical resources needed to ensure the quality of the learner experience. Centres must ensure that staff have the appropriate level of subject knowledge, practical experience of the sector and are normally qualified to at least a degree standard. It is desirable that staff have a teaching and/or assessing qualification.

The physical resources required will vary depending on the style of delivery. Where distance or blended learning is used, KPA expects centres to have appropriate learning support materials, infrastructure and technology in place to meet student needs.

#### Certification

On completion of the qualification, KPA will confer upon the learner the award of

#### **KPA Level 3 Certificate in Pensions Administration (RQF)**

KPA will send learners' certificates to learners within 21 working days.

#### **Fees**

You can find our Fees and Pricing Brochure on our Qualifications page by clicking here.

## 6. Access arrangements and Reasonable adjustments

KPA complies with the Equality Act 2010 and Ofqual general conditions of recognition regarding fair assessment. Students are asked to notify KPA or their centre on registration so that their needs may be considered.

Candidates are able to request alternative access due to short-term or long-term indispositions. Applications must meet the relevant deadlines as laid out in the Access Arrangements for Examinations policy. Students who have been granted access arrangements must inform KPA or their centre immediately if the circumstances related to their access arrangements change prior to the sitting of the examination in question.

#### **Access arrangements**

Access arrangements allow candidates with specific needs; such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries, to access an assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. The purpose behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment and are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010\* to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

#### **Reasonable Adjustments**

The awarding body is required to make reasonable adjustments for a candidate with a disability, as defined in the Equality Act 2010\*; who would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

An adjustment to be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include, but are not limited to the:

- needs of the disabled candidate;
- effectiveness of the adjustment;
- cost of the adjustment
- likely impact of the adjustment

# **Appendix A: definitions for assessment verbs**

Analyse	Break down a subject or complex situation into its component parts, examine each part in detail, and identify the main issues. Explain how the key ideas relate to practice and their importance, using references to current research or theory to support your analysis.
Apply	Demonstrate how existing knowledge is relevant and can be used in new or practical situations.
Assess	Review information or situations carefully to make a well-reasoned judgement. This may include considering different aspects or perspectives to decide their importance or value.
Clarify	Provide a clear and concise explanation of the information.
Compare	Examine two or more subjects in detail, highlighting their similarities and differences.
Define	Provide the precise meaning of a word, phrase, or process.
Describe	Present a detailed and logical account of factual information about a topic or item.
Develop	Build upon and expand a topic, plan, or idea, providing additional depth and detail.
Differentiate	Recognise and explain the differences between two or more items.

Discuss	Present a detailed account that includes a range of views or opinions, incorporating contrasting perspectives where relevant.
Distinguish	Clearly explain the differences between two or more items, resources, or pieces of information.
Draw conclusions	Identify logical outcomes based on evidence and provide potential recommendations.
Evaluate	Assess strengths, weaknesses, arguments, and evidence from different perspectives. Form a reasoned conclusion or judgement based on the evaluation.
Explain	Provide detailed information that explains how or why something occurs, including reasoning and examples to support your explanation. Demonstrate an understanding of underlying concepts.
Identify	Recognise and list the main points or ascertain the origin, nature, or defining characteristics of a subject.
Illustrate	Provide a clear explanation or description, using examples such as spoken or written words, pictures, or diagrams.
Judgment	Form a reasoned opinion or decision based on the available evidence.
Justify	Provide a thorough explanation of the reasons behind actions or decisions, supporting them with evidence or reasoning.
List/state	Present a list of items, words, statements, or comments in a clear format.
Outline	Briefly identify and clearly describe the main points of a subject.

Provide	Present relevant and detailed information specific to the subject.
Recommend	Based on conclusions, suggest appropriate courses of action or strategies for improvement. Use conclusions to suggest ways forward or course of action
Report	Create a detailed and structured account describing an event, situation, or activity.
Select and apply	Make informed choices and demonstrate their relevance to specific situations.
Summarise	Extract and present the main ideas, arguments, or facts in a clear and concise manner.