



ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma
in Leadership
610/5391/0

Qualification Specification v2

Version Control

Version and date	Change details	Section
V1-2025-02-28	Draft for accreditation	
V2-2025-03-05	Updated qual numbers	

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About ABE

Recognition

ABE Level 3 qualifications are aligned to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements. All ABE qualifications are part of the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). ABE is fully regulated by Ofqual, the qualifications regulator for England. In addition to Ofqual, ABE has agreements or recognition by regulatory authorities in many other countries where we operate – check our website for more details.

ABE diplomas

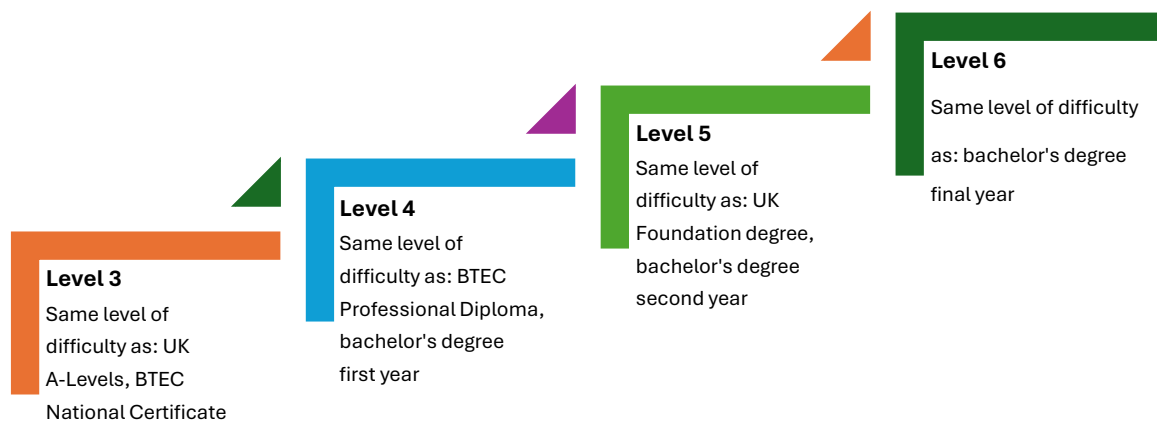
Our diplomas are management focused and blend common units with more specialist subject areas, enabling you, through the learning, to develop expertise in particular disciplines as well as a strong understanding of business management in general. They represent the latest in professional standards and provide opportunities for students to develop professional behaviours. Our focus on developing practical workplace knowledge and skills alongside academic expertise, is a winning combination for ABE graduates.

ABE diplomas are valued internationally because they are:

Professional	Our qualifications are designed to give you the knowledge and skills you need to excel in a managerial career.
Affordable	ABE is a not-for-profit organisation; as such we endeavour to keep costs to a minimum. Our fast track routes to degrees are often much less expensive than traditional routes.
Recognised	In addition to respected regulatory authorities, our qualifications are recognised by colleges, universities, employers and governments around the world.
Supported	As an ABE member, you can access a wealth of resources designed to support your studies and enhance your learning experience. Each ABE unit has its own study guide, and we support our colleges with tuition resources to help them deliver teaching to an outstanding standard.
International	For more than 50 years, learners around the world have been benefitting from ABE qualifications.
Proven	Our alumni speak for themselves – see their testimonials on our website. They work in a diverse range of industries and organisations. Many are in top jobs or running their own successful enterprises.
Flexible	You can study full time or part time at a pace that suits you. All our diplomas provide expertise in business management and offer you the option of specialising in Marketing, Human Resources or Leadership alongside this.

About your qualification

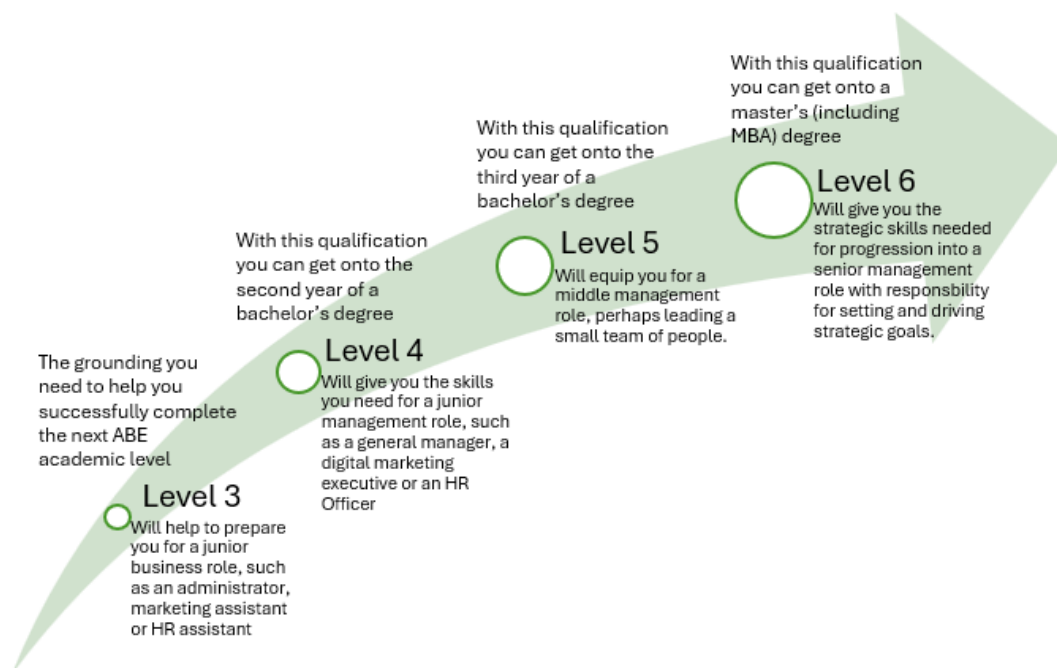
ABE is regulated by Ofqual who also manage the Regulated Qualifications Framework, which ABE Diplomas are accredited against. Qualifications within the RQF must be levelled against the RQF level descriptors to ensure they are broadly similar in the knowledge and depth of understanding required to pass them. The size and the content of qualifications at the same level can vary. The diagram below shows how the levels progress.



Pathways

ABE's framework of business management qualifications runs from Level 3, right through to Level 6. You can enter at Level 3 and progress all the way to Level 6, enabling you to accumulate the credits needed for a university top-up, or you can enter onto the framework at any point depending on your centre's professional and academic judgement – see our 'Entry guidance' section for more details.

Progression



ABE qualifications have been designed with progression in mind and, after completing one of our qualifications, you can progress to employment or to a higher level of study.

ABE offers you a full framework of qualifications that have been designed for you to be able to progress right from Level 3 all the way up to Level 6. Each qualification builds from the one before, taking you from introductory units through to strategic ones.

The Level 3–6 Diplomas do not have any pre-requisites, and you are free to start on the Level that best suits where you are in your learning journey and the scope of the academic requirement in each qualification. ABE recommends that you follow the learning of one qualification at a time, but this is not a requirement.

The ABE Level 3 Foundation Diplomas are each worth 40 credits, making them ideal for supporting you in progressing to higher education. They provide you with a recognised qualification that can enhance your career prospects and employability and enable you to develop your knowledge and skills in business.

You have the opportunity to take advantage of one of our university partnerships (see website for more details on progression arrangement and exemptions).

Qualification summary

Qualification title

ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership

Operational start date

3rd March 2025

Qualification objective

The objectives of the ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership are as follows:

- To equip learners with knowledge and understanding of the nature of leadership and different leadership styles.
- To equip learners with knowledge of the skills needed to be an effective leader.
- To equip learners with knowledge and skills in relation to how to lead and work effectively in a team.
- To provide opportunities for learners to enter or progress in employment in business, or progress to higher education qualifications.
- To offer learners the chance of career progression in their chosen field.
- To allow flexibility of study and to meet local or specialist needs.

Who is it for?

This qualification is for learners that are 16 and over. It gives learners the opportunity to learn about Leadership alongside other fields of study, in order to progress to study a range of higher education courses. This qualification can also support those looking to progress into, or within, employment.

The ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership is built upon the subjects covered in the ABE Level 2 Certificates and give a more extensive coverage of knowledge and understanding in developing your leadership brand, building stakeholder relationships, and leading others.

Who regulates this qualification?

The qualification is regulated in the UK by:

- Ofqual

Entry guidance and criteria

There are no formal entry requirements to study ABE Level 3 Diplomas; however, the centre should ensure that you have a reasonable expectation of success on the programme by assessing your previous qualifications and/or related work experience.

Hence, it is their responsibility to use professional and academic judgement when assisting you in making the decision at which level you should enter the ABE programmes.

In order to successfully study for an ABE qualification, you should have an appropriate level of English language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). For the ABE Level 3 Diplomas, ABE recommends the following standards are met:

- IELTS - 6
- Cambridge ESOL - Cambridge English First - Cambridge English Advanced (points score 196 or above)
- Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) - 56
- Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) - B2

Centres can use other English language tests as a measure of a learner's English language skills; but the centre must be satisfied that the score is equivalent to those recommended above.

Before the qualification can be assessed and awarded

To be awarded the ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership learners are required to successfully achieve the **four units from the leadership 'pillar': two mandatory and two optional units.**

Knowledge, skills and understanding to be assessed

The knowledge, skills and understanding being assessed in this qualification are:

- Understanding the nature of leadership in the workplace, different leadership styles and the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective leadership.
- Developing knowledge and relevance of leadership theory and models, together with the challenges and opportunities that can be faced in leadership roles.
- Understanding of what is required for effective followership and how leadership can support an inclusive working environment for followers.
- Understanding of how to create a strong personal leadership brand.
- Understanding of the importance of stakeholder relationships and how to manage them, including stakeholder theory relevant to the workplace.
- Understanding of how motivational theory affects performance in the workplace and how leaders motivate and support individuals and teams to achieve goals, objectives and deliver results.
- Knowledge and understanding of how leaders align individual and team goals to their organisations' goals and objectives.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL), accreditation of prior learning (APL), and exemptions

If you hold a qualification from either another professional body or university which is similar in content and level to the ABE Level 3, 4, 5 or 6 qualifications, you might qualify for RPL, APL or an exemption from some ABE units.

If you wish to find out if you qualify for any exemptions before you register with us, please send us a letter or an email to admissions@abeuk.com and we will forward you a copy of the ABE Exemptions Policy and application form.

If you are already registered, you can find further information on the [ABE Portal](#).

Qualification Structure

ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership

Learners must complete **two** core mandatory units and **two** optional units from the leadership 'pillar' to achieve ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership. In order to be awarded the qualification learners must achieve a minimum of a Pass in **all four units**.

The total Guided Learning Hours (GLH) is **200 hours**

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) is **400 hours**

The credit value is **40**

ABE Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credits	Assessment Method
Core Mandatory Units					
3UPL	Principles of Leadership	3	50	10	Assignment
3UDLC	Developing Leadership Capability	3	50	10	Assignment
Optional Units					
3UBSR	Building Stakeholder Relationships	3	50	10	Assignment
3ULSO	Leading and Supporting Others to Deliver Results	3	50	10	Assignment

Suggested reading and resources for the qualification

For each unit in the ABE qualifications, ABE will provide the following learning materials:

- A Study Guide in PDF format available on the ABE Portal. This Study Guide is suitable for use by learners to support their studies and for tutors as the basis for their teaching. It will expand on the Unit Syllabus, including examples, activities, a recommended reading list and a glossary of terms.
- Tutor Guide for centres. This gives tutor-focused recommendations on how best to teach this syllabus.
- A set of Frequently Asked Questions.

Assessment

ABE's assessments are specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. The ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership is assessed by Assignments set by ABE. You can find out how each unit is assessed by checking the Unit Specification in this document, or the qualification tables above.

Assignment

ABE sets assignments in the form of an assignment brief. Sometimes a scenario and/or templates are provided as well. An organisation context is required. Learners can find the required word count for each assignment on the front of the assignment brief. For more information on assignments, please go to the questions and answers section of the ABE website.

Learners have three opportunities per year to submit assignments. For further details please visit the assessment section of the ABE website: <https://www.abeuk.com/assessments>.

All assignments submitted are marked by ABE. Results are released by ABE on each session's specified Results Day.

For more information on results release, please consult ABE Website. Centres can find out more information about submitting assignments in the Centre Delivery Guide.

Marking and moderation

ABE has a broad and varied external academic team with a breadth of experience across the qualification areas and levels. Our external assessment team marks across the three assessment windows and is very familiar with ABE students and the format of ABE exams and assignments. ABE has a very robust marking and moderation process: assessments are marked and standardised by our external team, after which they go through two phases of moderation. The results are presented to the assessment board for ratification, prior to publishing.

Additional examination requirements

There are no additional examination requirements for this qualification.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

In the development of this qualification ABE has taken steps to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to achievement. For learners with particular requirements reasonable adjustments may be made in order that they can have fair assessment and demonstrate attainment. There are also

arrangements for special consideration for any learner suffering illness, injury or indisposition. Full details of the reasonable adjustments and special considerations are available from the ABE Portal.

Appeals and enquiry of results

ABE has an appeals procedure that has been written in accordance with the regulatory arrangements in the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition. Full details of this procedure, including how to make an application, are available on the [ABE Portal](#).

You can find further information relating to ABE assessment on the Exam Regulations section of the [ABE website](#).

Grading

In order to achieve an ABE qualification, you must demonstrate sufficient depth of study and acquisition of knowledge and skills expected for the qualification. You will need to demonstrate your achievement through the assessments set by ABE. On completion of your ABE qualification, you will be awarded an overall qualification grade based on your performance across all of your unit assessments.

The following qualification grades are available:

Grade
Distinction
Merit
Pass
Fail

Units will be assessed using the following grading scale:

Grade	Boundary
Distinction	70 - 100
Merit	55 - 69
Pass	40 - 54
Fail	0 - 39

Calculation of the qualification grade

The overall qualification grade will be calculated based on learner performance at unit level. Each unit carries a maximum of 100 points. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the learner's performance in all units to the value of 40 credits. All units in the qualification must be attempted and contribute to your final grade. A minimum of Pass is required for all units in order to complete the qualification.

ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership

Grade	Boundary points threshold
Distinction	280-400
Merit	220-275
Pass	160-219
Fail	0 – 159

Grade descriptors

The table below details the grade descriptors that will be used to make judgements on grade boundaries. These descriptors will also help you to understand what we expect to see in order to achieve each grade.

Level 3			
0-39 Fail	40-54 Pass	55-69 Merit	70-100 Distinction
Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter			
Lack of, limited or incomplete knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory and concepts; lack of ability to apply concepts to a relevant context.	Adequate knowledge and understanding of most key areas of the subject matter and of appropriate theory, but with some minor gaps; sometimes able to apply to a relevant context.	Good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory; understands how to apply them to a relevant context.	Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of appropriate theory; consistently able to apply to a relevant context.
Information gathering, use of sources and data			
Lack of, limited or only partially completed evidence of information gathering; limited use of data and of relevant sources.	Adequate evidence of information gathering, use of sources and data; some use of data and of relevant sources.	Clear evidence of a range of information gathering, use of sources and data, used to support answers; good use of data and of relevant sources.	High level of evidence of information gathering, use of sources and data, all of which is relevant and used consistently to support answers.
Application, analysis and interpretation			
Lack of or limited interpretation and application of theory and concepts; weak or missing analysis, justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Adequate interpretation and application of theory and concepts; adequate analysis, justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Good interpretation and application of theory and concepts; generally supported analysis, justifications and recommendations where relevant.	Outstanding interpretation and application of theory and concepts; analysis justifications and recommendations are thorough and consistently supported where relevant.
Professional communication			
Poor or inappropriate standard of presentation, structure and editing; several presentation errors, lacking in relevant	Adequate and logical presentation, structure and editing; minor errors, generally using relevant examples where appropriate; referencing	Good standard of presentation, structure and editing; limited number of errors, using relevant examples where appropriate; work is	Excellent standard of presentation, structure and editing; well-structured and no errors, using highly relevant and topical examples where

examples; poorly referenced.	is generally adequate but inconsistent.	accurately referenced throughout.	appropriate; high quality referencing throughout.
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Results and certification

The results release date for each session is published on your Portal dashboard and on the Assessment page of the website.

If you are taking an ABE Diploma, please allow three months from the date of your results to the receipt of your certificate. Certificates are usually dispatched around six weeks after results have been published (this is to allow time for any enquiries about results or appeals). Transit times vary according to which country you are in.

Unit specifications

In the second section of this document, you will find the Unit Specification for each unit included in the ABE Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Leadership.

The Unit Specification contains all the information you need about a particular unit, including the Credit value, Guided Learning Hours and the Unit Syllabus details. You should use the Unit Specifications to see what you will be expected to learn and what you will be expected to demonstrate in your assessments.

Unit Type: Mandatory

Level: 3

Credits: 10

GLH: 50

Assessment Method: Assignment

This unit is designed to provide an understanding of leadership within an organisational context and the impact of leadership approaches and styles.

The aim is to introduce leadership principles for learners who wish to develop their understanding of leadership models and theories and how they are applied.

On completion of this unit, you will know a range of leadership theories, models and styles and their application within teams and organisations. Additionally, you will understand the opportunities and challenges encountered in leadership, with strategies to minimise or overcome challenges faced.

What you'll learn

The table below shows the learning outcomes of this unit (what you will be able to do or what you will know), along with the assessment criteria (what you will be able to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome).

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Weighting
1. Understand the nature of leadership in the workplace	1.1 Explain the differences between leadership and management 1.2 Describe the roles and responsibilities of leaders at different levels in an organisation 1.3 Discuss the impact of an organisation's culture on effective leadership	26%
2. Understand different leadership styles and their application	2.1 Explain different leadership styles using a recognised model or theory 2.2 Describe the factors that will influence the choice of leadership styles 2.3 Explain the benefits of adapting leadership styles in different situations	26%
3. Understand leadership theory and models and their relevance	3.1 Discuss different theories of leadership 3.2 Discuss how knowledge of different leadership models can be applied by people to develop their own leadership approach 3.3 Explain how leadership models can be used to support and develop others	26%
4. Understand the challenges and opportunities that can be encountered in leadership roles	4.1 Describe the challenges faced in leadership roles 4.2 Discuss actions for overcoming challenges encountered in leadership roles 4.3 Explain the opportunities associated with leadership roles	22%

Unit Type: Mandatory

Level: 3

Credits: 10

GLH: 50

Assessment Method: Assignment

This unit is designed to provide an understanding of the essential skills, knowledge and behaviours required for effective leadership.

The aim is to enable learners to assess their leadership skills and capabilities and identify the personal strengths and areas for development.

On completion of this unit, you will understand what is required to be an effective leader and how to create good followership. Additionally, you will understand the basic concepts of psychological safety and how this contributes to a safe and inclusive working environment.

What you'll learn

The table below shows the learning outcomes of this unit (what you will be able to do or what you will know), along with the assessment criteria (what you will be able to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome).

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Weighting
1. Understand the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for effective leadership	1.1 Describe the skills and behaviours required for effective leadership 1.2 Discuss the knowledge required for effective leadership in an organisational context 1.3 Explain the importance of developing leadership skills, behaviours and knowledge	25%
2. Understand what is required for effective followership	2.1 Explain the importance of followership within a leadership context 2.2 Explain different models of followership and their relevance in the workplace 2.3 Describe the actions required by a leader to encourage effective followership	25%
3. Understand how leadership contributes to a psychologically safe and inclusive working environment for followers	3.1 Describe the characteristics of psychological safety 3.2 Discuss the workplace factors that impact psychological safety 3.3 Explain the importance of creating a psychologically safe and inclusive working environment 3.4 Describe leadership actions and behaviours that support a safe and inclusive working environment	24%
4. Understand how to create a strong personal leadership brand	4.1 Explain the importance of personal brand within a leadership role 4.2 Describe the factors that can affect a leader's personal brand 4.3 Discuss the actions a leader can take to develop their own personal brand 4.4 Describe the contents of an action plan someone could use to develop their own personal leadership brand	26%

Unit Type: Optional

Level: 3

Credits: 10

GLH: 50

Assessment Method: Assignment

This unit is designed to provide an understanding of how to manage stakeholder relationships.

The aim is to introduce stakeholder theory and to explore the application for leaders who have to communicate with a range of internal and external stakeholders.

On completion of this unit, you will understand how to identify relevant stakeholders and their needs and expectations. You will also be able to recognise a range of actions required by a leader to develop and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders. Additionally, you will understand how to deal with conflict situations when they arise in stakeholder relationships.

What you'll learn

The table below shows the learning outcomes of this unit (what you will be able to do or what you will know), along with the assessment criteria (what you will be able to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome).

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Weighting
1. Understand stakeholder theory relevant to the workplace	1.1 Describe different types of stakeholders and their needs 1.2 Explain the advantages of a stakeholder value model within an organisational context 1.3 Explain the importance of a stakeholder engagement and how it can be achieved	32%
2. Understand the importance of stakeholder relationships	2.1 Explain the role and responsibilities of the leader within stakeholder groups 2.2 Discuss the importance of building relationships with stakeholders 2.3 Explain how to assess the needs and expectations of stakeholders 2.4 Describe the channels and methods of communication used for stakeholder groups	34%
3. Understand how to manage stakeholder relationships	3.1 Describe potential barriers to stakeholder engagement and their impact 3.2 Explain ways to assess if stakeholder needs have been met 3.3 Describe reasons why stakeholder needs might not be met and actions a leader can take to address this 3.4 Explain how conflict might arise within stakeholder groups and how conflict can be managed and resolved	34%

Unit Type: Optional

Level: 3

Credits: 10

GLH: 50

Assessment Method: Assignment

This unit is designed to provide an understanding of how to lead, motivate and support others to achieve goals and objectives.

The aim is to enable learners to understand the importance of aligning goals for individuals and teams to organisational strategy and objectives.

On completion of this unit, you will understand a range of motivation theories and their application with individuals and teams. You will be able to identify key actions a leader can take to motivate others to achieve goals. Additionally, you will understand the reasons why individuals and teams may not achieve goals, and explore methods that will support others in order to achieve goals and deliver results.

What you'll learn

The table below shows the learning outcomes of this unit (what you will be able to do or what you will know), along with the assessment criteria (what you will be able to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome).

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Weighting
1. Understand how leaders align individual and team goals and objectives with their organisation's goals and objectives	1.1 Explain the purpose of an organisation's mission, vision and strategy for effective leadership 1.2 Discuss the relevance of organisational goals and objectives when setting individual and team goals and objectives 1.3 Describe how to communicate organisational goals and objectives to individuals and teams 1.4 Explain how the achievement of individual and team goals and objectives can be assessed	25%
2. Understand how motivational theory affects performance in the workplace	2.1 Explain recognised theories of motivation relevant to the workplace 2.2 Discuss the internal and external factors that may affect the motivation of individuals or teams in the workplace 2.3 Describe the impact of motivation levels on the achievement of organisational goals and objectives	25%
3. Understand how leaders motivate individuals and teams to achieve goals and objectives	3.1 Discuss the methods leaders can use to set goals and objectives for individuals and teams 3.2 Explain how leaders can recognise when individual or team motivation levels are low 3.3 Describe actions a leader can take to restore motivation levels to ensure individual and team goals and objectives are achieved	25%
4. Understand how to support individuals and teams to achieve objectives and deliver results	4.1 Explain the potential reasons for individual and team objectives not being met 4.2 Discuss the impact of individual and team objectives not being met 4.3 Describe the actions a leader can take to support individuals and teams to deliver expected results	25%

