



PART OF **nocn** GROUP

QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATION

NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance

Qualification No: 600/0987/1

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3.1 – March 2019

To know more about NOCN:

- Visit the NOCN website: www.nocn.org.uk
- Call the Customer Service Team: **0300 999 1177**

www.nocn.org.uk



Introduction

NOCN has been providing a qualification and accreditation service to providers across the UK for over 25 years and is justifiably proud of its reputation as, "...a provider of fully accessible, trusted and flexible qualification and accreditation services".

Over the years, NOCN has worked effectively with centres for the benefit of learners across the country, with a mutual interest in providing a continuously improving service. NOCN, whilst retaining all the advantages of being a national body, has always provided a personal, bespoke service to its customers and prides itself on its local presence and expertise within communities.

This document details the qualification specification and provides guidance to the training provider on assessment criteria and evidence requirements.



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1. About the qualification

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance provides a basic introduction to the sector and includes units which have been mapped to ENTO National Occupational Standards for Advice and Guidance (2006) and the Matrix Standard.

The qualification will prove beneficial in four critical areas:

- The organisation or institution to which the learner is attached will benefit, as the learner's practice becomes more informed.
- The community member in contact with the learner will receive better information from someone who is aware of the boundaries underpinning practice in information, advice or guidance.
- The learner will be more aware of the role of information, advice or guidance, and the boundaries of their role in relation to this.
- The learner will be more aware of the skills needed and further study required to engage in an information, advice or guidance role.

The qualification was developed with:

- Employment National training Organisation (ENTO)
- Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)
- Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)
- National Citizens Advice Bureau
- Museums, Libraries and Archive Council and the local Library Service
- Private Training Providers
- FE Colleges
- Advice UK
- Careers Education Sector
- Schools and 14-19 education service providers

Guided Learning Hours

Guided Learning Hours are defined as the number of hours of teacher-supervised or directed study time required to teach a qualification or unit of a qualification.

The recommended guided learning hours to achieve the NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice and Guidance is **54**.

Some learners will be able to achieve these units in a shorter time, other learners, particularly those with additional support requirements will take much longer.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) are a guide to the amount of teacher-supervised or directed study time a learner will need to complete the learning needed for a qualification. NOCN recognises that every learner is different and the actual time taken may vary beyond the maximum and minimum shown.

Training providers not reliant on public funding measured by GLH may find them a useful guide to the recommended length of a programme of study. The learning hours can be divided in any way, for example, a 20 GLH hour programme could be delivered in 2 hours a week for 10 weeks or 8 hours a day for 3 days, depending on the course and learners.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Through consultation with users, TQT has been agreed by considering the total number of learning hours required for the average learner to achieve this qualification.

TQT is split into two areas:

- **Guided Learning Hours (GLH):**
 - learning activity under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training
 - includes the activity of being assessed if the assessment takes place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.
- **Other Learning Hours (OLH):**
 - an estimate of the number of hours a learner will spend, as directed by (but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of) a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including:
 - preparatory work
 - self-study
 - or any other form of education or training, including assessment.

Examples of GLH activities include:

- Classroom-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Work-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a teach in real time
- E-learning supervised by a teacher in real time
- All forms of assessment which take place under the immediate guidance or supervision of an appropriate provider of training
- Exam time

Examples of OLH activities include:

- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning

The agreed Total Qualification Time has been used to identify the qualification's Credit Value.

The TQT for the NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice and Guidance is **60**
Relationship with National Occupational Standards

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance is related to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Advice and Guidance (2006) developed by ENTO. The qualification also provides a significant amount of knowledge, understanding and skills development that underpins occupational competence in information, advice or guidance as identified in the Matrix Standards. The links between the qualification, NOS, Matrix Standards and the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum are detailed below.

Unit Title	ENTO National Occupational Standards for Advice and Guidance	Matrix Standards	Skills for Life (Adult Literacy)
Introduction to Underpinning Principles of Information, Advice or Guidance	AG1, AG2, AG3	Element 1a,b,c,d Element 2a,b,c,d Element 6a	SLIr/L1.1, SLIr/1.3, SLIr/L1.6, Wt/L1.5, Rs/L1.1, Rt/L1.1, Rt/L1.6, Ws/L1.12, SLc/L1.4,
Introduction to Skills – Delivering Information, Advice or Guidance	AG2, AG13	Element 1a Element 2b,d,e	SLc/L1.1, SLc/L1.2, SLIr/L1.1, SLIr/L1.2, SLIr/L1.3, SLIr/L1.4, SLd/L1.2, Rt/L1.4, Rt/L1.5, Wt/L1.3, Wt/L1.4

Language Requirements

If you wish to offer this qualification in Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge) then please contact NOCN who will review demand and provide as appropriate.

2. Who the qualification is for

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance is aimed at those workers (either paid or unpaid) who are starting out in an information, advice role or whose role involves general signposting or referral to guidance.

The minimum age for access to the qualification is 19.

The qualification is particularly suitable for those who are:

- Involved in general signposting in a paid or unpaid capacity in communities, who have not been involved in mainstream education for some time, and who would benefit from developing confidence through a relevant introductory programme of study.
- Interested in information, advice or guidance delivery and who, although not involved in this area at present, would benefit from a relevant introductory programme.
- New to a work role in the information, advice or guidance sector which includes general signposting, for whom this programme would prove a useful induction programme.

The qualification would be particularly useful for:

- Volunteers/paid workers within a broad range information or advice giving contexts
- Learning Champions
- Volunteers in local communities who are involved in a signposting or referral role
- Library and information staff
- Support staff in 14-19 educational establishments.

Restrictions on Learner Entry

There are no restrictions on learners' entry to this qualification.

There is no overlap between units of this qualification and other NOCN qualifications.

Entry Requirements

Learners will need to:

- Read and interpret given tasks
- Write answers that are clear, logical and understandable
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently.

QCF Level Descriptors

Level	Summary	Knowledge and understanding	Application and action	Autonomy and accountability
Level 1	Achievement at Level 1 reflects the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills and procedures to complete routine tasks. It includes responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance.	Use knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined, routine tasks. Be aware of information relevant to the area of study or work.	Complete well-defined routine tasks. Use relevant skills and procedures. Select and use relevant information. Identify whether actions have been effective.	Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance as needed

Extracted from QCF level descriptor's document on QCDA's website October 2008

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is an assessment method leading to the award of credit. The process involves considering if a learner can meet the specified assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they possess already as a consequence of which they do not need to undertake a course of learning.

Centres are encouraged to recognise the previous achievements and experiences, both formal, for example through accredited units or qualifications or informal, for example through continuous learning. This involves the recognition of achievement from a range of activities that will have been assessed through any valid method of assessment. When using the process of the recognition of prior learning, it is essential that the assessment requirements of a specific unit or, more exceptionally, a qualification have been met. The evidence of learning provided must be sufficient, reliable, authentic and valid. Evidence is not time-limited.

Progression Opportunities

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance enables progression to employment, further learning opportunities within employment, or further study.

The qualification meets the Foundation Learning strategy by:

- Providing learners with the potential and capacity to progress to Level 2 achievement
- Encouraging learners to re-engage with learning
- Raising learners confidence in their ability to achieve
- Enabling meaningful progression into employment or further education
- Providing an introduction to a particular sector
- Providing learners with generic skills and specific knowledge and understanding of the information, advice or guidance sector in a range of contexts
- Equipping learners with job specific skills
- Equipping learners with generic employability skills.

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance relates academically to GCSE subjects such as sociology, psychology, English and citizenship and learners will be able to progress to:

- NOCN Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance
- NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Information, Advice or Guidance
- NVQ Level 2 in Advice and Guidance
- Other appropriate Level 2 provision.

Learners with Particular Requirements

If you are a NOCN Recognised Centre and have learners with particular requirements, please see the **NOCN Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure** found on the NOCN website at www.nocn.org.uk

This policy gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the assessment criteria.

The NOCN Centre Recognition process requires the centre to hold policy statements on Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Disability Discrimination which will be reviewed by NOCN. Please contact assurance@nocn.org.uk for further details.

3. Achieving the qualification

Rules of Combination

In order to achieve the NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance, the learner must achieve a total of **6** credits.

- **Mandatory Credits**
All units in the mandatory group (**6** credits) must be achieved.

Exemptions

A maximum of **3** credits can be claimed as exemption.

The following NQF units are exemptions from QCF units of the same name:

D/501/8072 Introduction to the Underpinning Principles of Information, Advice or Guidance
R/501/8070 Introduction to Skills in Delivering Information, Advice or Guidance

Achievement Methodology

The qualification is awarded to learners who successfully achieve an approved combination of units. Assessment for each unit is designed by the Centre in accordance with the NOCN Assessment Definitions Document. There is no further assessment to achieve the qualification.

In summary:

- Tasks set by Centre
- Tasks approved by Centre
- Tasks marked by Centre
- Internally verified
- Externally verified

4. The qualification units

Please click on the hyperlinks below to access the units from the NOCN website.

NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance

Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	Credit Value	Level
J/502/7980	Introduction to Skills - Delivering Information, Advice or Guidance	Mandatory	3	1
L/502/7981	Introduction to Underpinning Principles of Information, Advice or Guidance	Mandatory	3	1

An explanation of the kind of activity, assessment and evidence expected at the appropriate level is given on the next page

Assessment Definitions

Case Studies

Consideration of a particular, relevant situation or example, selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations. May be used as a collective / group activity and discussed in a group of learners or by an individual learner. **Or** may be used with individual learners as a written activity through case study materials and learner responses.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor observation
- Class discussion
- One to one
- Group tutorial discussion

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation
- Learner notes
- Summary of class discussion
- Tutorial notes
- Audio/video/photographic record

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Case studies should be limited in range, familiar and require a narrow range of knowledge. Discussion should be structured and involve a limited degree of judgement (group or one-to-one). Written work should be structured and involve a limited degree of judgement.	Assessment through tutor observation, discussion or tutor assessment of written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, summary of discussion, learner notes, audio / video / photographic record or written work.

Oral Question and Answer

Specific, open or closed questions for immediate response. Can range from quite formal questions, for example, an oral test, to a quick, fun way of finding out where learners are up to, for example, a quiz. Allows response and questioning from learners and immediate feedback from tutor.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Responses by both tutor and individual learners.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record/notes
- Learner notes or log
- Audio / video record

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Process should be informal and should include both open and closed questions covering a narrow range of knowledge. Learners should be encouraged by the use of supplementary questions.	Assessment by tutor.	Evidence could be; tutor record / notes or audio / video record.

Written Question and Answer / Test / Exam

Specific, open and closed questions for immediate response. Can range from formal exams and tests, to a quick, fun way of finding out where learners are up to, for example, a quiz. Allows response and questioning from learners and feedback from tutor.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Responses by individual learners.
- May make use of on-line assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Written questions
- Learner responses.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Process should be informal and non-threatening. Questions should encourage learners to make use of knowledge rather than just testing recall.	Assessment by tutor or external marker (for exams / tests).	Evidence could be; written responses.

Project

A specific task involving private study and research for individuals or groups. Normally involves selection of a topic, planning, finding information and presenting results orally or in writing.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor, learner or peers, during and at the end of process through discussion and observation.

Evidence could include:

- Notes, plans, record of project process.
- Tutor record.
- Peer records.
- Learner log.
- Audio / video / photographic record.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Task should be selected with support from tutor to allow the demonstration of knowledge and skills in a range of predictable, structured and familiar contexts.	Assessment through tutor observation and questioning during at the end of the process.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.

Role Play / Simulation

Use of a situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practice and apply skills and to explore attitudes.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor / peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio / video / photographic record.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Role-plays should be limited in range, be familiar and require a narrow range of skills. Role-plays should be structured and involve limited degree of learner choice.	Assessment through, tutor / peer observation, one to one tutorial, discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video / photographic record or learner log.

Group Discussion

Discussion of a topic or situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to share knowledge and thoughts and to assess their learning.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor.
- Peer observation.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.
- Self-assessment.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutor lesson plan.
- Tutorial notes.
- Audio/video/photographic record.
- Learner log.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Discussions should be limited in range, cover topics that are familiar to the learner. These should require a narrow range of skills. The discussion should be structured and involve a limited degree of learner choice.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record of observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.

Practice File

A structured collection of documents from real situations such as work or voluntary activity, which evidence the application of knowledge and / or skills. The documents should be mapped to specific learning outcome/s in a unit of assessment. May need a short explanation of how the particular document evidences achievement of a specific learning outcome.

The learning may be assessed through:

- Discussion with the tutor.

Evidence could include:

- Form mapping to learning outcomes, plus explanation if necessary and the documents, for example, minutes, reports, brochures, plans, witness statements, letters or e-mails.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Practice evidence should demonstrate the application of a narrow range of skills and / or knowledge. Learners should be given detailed guidance on what documents would be appropriate, how the evidence should be presented, and on mapping to learning outcomes.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; documents, learner notes and tutor comments.

Written Description

Consideration of a particular subject, situation or example selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to apply knowledge to specific situations and to present them in written format.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor.
- One to one tutorial.
- Discussion.

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation.
- Learner notes.
- Tutorial notes.
- Completed report.
- Charts.
- Plans.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 1	Subjects should be limited in range, be familiar and require a narrow range of knowledge. Written work should be structured and involve limited degree of judgment.	Assessment through tutor assessment and discussion.	Evidence could be; tutor record of observation, summary of discussion and feedback or completed work.

Forms and guidance for gathering learner evidence against the individual assessment criteria are available for download in Word format on the NOCN website: http://www.nocn.org.uk/qualifications_and_units/additional_qualification_documents.

Alternatively, centres can use their own paperwork provided they ensure that the learners' work is ordered and portfolio references provided as required.

5. How the qualification is assessed

The qualification requires achievement of the specified units with no further requirements for additional/summative assessment. Achievement is therefore determined by successful completion of unit assessment. The assessment process is as follows:

- Assessments are internally set at the Centre by assessors, against the requirements detailed in the assessment criteria of the unit
- The learners are assessed internally at the Centre, using the assessments set
- The resulting portfolios of assessed evidence are internally verified by an internal verifier at the Centre
- The portfolios of assessed evidence are externally verified by an external verifier appointed by NOCN.

5.1 Unit Assessment

Achievement of units is through internally set, internally marked, internally verified and externally verified tasks, as detailed above. Centres devise assessment activities to meet the specified assessment criteria detailed in each unit, guided by the Assessment Information Grid which accompanies each unit and the NOCN Assessment Definitions Document. The activity or activities set must enable the learners to meet the standards detailed in the assessment criteria. Centre devised assessments should be scrutinised by the Internal Verifier before use to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Centre devised assessments will be scrutinised by the external verifier to ensure reliability and validity of assessment.

5.2 Marking Tasks

Each task must be marked against the identified assessment criteria in the unit and judged to be either achieved or not achieved. Where a series of tasks is set, learners must demonstrate the achievement of the required standard identified in the assessment criteria in all tasks in order to achieve the unit credit. All of the assessment criteria in a unit must be met before the unit is deemed achieved. The unit achievement is not banded or graded; units are either achieved or not achieved.

5.3 Recording Achievement

You must record each learner's performance in each unit on an appropriate form or forms. The form/s should record the learner's performance against the unit assessment criteria evidenced by the task.

5.4 Standardisation

Centres will be required to provide samples of assessment tasks for OCN and national standardisation activity.

6. Offering the qualification

Recognised Centres

If you are already recognised to offer NOCN qualifications and would like more information contact: business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk.

If you are ready to add the qualification to your curriculum offer, please log in to the NOCN website, under Centres/Processes and Documents, and complete the 'Additional Qualification Approval Request Form,' which can then be returned to business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk for the attention of your Account and Sector Manager.

New Centres

If you are interested in offering this qualification, but are not yet a NOCN Approved Centre and would like more information about becoming a NOCN centre and offering this qualification please see **Become a Registered Centre** on our website <https://www.nocn.org.uk/customers/nocn-centres/> and click Become a Centre.

7. Quality Assurance and National Standardisation

7.1 General Information

All Centres wishing to deliver the qualification, or units of the qualification, will need to demonstrate the ability to manage and deliver the units and/or the qualification, including adherence to quality assurance and assessment regulations.

NOCN will provide guidance and give support in enabling you to use the qualification.

The NOCN standard quality assurance arrangements and requirements include:

- Internal verification
- External verification
- Standardisation.

Details and guidance are provided by NOCN.

7.2 Standardisation

Standardisation is a process that promotes consistency in the understanding and application of standards, as it:

- establishes statements on the standard of evidence required to meet the assessment criteria for the units in NOCN qualifications
- makes recommendations on assessment practice
- produces advice and guidance for the assessment of units
- identifies good practice in assessment.

It is a requirement of the Centre Recognition Process that each Centre offering the units from the qualification must contribute assessment materials and learners' evidence for NOCN standardisation if requested.

NOCN will notify Centres of the required sample for standardisation purposes. Assessment materials, learners' evidence and tutor feedback will be collected by External Verifiers on behalf of NOCN.

Outcomes from standardisation will be available to Centres through NOCN.



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