

ocn
EASTERN REGION

Widening Participation in Learning

A White Paper for NHS Training Staff



The **Diversity** of Learning

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Widening participation

“The NHS will not reach its aspiration of becoming a world class employer and employer of choice whilst the least qualified and least well paid members of the current health and social care workforce are the least likely to be offered training and staff development opportunities.”

Professor Bob Fryer, *Learning for a Change in Healthcare*, Dec 2006

Under the banner of Widening Participation in Learning, all healthcare organisations should have in place plans for the learning and development of staff at all levels, approved by their respective Boards or other governing bodies. Particular attention should be given to developing those staff who either have few or no formal qualifications or who currently receive or participate little in learning through work.

There is a national and regional focus within the NHS to commit to widening access to, participation in, and achievement through learning for all healthcare staff particularly in the four lowest pay and career bands (or their equivalent); the pre-professional workforce.

The signing of the Skills Pledge by many NHS organisations, and the development of the Joint Investment Framework (JIF), further underline this commitment.

JIF funding is available for a number of initiatives which must meet the following requirements;

- NHS employee bands 1-4, employed to deliver NHS commissioned healthcare activity.
- Transferable accredited qualifications in areas which support service needs.
- Enhancing literacy and numeracy.

There is also a drive to retain staff by creating more satisfying roles and reducing barriers to progression. Progression routes should be available for all staff and all learning should be recognised and accredited.

To achieve this NHS organisations need access to a flexible framework of nationally recognised qualifications that can be tailored to the individual organisation's requirements.

Ideally these qualifications should:

- be taught on the job with minimal classroom learning to ensure little or no work pattern disruption;
- consist of core subjects manipulated for different job functions and/or levels;
- provide additional subjects relevant to the individuals job;
- be achievable in bite-sized chunks to suit the learner and the organisation;
- and enable progression through the organisation.

Credit based qualifications

Credit-based qualifications meet these criteria by offering a wide range of units on a variety of subjects that can be combined in different ways and at different levels to meet the needs of various groups of learners.

This approach provides an organisation with a flexible training offer:

- Common units can be offered to a cross section of staff resulting in different qualifications.
- The same units can be delivered in the context of different job roles.
- A cohort of learners can achieve similar qualifications at different levels.
- Learners can “bank” credits to contribute towards qualifications at a future date.

Courses can also be tailored to meet the six core Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) dimensions of

- Communications
- Personal and people development
- Health, safety and security
- Service improvement
- Quality
- Equality and diversity.

The credit-based approach has recently been endorsed by the Government with the introduction of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

This new Qualifications and Credit Framework will enable people to gain qualifications at their own pace, from a number of sources, in a way that suits them – and to carry the modules with them if, for example, they change jobs. Employers will find it easier to find or develop employees with the skills they need for business success. By 2010 all key vocational qualifications will be approved by Sector Skills Councils and readily available to learners in small, credit-based units of learning.

The National Open College Network (NOCN) has been developing just such credit based courses and qualifications for over 25 years. The following pages describe how these qualifications can be customised to meet the needs of an NHS training department and address the issues of learning on the job, at different levels and with different outcomes.

How it works in theory

The NOCN Qualifications in Progression are one of the most extensive credit-based qualifications in the QCF. They are designed to enable flexibility for learners, allowing staff to achieve units on an incremental basis, assisting with work loads and staff retention. It is particularly suitable within the NHS for staff in bands 1-4 and may be used with, amongst others:

- Care staff
- Clerical staff
- Estate Workers
- Kitchen staff
- Porters
- Managers

Units from the qualifications can be combined to create varying sizes and levels of qualification to meet the needs of the various staff groups. A qualification is built through its specific Rules of Combination.

They will assist you in working towards the National NHS target of improving the patient experience, staff satisfaction and engagement, whilst widening participation and enabling progression.

Qualification structure and content

The qualifications consist of a combination of units of assessment, each with an assigned level and credit value, which allow learners to achieve at their own pace and build towards a full qualification over time. Each 10 hours of learning has one credit attached. Much of the evidence for assessment can be acquired through work-based learning.

Core Units

Core units are located within the sector 'foundations for learning and life'. They are intended to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required in preparation for learning and/or life. They provide essential learning opportunities to support the specific needs and progression routes for a range of learners.

All Qualifications in Progression require the achievement of at least one core unit within their Rules of Combination.

Optional Units

Optional units come from a range of sector areas, for example, Health and Social Care and Horticulture and Forestry.

Spiky Profile

When creating a course, the Rules of Combination allow for a "spiky profile". A certain number of units must be achieved at the level of the qualification but a small number may be included from another level. This would perhaps offer the ability to "stretch" a number of learners within a group.

How it works in practise

Course Examples

On subsequent pages are only some examples of the ways in which units can be combined for different groups. You are able to combine units to suit different job roles, providing you conform to the structure identified on page 3.

- Learners can aim immediately for a Certificate or a Diploma; they do not need to achieve an Award first.
- If learners are working towards a Certificate or Diploma and do not achieve all the credits they require they will be certificated for what they have achieved and awarded an Award or Certificate if they have achieved the required Rules of Combination. **See *Estate Worker examples*.**
- Learners within the same job category can have very different needs, which can be addressed through the NOCN Qualifications for Progression. **See *Care staff examples*.**

Progression examples

- Learners can work towards a qualification at a level which suits them initially and then move on to show progression by working towards a qualification at a higher level. **See *Clerical staff examples*.**
- It is possible to start working towards an Award and then undertake additional units to achieve a Certificate, before completing more units to achieve a Diploma. **See *Kitchen Staff examples*.**

Advice and Guidance

Open College Network Eastern Region can work with you to develop courses and qualifications that meet your needs.

We have over 25 years experience in the education sector and lead the market in the recognition of achievement through the award of credit for units and qualifications.

Dedicated to widening participation in learning, social inclusion, employer engagement and lifelong learning for all, OCN Eastern Region supports flexible, responsive and quality assured learning opportunities whether it's in the classroom, at work, in the community or through distance learning.

Clerical staff

Clerical staff joining the organisation with little or no previous experience may benefit from an **NOCN Entry 3 Level Award in Progression**. This would take 30 guided learning hours and achieving 3 credits. The 3 credits can be taken from a combination of any units within any groups. For example:

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Introduction to Using ICT Systems	Entry 3	3	Mandatory

Staff joining the organisation with some limited experience may require an **NOCN Level 1 Certificate in Progression**. This would enable them to achieve 21 credits and might consist of:

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Improving Spelling Skills	One	3	Mandatory
Select and Use ICT	One	6	Mandatory
Communication in the Workplace	One	3	Optional
Developing Customer Service Skills	One	3	Optional
Health and Safety Awareness in a Working Environment	One	1	Optional
Problem Solving in the Workplace	One	3	Optional
Understanding Time Management in the Workplace	One	2	Optional

Once a member of staff is in a position to progress to a level 2 qualification, the following may be appropriate. In this example, an **NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Progression**, they must achieve 24 credits:

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing Decision Making Skills	Two	1	Mandatory
Improving Assertiveness and Decision Making Skills	One/Two	3	Mandatory
E-mail	Two	2	Mandatory
Spreadsheet Software	Two	6	Optional
Using Teamwork Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Using Writing for Meaning	One/Two	3	Mandatory
Word Processing Software	Two	6	Optional

For further progression an **NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Progression** could be constructed. Here, the course consists of 30 credits:

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing and Using Research Skills	Three	6	Mandatory
Adapting to Change at Work	Two/Three	3	Mandatory
Developing Decision Making Skills	Two	1	Mandatory
Developing Problem Solving Skills	Two/Three	3	Mandatory
Specialist or Bespoke Software	Three	8	Optional
Understanding Stress and Stress Management Techniques	Three	6	Mandatory

Estate Workers

In a similar way, a series of qualifications for Estate Workers could be devised allowing them to develop their skills by undertaking a series of qualifications at level 1. The common units could be undertaken at the same time by all workers. Additionally, if an Estate Worker was working towards a Diploma but fails to complete it, they may be entitled to the Certificate if the appropriate units were completed.

NOCN Level 1 Award in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Using Floor and Wall Tiling Techniques	One	3	Optional
Using Painting Skills for Interior Ceilings and Walls	One	3	Optional

NOCN Level 1 Certificate in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Using Teamwork Skills	One	3	Mandatory
Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills	One	3	Mandatory
Introduction to Garden Horticulture	E3	3	Optional
Understanding how to Cultivate Compost and Soils	One	3	Optional
Understanding Pest, Disease and Weed Control	One	3	Optional
Understanding Soils and Crop Plants	One	3	Optional
Understanding Sowing and Growing Techniques	One	3	Optional

NOCN Level 1 Diploma in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills	One	3	Mandatory
Using Common Measures	One	3	Mandatory
Using Teamwork Skills	One	3	Mandatory
Constructing a Cavity Wall Using Bricklaying Skills	One	3	Optional
Constructing a Half Brick Wall Using Bricklaying Skills	One	3	Optional
Constructing a One Brick Wide Wall Using Bricklaying Skills	One	3	Optional
Developing Wallpapering Skills	One	3	Optional
Use and Maintain Woodworking Tools	One	3	Optional
Use of Tools and Equipment for Bricklaying	One	3	Optional
Using Carpentry Hand Skills	One	3	Optional
Using Floor and Wall Tiling Techniques	One	3	Optional
Using Painting Skills for Interior Ceilings and Walls	One	3	Optional
Using Plastering Skills - Floating Coat to an Attached Pier	One	3	Optional
Using Plastering Skills – Plastering to a Window Reveal	One	3	Optional

Kitchen staff

In this example, the learners can achieve the award then go on to complete the Certificate or Diploma by undertaking additional units, having “banked” the credits from the previous qualification. The units in italics are carried forward from the previous qualification.

NOCN Level 2 Award in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills	One/Two	3	Mandatory
Developing Cooking Skills	Two	3	Optional
Developing Good Practice Skills for use in a Kitchen	Two	3	Optional

NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
<i>Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills</i>	<i>One/Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>
Developing Problem Solving Skills	One/Two	3	Mandatory
Cooking with Meat, Fish and Vegetables	Two	3	Optional
<i>Developing Cooking Skills</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>Developing Good Practice Skills for use in a Kitchen</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
Identifying and Using Grains, Pulses and Dairy Produce in Cooking	Two	3	Optional
Planning and Cooking for a Healthy Lifestyle	Two	3	Optional
Baking Bread, Pastry, Cakes and Biscuits	Two	3	Optional

NOCN Level 2 Diploma in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
<i>Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills</i>	<i>One/Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>
<i>Developing Problem Solving Skills</i>	<i>One/Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>
Improving own Learning and Performance	One/Two	3	Mandatory
<i>Baking Bread, Pastry, Cakes and Biscuits</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>Cooking with Meat, Fish and Vegetables</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>Developing Cooking Skills</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>Developing Good Practice Skills for use in a Kitchen</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
Developing Leadership Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
<i>Identifying and Using Grains, Pulses and Dairy Produce in Cooking</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
Improving Team Building Skills	One/Two	3	Mandatory
<i>Planning and Cooking for a Healthy Lifestyle</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Optional</i>
Understanding Nutrition and Weight Management	Two	6	Optional
Understanding Nutrition, Performance and Healthy Eating	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Team Motivation	Two	3	Mandatory

Care staff

Workers within the same job category may have very different training needs. The following qualifications demonstrate how a series of qualifications for care workers can be developed:

Working with Older People: NOCN Level 2 Diploma in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Demonstrating Speaking and Listening	Two	3	Mandatory
Developing own Interpersonal Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Understanding Prejudice and Discrimination	Two	3	Mandatory
Understanding Physical Disabilities	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Health Promotion in Care Settings	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Mental Health	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Ageing and the Older Person	Two	3	Optional
Understanding the Role of the Care Worker in Caring for the Person with Dementia	Two	3	Optional
Developing Care Planning Skills for the Care Worker	Two	3	Optional
Understanding the Role of the Care Worker in Time of Death	Two	3	Optional
Understanding The Principles Of Care, Organisational Policies And The Role Of The Care Worker	One	3	Optional
Developing Skills To Provide Personal Care In Care Settings	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Record Keeping for the Care Worker	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Diversity within Society	Two	3	Optional

Working with Children: NOCN Level 2 Diploma in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing own Interpersonal Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Developing Personal Development Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Demonstrating Speaking and Listening	Two	3	Mandatory
Understanding Diversity within Society	Two	3	Mandatory
Developing Group and Teamwork Communication Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Understanding Child Protection Theory	Two	3	Optional
Understanding how Children Learn	Two	3	Optional
Understanding how to Care for Babies Under Twelve Months	Two	3	Optional
Understanding how to Meet the Physical Needs of Children	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Play for Early Learning	Two	6	Optional
Understanding the Language and Communication Development of Children	Two	6	Optional
Understanding the Value of Food and Nutrition for Children and Young People	Two	3	Optional
Understanding Children's Social and Emotional Development	Two	3	Optional

Please note: Achievement of any units, at all levels, in sector 1, (Health, Public Services and Care) does not provide evidence against the Care Standards Act requirements.

Management

Non-clinical and clinical management staff could benefit from the following level 3 qualification:

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Progression

Unit Title	Level	10 Hour Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional
Developing Leadership Skills	Three	3	Mandatory
Developing Presentation Skills	Three	3	Mandatory
Developing Problem Solving Skills	Three	3	Mandatory
Communication in the Workplace	Three	3	Optional
Improving Own Learning and Performance	Three	3	Mandatory
Understanding Stress and Stress Management Techniques	Three	6	Mandatory
Understanding Business Organisation Structures	Two	2	Optional
Developing and Using Research Skills	Two	3	Mandatory
Developing Decision Making Skills	Two	1	Mandatory
Using Teamwork Skills	Three	3	Mandatory

Summary

In summary, using qualifications such as the NOCN Qualifications in Progression provides NHS organisations with the flexibility to develop those staff who either have few or no formal qualifications or who currently receive or participate little in learning through work.

The qualifications give individuals the opportunity to study at their own pace and level whilst contributing to the organisation. They can measure their own progression and have their learning recognised whatever their level of achievement.

This provides job satisfaction to the individual; improves staff retention for the employer; and develops a more highly skilled and motivated workforce; all leading to a better patient experience.

For further Information

If you would like to find out more about the NOCN Suite of Qualifications in Progression please contact:

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Appendix I: Achievement and Assessment

Achievement

The Progression Qualifications require achievement of the specified units with no further requirement for additional/summative assessment. Achievement is therefore determined by successful completion of unit assessment.

The methodology is therefore:

- Internally set - against the requirements detailed above for units (Centre)

- Internally assessed (Centre)

- Internally verified (Centre)

- Externally verified (NOCN)

Unit Assessment

Achievement of units is through internally set, internally assessed and externally verified assessment activity. Centres devise assessment tasks to meet the specification for assessment detailed for each unit. The activity must meet the standards detailed in the assessment grid provided on each unit. If an assessment method is prescribed, it must be used to assess the unit. Each Assessment Criteria must be achieved and evidenced by the learner.

Relationship with National Occupational Standards

Units from the Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Qualifications in Progression have been mapped to the appropriate National Occupational Standards (NOS). The mapping is identified on the unit against each of the learning outcomes.

Appendix II: Qualification Structure and level

All NOCN qualifications are structured in the same way with a minimum number of credits to be achieved at the level of the qualification and a minimum number of those which must be achieved from the mandatory units. In some instances credits can also be included at a lower level. The table below also indicates the total recommended notional learning time (guided learning plus self study) and the total recommended guided learning hours.

Structure

Qualification Title	Total credits required	Min. no. of Mandatory units	Max. no. of credits from level below	Notional learning time	Guided Learning Hours
NOCN Entry Level Award in Progression (Entry 3) (QCF)	3	0	0	30	30
NOCN Entry Level Certificate in Progression (Entry 3) (QCF)	15	3	0	150	150
NOCN Level 1 Award in Progression (QCF)	6	0	0	60	54
NOCN Level 1 Certificate in Progression (QCF)	21	6	6	210	189
NOCN Level 1 Diploma in Progression (QCF)	42	9	12	420	388
NOCN Level 2 Award in Progression (QCF)	9	3	3	90	72
NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Progression (QCF)	24	6	6	240	192
NOCN Level 2 Diploma in Progression (QCF)	45	9	12	450	360
NOCN Level 3 Award in Progression (QCF)	12	3	3	120	84
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Progression (QCF)	30	6	9	300	210

Level

Level	Level Indicators	Level of study
Entry	Recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning in everyday situations under direct guidance or supervision.	Entry 1/2/3
Level 1	Recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision.	NVQ 1 GCSE Grades D–G
Level 2	Recognise the ability to gain a good knowledge and understanding of a subject area of work or study, and to perform varied tasks with some guidance or supervision.	NVQ 2 GCSE Grades A*–C
Level 3	Recognise the ability to gain, and where relevant apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning at this level involves obtaining detailed knowledge and skills.	NVQ 3 A levels