

Qualification Guide

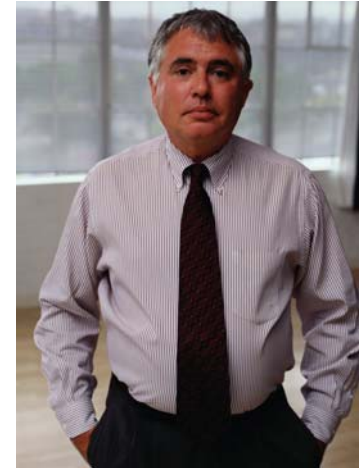


NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance

NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance

Award National Accreditation No. 500/5077/1
Certificate National Accreditation No. 500/5161/1

Version 1 October 2008



The **Diversity** of Learning

National Open College Network

The National Open College Network (NOCN) is the leading credit and unit-based Awarding Body in the UK. NOCN provides a national framework of credit-based units and qualifications which are underpinned by a range of national and local services, including curriculum support and staff development.

NOCN, through its Open College Networks (OCNs), works with over 3,000 Centres across the UK to develop flexible and responsive credit-based awards and qualifications that widen access to lifelong learning and address exclusion, participation and achievement. The structure of our qualifications provides opportunities for learners to achieve unit credits and use these to gain access to full qualifications and further learning.

Quality assurance, supported at the point of delivery, underpins all NOCN credit achievement and qualifications. OCNs approve Centres that can demonstrate the ability to meet national requirements for course delivery and quality assurance to support credit awards and qualifications. OCNs have wide-ranging experience in centre and programme approval and support Centres to ensure all awards are valid and valued.

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1. About the qualifications

The NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance and the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance aim to create a career pathway for learners in information, advice or guidance and to fill the acknowledged gap in provision for those giving information, advice or guidance at this level.

- It provides the opportunity for learners working in this field to share good practice and build confidence in their ability to fulfil their role as providers of advice at this level in a range of contexts.
- It provides the opportunity for those working as providers of information, advice or guidance to develop the knowledge and skills they require to be able to assist those they are supporting to make informed choices.
- It is an important innovation in that it has been developed to acknowledge and underpin the practice of those who may deliver information, advice or guidance as part of their role, while not employed primarily in that capacity.
- It provides a flexible credit-based qualification that is responsive both to the needs of the learner (the employee) and the employer and is able to show incrementally what a learner has achieved.
- Research undertaken by ENTO for the Sector Qualification Strategy identified that only a small range of qualifications were available to the Advice or Guidance sector with little or no choice at most levels. The development at this level provides learners with an opportunity to obtain a qualification which is smaller in size than previously offered.
- It provides an opportunity for those who have completed the NOCN Level 2 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance to progress to a qualification offering specialist pathways.

The qualifications will be beneficial in three key areas:

- To the learner, who will become better skilled and confident in information, advice or guidance delivery
- To the organisation, to which the learner is attached as the learner's practice becomes more informed and confident
- To the client, who will receive a higher quality service.

The qualifications were developed with and are supported by:

- ENTO
- Voluntary Sector Organisations including National Citizens Advice Bureau
- Museums, Libraries and Archive Council and the local Library Service
- Private Training Providers, for example A4E
- FE Colleges
- General Advice Sector, for example Advice UK
- Careers Education Sector

Guided Learning Hours

The recommended guided learning hours for one unit credit is 10. The total recommended guided learning hours is:

- 60 for the NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance
- 150 for the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance.

This is notional learning time based on the credit values assigned to the units, and the number of unit credits required to achieve the qualifications. Some learners will be able to achieve these units in a shorter time, whereas other learners, particularly those with literacy requirements, will take much longer.

Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy

Each unit within the qualifications has been mapped to identify where opportunities exist for learners to achieve Skills for Life/Key Skills. In designing activities for unit assessment you will be able to use the mapping to identify which skills could be addressed through evidence generated by learners. The degree of opportunity in any one unit will depend on centre-specific factors including learning context, teaching and learning strategies and resources.

How the Qualification Relates to Wider Education and Training Issues

Unit Title	Social, Cultural & Ethical issues	Health & Safety	Equal Opportunities	Environmental Issues	European Awareness/Legislation
Information, Advice or Guidance in Practice	✓		✓		✓
Developing Interaction Skills for Information, Advice or Guidance	✓	✓	✓		✓
Signposting and Referral in Information, Advice or Guidance	✓	✓	✓		✓
Information, Advice or Guidance in Context	✓		✓		✓
Skills for Advice Providers	✓	✓	✓		✓
Benefits Advice Work in Practice	✓		✓		
Specialist Advice Work in Practice	✓		✓		✓
Managing Information	✓	✓	✓		✓

Relationship with National Occupational Standards

The NOCN Level 2 Award and Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance are related to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by ENTO for Advice and Guidance. They provide a significant amount of knowledge, understanding and skills development that underpins occupational competence in information, advice or guidance as identified in the Matrix Standards.

**NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information,
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The link between the qualifications and the NOS that underpins the G/NVQ is detailed below.

Unit Title	ENTO National Occupational Standards for Advice and Guidance	Matrix Standards
Information, Advice or Guidance in Practice	AG2, AG4, AG13	Element 1 Element 2 Element 3 Element 4 Element 5e, f, g Element 6c Element 7c
Developing Interaction Skills for Information, Advice or Guidance	AG2	Element 1 Element 2 Element 3 Element 4 Element 5e, f, g Element 6f
Signposting and Referral in Information, Advice or Guidance	AG2, AG13	Element 2 Element 4
Information, Advice or Guidance in Context	AG2, AG4	Element 1 Element 2 Element 3 Element 4
Skills for Advice Providers	AG1, AG2, AG4, AG5, AG6, AG11	Element 1 Element 2 Element 3 Element 4
Benefits Advice Work in Practice	AG2, AG4	Element 3b Element 5e, f, g
Specialist Advice Work in Practice	AG2, AG4	Element 3b Element 5e, f, g
Managing Information	AG2, AG4	Element 8c, d

Language Requirements

If you have a requirement for this qualification in Welsh, please contact NOCN who will review demand and provide as appropriate. At present this qualification is not offered through the medium of Irish. This will be reviewed if there is evidence of demand.

2. Who the qualifications are for

The NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance and the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance are for learners working in this field to share good practice and build confidence in their ability to fulfil their role as providers of advice at this level in a range of contexts. They give support to those working as advice or guidance providers to be able to guide those they are supporting to make informed choices.

The advised minimum age for access to the qualifications is 18 years old because the complex nature of advice giving within the range of sectors where it is offered demands that learners have a minimum level of experience, self awareness and self confidence.

The qualifications are particularly suitable for those who:

- Deliver information, advice or guidance and who want recognition for the work that they do;
- Have an interest and/or some involvement in information, advice or guidance delivery but not as their primary role, for example:
 - First line staff - receptionists, secretaries, learner support workers, mentors
 - People working in voluntary organisations in a paid or unpaid capacity
 - People working with further, adult or community groups - full time or part time tutors, outreach workers
 - Members of staff working formally or informally with young people in Integrated Youth Support Services including Young People's Services/Careers Service, Connexions.

Restrictions on Learner Entry

The demands and nature of the qualifications and the assessment requirements are such that learners will need to have literacy skills which are at least at Level 1 of the National Standards for Adult Literacy.

Recommended Prior Learning

No specific prior learning, experience and/or qualification are required for learners undertaking the NOCN Level 2 Award and Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance. However, the demands and nature of the qualifications and the assessment requirements are such that learners will need to have literacy skills which are a least at Level 1 of the National Standards in Adult Literacy. This level is required in all three skill areas of Literacy. The learner will need to be able to:

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

Learners will also need to have a minimum level of experience in the delivery of information, advice or guidance.

Learners will need to be able to:

Level	Intellectual Skills and Attributes	Processes	Accountability
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge with underpinning comprehension in a number of areas • Make comparisons • Interpret available information • Demonstrate a range of skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose from a range of procedures performed in a number of contexts, some of which may be non-routine • Co-ordinate with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake directed activity with a degree of autonomy • Achieve outcomes within time constraints • Accept increased responsibility for quantity and quality of output subject to external quality checking

Progression Opportunities

The NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance and the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance enable progression to employment, further learning opportunities within employment, or further study.

The qualifications at this level demonstrate how NOCN accreditation offers a range of routes to vocational competence and the opportunity for learners to choose a flexible route in to either employment or training which allows them start at a point from which they feel confident.

The NOCN Level 2 Award and Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance relate academically to GCSE subjects such as Sociology and Psychology or English Language, Citizenship, Key Skills etc. in so far as the units focus on aspects of social interaction, general communication skills, and equal opportunities.

Learners who have successfully completed the NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance will be able to progress to:

- NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance
- NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Information, Advice or Guidance
- NVQ Level Three in Advice and Guidance.
- Other appropriate Level 2 or Level 3 provision, for example teaching adults, facilitating group learning or mentoring

Learners who have successfully completed the NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance will be able to progress to:

- NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Information, Advice and Guidance.
- NVQ Level Three in Advice and Guidance.
- Other appropriate Level 2 or Level 3 provision, for example teaching adults, facilitating group learning or mentoring.

Learners with Particular Requirements

Assessment within the NOCN Level 2 Award and Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance is designed to be accessible and inclusive. The unit based approach allows flexibility through enabling learners to achieve the qualification in stages. The assessment methodology is appropriate and rigorous for individuals or groups of learners.

If you have learners with particular requirements you should refer to the NOCN website within the Learning Providers section under Recognised Centre Area.

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

3. Achieving the qualifications

NOCN Level 2 Award in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance

The learner must successfully complete the following number of units in the Mandatory and Optional categories:

6 Mandatory unit credits

NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Developing Information, Advice or Guidance

The learner must successfully complete the following number of units in the Mandatory and Optional categories:

6 Mandatory unit credits

9 Optional unit credits

Achievement Methodology

The qualifications are 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

For example: the Qualifications for Progression use this achievement methodology

4. The qualification units

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

NOCN Unit Code	QCA Accredited Number	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	NOCN 10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
PS3/2/QQ/010	L/501/8083	Information, Advice or Guidance in Practice	Mandatory	3	2	CAB499
PS3/2/QQ/011	R/501/8084	Developing Interaction Skills for Information, Advice or Guidance	Mandatory	3	2	CAB502
PS3/2/QQ/012	D/501/8086	Signposting and Referral in Information, Advice or Guidance	Optional	3	2	CAB503
PS3/2/QQ/013	H/501/8087	Information, Advice or Guidance in Context	Optional	3	2	CAB505
PS3/2/QQ/014	K/501/8088	Skills for Advice Providers	Optional	3	2	CAB507
PS3/2/QQ/015	M/501/8089	Benefits Advice Work in Practice	Optional	3	2	CAB509
PS3/2/QQ/016	R/501/8831	Specialist Advice Work in Practice	Optional	3	2	CAB511
PS3/2/QQ/017	Y/501/8085	Managing Information	Optional	3	2	CAB512

The assessment activities for the units are indicated in the Assessment Grid Table on the individual units.

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

Assessment Definitions

1. 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 2	Case studies should allow the application of knowledge in a number of areas and contexts. Discussion should be directed but should allow for a degree of autonomy (group). Written work should be directed but allow for a degree of autonomy (GL ¹ = 500 words).	Assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment, tutor observation, or assessment of written work.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, peer checklist, summary of discussion or audio / video / photographic record or written work.

¹ GL = guidance on length of activity.

2. 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 2	Open and closed questions should be included, covering a number of topics. Learners should be encouraged to expand on their answers.	Assessment by tutor, with a degree of self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor records, learner log or audio / video record.

3. 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 2	Task should be selected with tutor guidance to allow the demonstration of knowledge and understanding in a range of areas and contexts, and the interpretation of information. The project should be completed within an agreed timescale.	Assessment through tutor / learner discussion during and at the end of the process, and through self-assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner notes, plans, reports, learner log or audio / video / photographic record.

4. Role Play / Simulation

Use of a situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise 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 2	Role-plays should allow the application of skills in several areas and contexts. Role-plays should be directed, but allow for a degree of learner autonomy.	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.

5. 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 2	Subjects should allow the application of knowledge in a number of areas and contexts. Written work should be directed but should allow for a degree of autonomy. GL = 500 words.	Assessment through self-assessment and tutor assessment.	Evidence could be; tutor record, learner record, summary of discussion and feedback or completed work.

6. Practical Demonstration

A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge.

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 2	Practical demonstrations should allow the application of skills and knowledge in several areas and contexts. A degree of learner autonomy should be encouraged within the scope of the demonstration.	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 / photographic record and learner log.

7. 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 2	Discussions should allow for consideration of several topics covering a number of contexts. The discussion should be directed, but allow for a degree of learner autonomy.	Assessment through tutor, peer observation, one-to one tutorial discussion and self-assessment.	Evidence could include; tutor record observation, learner notes, tutor lesson plan, tutorial notes, audio / video record and learner log.

8. Reflective log or diary

A description, normally in writing but may be oral, by the learner reflecting on how and what they have learned. Often completed at regular intervals during the learning process thus allowing discussion on individual progress and how further learning could be supported.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Learner, often supported through tutorial discussions with tutor.

Evidence could include:

- Log / diary (however this may be confidential and therefore not available for verification).
- Tutorial notes.
- Tutor record.

	Activity	Assessment	Evidence
Level 2	The reflection process should be written in a structured format that allows some autonomy in recording. Learners should be asked to record regularly what they have learned and to make judgements on the learning in terms of, for example, usefulness, interest, how it has extended their knowledge / skills, what else they need to learn.	Assessment by learner supported by tutor through tutorials.	Evidence could include; log / diary, tutorial notes and tutor record.

9. 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 2	Practice evidence should be chosen from a number of possible contexts to demonstrate application of a range of skills and / or knowledge. Learners should receive guidance on the type of document which could be appropriate, for example, a list, and advice on how to ensure the documents evidence specific learning outcomes, for example, highlighting sections, notes and on how the file should be presented.	Assessment through discussion with the tutor.	Evidence could include; structured file with tutor feedback.

5. How the qualifications are assessed

The qualifications require 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 the OCN.

5.1 Unit Assessment

Achievement of units is through internally set, internally assessed, internally verified and externally verified assessment activity, 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 grid. The activity or activities set must enable the learners to meet the standards detailed in the assessment criteria. Centre devised assessments will be scrutinised by the external verifier to ensure reliability and validity of assessment.

5.2 Assessment Information Grid

Each unit has a supplementary page with an Assessment Information Grid. The Assessment Information Grid gives recognised methods of assessment for NOCN units. If a method is marked 'P' (Prescribed), that method must be used in the assessment of the unit. Methods marked 'O' (Optional) are recommended methods and you will select the activity or activities most appropriate for your learners and context. Some units will have a combination of Prescribed and Optional methods. Assessors must always refer to this Grid before devising assessment tasks. NOCN also provides Assessment Definitions for a wide range of assessment activities. This grid includes a general description of the activity and, for each level (Entry to Level 3), details on how that method can be applied and what evidence is appropriate.

5.3 Marking Tasks

Each task must be assessed 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 Standardisation

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

6. Offering the qualifications

Centres wishing to offer the qualification or units of the qualification should in the first instance contact their OCN for information and support. A list of all OCN offices and contacts can be found on the NOCN website at www.nocn.org.uk.

Your OCN will advise you on the best and most efficient methods for offering this qualification to learners. All procedures for the use of this qualification or units of this qualification, including approval, registration of learners, verification, externally set assessment and certification will be completed through your OCN who will have an identified officer to support your Centre. If you have any queries or difficulties at any time you should contact your OCN office.

Approval to Offer NOCN Qualifications or Units of NOCN Qualifications

If you are a new Centre then please contact your nearest OCN office for details of the Centre Recognition Application process and the process for delivering qualifications.

Support for Centres

1. Your OCN will provide ongoing support and advice on the use of NOCN credit and qualifications including the requirements for assessment.
2. Approval should always take place through the normal OCN processes and will be explicitly recorded.
3. All Centres approved to offer NOCN credit and qualifications will be allocated a unique NOCN Centre Number.
4. Each Centre should identify a Centre Contact who will be responsible for NOCN credit and qualifications within the Centre.
5. The Centre Contact must ensure all procedures relating to the delivery of the qualification operate effectively in the Centre.
6. The Centre Contact is the person responsible for confirming and ensuring that the Centre meets all the NOCN requirements for Centre Recognition.
7. The Centre Contact is responsible for ensuring all relevant NOCN documentation is distributed as required within the Centre and that the security requirements for External Assessment are adhered to, where applicable.

Full details of all NOCN requirements are provided on the NOCN website at www.nocn.org.uk.

7. How are the qualifications quality assured

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.

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

The NOCN standard quality assurance arrangements and requirements include:

- Internal assessment of all assessment tasks and activities.
- Internal verification.
- External verification.
- Standardisation.

Details and guidance are provided on the NOCN website.

7.2 Standardisation

NOCN will undertake a process of standardisation annually. Units from the qualification will be selected for standardisation and OCNs will collect sample assessment materials from Centres each year.

OCNs will notify Centres on an annual basis of the required sample and materials for national standardisation purposes. **Each Centre offering the specified units is required as part of the Centre Recognition Process to contribute assessment materials for standardisation.**

Feedback on standardisation will be available to Centres annually through their OCN. National standardisation will establish:

- Statements on the standards for each unit
- Recommendations, advice and guidance for use of the qualification and assessment of units.

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Accreditation start date: 01/08/2008
Accreditation end date: 31/12/2010
Certification end date: 31/12/2012

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