

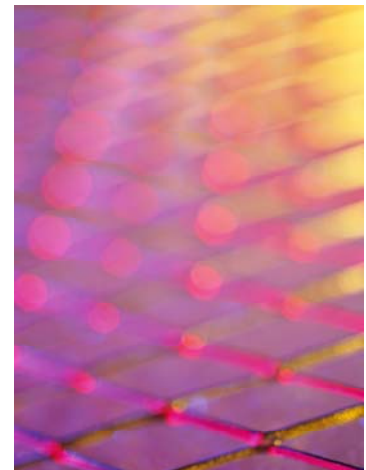
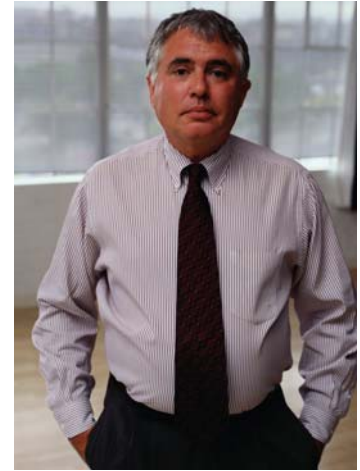
Qualification Guide



NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction)

National Accreditation No. 500/5076/X

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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 qualification

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction) creates the first step on a pathway to a work role in information, advice or guidance by introducing the principles, practice and skills. It provides an introductory programme of study and it is aimed at those workers (either paid or unpaid) who are starting out in an information, advice or guidance role or whose role involves general signposting, referral or guidance skills activities.

It offers a route into information, advice or guidance for volunteers with no previous relevant experience. The qualification (or units of the qualification) may also be used as part of an induction for staff new to an organisation that may be required to have face to face contact with members of the public in an information or advice context.

The qualification complements initiatives in community regeneration and capacity building and provides an opportunity to study for people within local communities for whom a Level 1 qualification is most appropriate. This may include people with an interest in information, advice or guidance work, who would like to be proactive in their community, but who have had no training in this area. There are a number of people who may be included in this group who would gain confidence both in their ability to achieve and in their role in the community through studying for a qualification at this level.

The units have been mapped to ENTO National Occupational Standards for Advice and Guidance 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 and is supported by:

- ENTO
- National Citizens Advice Bureau
- Museums, Libraries and Archive Council and the local Library Service
- Private Training Providers
- FE Colleges
- 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 to achieve the full qualification is 40. This is notional learning time based on the credit values assigned to the units, and the number of unit credits required to achieve the qualification.

Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy

Each unit within the qualification 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

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction) has been developed to:

- Complement initiatives in community regeneration and capacity building, reinforcing quality standards and provide a qualification for progression to information, advice or guidance for people involved in various roles in communities.
- Enable learners to meet the needs of community members, in the broadest sense, more effectively, where individual circumstances impact on community members' choices.
- Encourage many people working in paid or unpaid capacity to improve their skills, thereby improving the referral standard of informal providers who are often the chosen first contacts for people from marginalized communities.

Relationship with National Occupational Standards

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction) is related to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by ENTO for Advice and Guidance. It 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 link between the qualification and the NOS that underpin the G/NVQ are detailed below.

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

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 qualification is for

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

The advised minimum age for access to the qualification is 16.

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.

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.

Recommended Prior Learning

Learners will need to:

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

Learners will need to be able to:

Level	Intellectual Skills and Attributes	Processes	Accountability
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ a narrow range of applied knowledge and basic comprehension • Demonstrate a narrow range of skills • Apply known solutions to familiar problems • Present and record information from readily available sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show basic competence in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts • Utilise a clear choice of routine responses • Co-operate with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise a very limited degree of discretion and judgement about possible actions • Carry out responsibility for quality and quantity of output • Operate under direct supervision and quality control

Progression Opportunities

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

The qualification meets the Foundation Learning Tier 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 learners with generic skills and specific knowledge and understanding of the IAG sector in a range of contexts
- Equipping learners with job specific skills
- Equipping learners with generic employability skills
- Providing an introduction to a particular sector.

The NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction) relates academically to GCSE subjects such as Sociology, Psychology, English and Citizenship and Key Skills and learners will be able to progress to:

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

Learners with Particular Requirements

Assessment within the NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction) 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 qualification

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

4 Mandatory unit credits

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

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
PS3/1/QQ/004	D/501/8072	Introduction to the Underpinning Principles of Information, Advice or Guidance	Mandatory	2	1	CAB495
PS3/1/QQ/005	R/501/8070	Introduction to Skills in Delivering Information, Advice or Guidance	Mandatory	2	1	CAB497

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 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.

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 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.

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 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

5. How the qualification is 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 qualification

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 the qualification is 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.

NOCN Level 1 Award in Information, Advice or Guidance (Introduction)



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