

Qualification Guide



NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

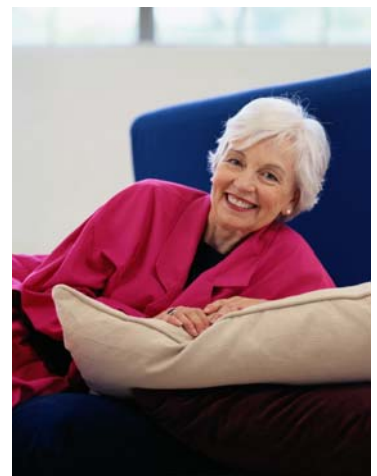
Endorsed Routes in:

French, German, Italian, Spanish, Welsh
Arabic, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Greek, Gujarati, Irish
Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Panjabi, Polish,
Portuguese, Russian, Swedish, Turkish, Urdu

Award National Accreditation No. 100/5185/5

Certificate National Accreditation No. 100/5186/7

Version 3 September 2008



The **Diversity** of Learning

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills



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.

Contents

1. About the qualifications	3
2. Who are the qualifications for?	5
3. Achieving the qualifications	7
4. The qualification units	8
5. How will the qualifications be assessed?	22
6. Offering the qualifications	24
7. How are the qualifications quality assured?	25
Appendix 1: Tutor Guidance	29
Appendix 2: Centre Languages Proposal Form	33

1. About the qualifications

The NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills and the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills aim to provide stepped opportunities for accrediting language skills; the units are designed to offer sufficient flexibility in the lexical content to allow them to be tailored to individual learner and workforce needs.

The qualifications offer the opportunity to accumulate the four communicative skills, Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing, at Level 3. The Award may consist of any two of the four units, thus rewarding achievement in specific skills, as prioritised by the learner or provider; the achievement of the remaining two units leads to completion of the full Certificate.

The open content of the four skills units aims to encourage the development of delivery plans detailing subject content, which reflect the needs and aspirations of each learner group. Common standards in language skills are maintained through the use of Achievement Criteria and Achievement Descriptors. The qualifications will contribute to the development of national competence in an area where the UK performs poorly at present and the NOCN suite of Language Skills qualifications offers a coherent strategy for progression.

These qualifications were developed in close consultation with the National Centre for Languages (CILT), and are mapped to the National Language Standards (revised) 2005.

Guided Learning Hours

The recommended guided learning hours for one credit is 10. Each unit is 60 hours and cannot be subdivided. The total recommended guided learning hours are 120 for the Award and 240 for the Certificate. 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, and some may take longer.

Key Skills

Each unit within the qualifications has been mapped to identify where opportunities exist for learners to achieve Key Skills. In designing activities for unit assessment you will be able to use the mapping to identify which Key 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 Qualifications Relate to Wider Education and Training Issues

The NOCN suite of Language Skills qualifications has been developed to underpin NOCN's commitment to widening participation, offering opportunities to those learners otherwise excluded from the National Qualifications Framework and to broaden awareness and knowledge of learners across educational, cultural and ethical issues.

Unit Title	Social, Cultural & Ethical issues	Health & Safety	Equal Opportunities	Environmental Issues	European Awareness/Legislation
Speaking	✓				✓*
Listening	✓				✓*
Reading	✓				✓*
Writing	✓				✓*

* Only applicable where the endorsement is a European Language.

N.B. As the units are content free, opportunities may emerge for delivery to cover other aspects, for example, Environmental Issues, if this is appropriate to the learner group.

Relationship with National Occupational Standards

The NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills and the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills are related to the National Language Standards developed by the National Centre for Languages (CILT). These qualifications support CILT's stated aims, amongst others, to build capacity in language skills across all phases of education and to enhance the competitiveness of UK industry. We are grateful for the support CILT offers to language service professionals, which has contributed to the development of these qualifications.

Each unit within the qualifications has been carefully mapped to the National Language Standards (revised 2005) against each learning outcome.

Language Requirements

There is no intention to provide these qualifications and associated assessment materials in Welsh and/or Irish unless there is evidence of demand. Translation of qualification assessment materials will not be provided where the target language is Irish or Welsh.

2. Who are the qualifications for?

These qualifications are intended for use by a wide variety of learners as they provide accessibility with steps towards full achievement.

These qualifications are particularly suitable for:

- Adults in part-time provision
- Adults in the workplace
- Adults in full-time learning
- 16-19 learners in schools and colleges who wish to study a language alongside academic or vocational qualifications.

Restrictions on Learner Entry

Learners must be 16+.

Recommended Prior Learning

Learners will need skills and knowledge at Level 2 as outlined in the Level 2 Achievement Criteria (please see NOCN Level 2 Award and Certificate in Language Skills Qualification Guide).

Learners will also need to be able to:

Level	Intellectual Skills and Attributes	Processes	Accountability
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge and skills in a range of complex activities, demonstrating comprehension of relevant theories • Access and evaluate information independently • Analyse information and make reasoned judgements • Employ a range of responses to well defined but often unfamiliar or unpredictable problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts using a range of technical or learning skills • Select from a considerable choice of procedures • Give presentations to an audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in self directed activity with guidance /evaluation • Accept responsibility for quality and quantity of output • Accept limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of output from others

Progression Opportunities

These qualifications encourage progression through the levels and learners at Level 3 can progress to higher education courses or professional qualifications in languages.

Delivery can be tailored to the needs of employers or potential employees, and thus encourages progression in the workplace. The opportunity to achieve separate skills units is appropriate where this can reflect the usefulness of different skills in a particular work environment, for example, speaking and listening skills within care environments and Home Office services, or for business people interacting at conferences and exhibitions, or writing skills for the completion of job applications and reports.

Learners with Particular Requirements

Assessment within the NOCN Level 3 Award and Certificate in Language Skills 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

To achieve these qualifications the learner must successfully complete:

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

2 Optional units

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

4 Mandatory units

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 qualifications. **Specific assessment information is given in Section 4.**

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.

QCA Accredited Number	NOCN Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
H/103/2000	FN3/3/QQ/003	French - Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF608
K/103/2001	FN3/3/QQ/001	French - Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF606
T/103/2003	FN3/3/QQ/002	French - Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF607
M/103/2002	FN3/3/QQ/004	French - Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF609
L/103/2007	FN3/3/QQ/007	German – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF612
A/103/2004	FN3/3/QQ/005	German – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF610
J/103/2006	FN3/3/QQ/006	German – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF611
F/103/2005	FN3/3/QQ/008	German – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF613
Y/103/2009	FN3/3/QQ/011	Italian - Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF616
R/103/2008	FN3/3/QQ/009	Italian - Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF614
Y/103/2012	FN3/3/QQ/010	Italian - Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF615
R/103/2011	FN3/3/QQ/012	Italian - Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF617
D/103/2013	FN3/3/QQ/015	Spanish - Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF624
K/103/2015	FN3/3/QQ/013	Spanish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF618
M/103/2016	FN3/3/QQ/014	Spanish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF619
H/103/2014	FN3/3/QQ/016	Spanish – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF627
T/103/2017	FN3/3/QQ/019	Welsh - Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF632

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

QCA Accredited Number	NOCN Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
A/103/2018	FN3/3/QQ/017	Welsh - Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF630
F/103/2019	FN3/3/QQ/018	Welsh - Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF631
T/103/2020	FN3/3/QQ/020	Welsh – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BSF633
A/103/4920	FN1/3/QQ/037	Arabic – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW284
F/103/4921	FN1/3/QQ/035	Arabic – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW280
J/103/4922	FN1/3/QQ/036	Arabic – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW282
L/103/4923	FN1/3/QQ/038	Arabic – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW286
R/103/4924	FN1/3/QQ/041	Czech – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW291
Y/103/4925	FN1/3/QQ/039	Czech – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW288
D/103/4926	FN1/3/QQ/040	Czech – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW289
H/103/4927	FN1/3/QQ/042	Czech – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW293
K/103/4928	FN1/3/QQ/045	Danish – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW298
M/103/4929	FN1/3/QQ/043	Danish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW295
H/103/4930	FN1/3/QQ/044	Danish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW297
K/103/4931	FN1/3/QQ/047	Danish – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW300
M/103/4932	FN1/3/QQ/055	Dutch – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW308
T/103/4933	FN1/3/QQ/049	Dutch – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW302
A/103/4934	FN1/3/QQ/051	Dutch – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW304
F/103/4935	FN1/3/QQ/057	Dutch – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW310

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

QCA Accredited Number	NOCN Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
J/103/4936	FN1/3/QQ/065	Greek – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW318
L/103/4937	FN1/3/QQ/059	Greek – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW312
R/103/4938	FN1/3/QQ/061	Greek – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW314
Y/103/4939	FN1/3/QQ/067	Greek – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW320
L/103/4940	FN1/3/QQ/073	Gujarati - Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW326
R/103/4941	FN1/3/QQ/069	Gujarati – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW322
Y/103/4942	FN1/3/QQ/071	Gujarati – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW324
D/103/4943	FN1/3/QQ/075	Gujarati – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW328
H/103/4944	FN1/3/QQ/080	Irish – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW333
K/103/4945	FN1/3/QQ/077	Irish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW330
M/103/4946	FN1/3/QQ/079	Irish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW332
T/103/4947	FN1/3/QQ/082	Irish - Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW335
A/103/4948	FN1/3/QQ/086	Japanese – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW339
F/103/4949	FN1/3/QQ/084	Japanese – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW337
T/103/4950	FN1/3/QQ/089	Japanese – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW342
A/103/4951	FN1/3/QQ/087	Japanese – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW340
J/103/4953	FN1/3/QQ/050	Mandarin Chinese – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW303
R/103/4955	FN1/3/QQ/046	Mandarin Chinese – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW299

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

QCA Accredited Number	NOCN Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
D/103/4957	FN1/3/QQ/048	Mandarin Chinese – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW301
K/103/4959	FN1/3/QQ/052	Mandarin Chinese – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW305
K/103/4962	FN1/3/QQ/056	Panjabi – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW309
T/103/4964	FN1/3/QQ/053	Panjabi – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW306
J/103/4967	FN1/3/QQ/054	Panjabi – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW307
R/103/4969	FN1/3/QQ/058	Panjabi – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW311
L/103/4971	FN1/3/QQ/098	Polish – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW370
R/103/4972	FN1/3/QQ/060	Polish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW313
Y/103/4973	FN1/3/QQ/062	Polish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW315
D/103/4974	FN1/3/QQ/063	Polish – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW316
K/103/4976	FN1/3/QQ/068	Portuguese – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW321
A/103/4979	FN1/3/QQ/064	Portuguese – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW317
T/103/4981	FN1/3/QQ/066	Portuguese – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW319
F/103/4983	FN1/3/QQ/070	Portuguese – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW323
J/103/4984	FN1/3/QQ/099	Russian – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW329
L/103/4985	FN1/3/QQ/072	Russian – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW325
R/103/4986	FN1/3/QQ/074	Russian – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW327
Y/103/4987	FN1/3/QQ/078	Russian – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW331

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

QCA Accredited Number	NOCN Unit Code	Unit Title	Mandatory or Optional	10 Hour Credit Value	Level	OPUS ID
D/103/4988	FN1/3/QQ/085	Swedish – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW338
Y/103/4990	FN1/3/QQ/081	Swedish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW334
D/103/4991	FN1/3/QQ/083	Swedish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW336
M/103/4994	FN1/3/QQ/088	Swedish – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW341
A/103/4996	FN1/3/QQ/092	Turkish – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW347
J/103/4998	FN1/3/QQ/090	Turkish – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW343
M/103/5000	FN1/3/QQ/091	Turkish – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW345
T/103/5001	FN1/3/QQ/093	Turkish – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW349
F/103/5003	FN1/3/QQ/096	Urdu – Speaking	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW353
J/103/5004	FN1/3/QQ/094	Urdu – Listening	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW350
R/103/5006	FN1/3/QQ/095	Urdu – Reading	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW351
Y/103/5007	FN1/3/QQ/097	Urdu – Writing	Optional for Award Mandatory for Certificate	6	Three	BUW356

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

Before preparing to deliver the qualifications, programme managers (and/or internal verifiers) and tutors must be fully conversant with the following information, which is intended both to support the planning and delivery of the units and to ensure standardisation of assessment practice across centres.

- The Table of Achievement Criteria: this is a summary of the language skills expected for full achievement of the Certificate.
- The Table of Achievement Descriptors: this gives details of the generic grammar and syntax expected at this level.
- The individual units, which define the parameters of the language content and give word counts.
- The Assessment Information Grid table attached to each unit: this gives details of the prescribed methods of assessment, which must be used at least once during delivery of the unit, and recommended optional methods.
- The Assessment Definitions, which expand on what is meant by the various assessment methods given in the Assessment Information Grid, and which are specific to Languages.
- Section 5 in this Guide, which gives detailed support for planning, marking of tasks and recording of achievement.
- Appendix 1 gives useful guidance on content.

OCNs help with the acquisition of competence and confidence in the delivery of these qualifications by offering support and training: please contact your OCN if you need further assistance.

Achievement Criteria for NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills

Knowledge and Skills

The learner who achieves the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills can:

1	Understand and use a wide variety of vocabulary relevant to the context in which s/he is operating.
2	Understand and use a range of polite forms of address, and expressions of feeling/emotion.
3	Understand and use more specialised vocabulary relevant to areas of special study or work.
4	Understand and use a range of structures using the infinitive and other root forms of the verb as appropriate.
5	Understand and use commonly used sentence structures in positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms.
6	Understand and use a range of complex sentence combinations.
7	Understand and use alternative structures and terms, which modify the register to make language appropriate for different audiences.
8	Understand and use a range of ways of expressing the past, present and future tenses, and a range of conditional forms, where appropriate to the context s/he is using.
9	Understand and use a wide range of link words to make longer and more complex sentences.
10	Use a range of reference sources, for example, bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, glossaries and dictionaries of synonyms, to clarify and confirm the meaning of words.

For a detailed explanation of the range of syntax assumed for the achievement of these criteria, please refer to the Level 3 Achievement Descriptors.

General Descriptors of Level 3 Achievement

- Learners communicate clearly and at a normal speed.
- Learners demonstrate good pronunciation and intonation, sufficient to enable smooth communication and variation of emphasis.
- Although there may be errors when using more complex structures, there are few mistakes with essential grammar, and approximately 80% of learners' assessed work is accurate within the parameters of the Level 3 level descriptors (Where this is not the case, learners should be encouraged to attempt another activity after further practice).
- Learners have completed a range of assessment activities as specified in individual units.

Detailed Descriptors of Level 3 Achievement

Numbering relates to the 10 items of skills and knowledge in the Achievement Criteria for the Certificate at Level 3. Skills and knowledge as described in the Level 2 Descriptors are assumed.

1. Vocabulary in a range of contexts, including less common alternatives: units are context-free, and vocabulary topic areas may be chosen to reflect learners' needs and aspirations, i.e. social activities, hobbies and skills or general/specific work-related contexts. Confidence and accuracy in the use of less common vocabulary is expected in areas of special study or specific, work-related contexts where chosen, for example, technical terms. Competent understanding and use of gender, inflection and agreements in nouns and pronouns, including common irregular noun forms as appropriate. Active use of a range of pronoun forms as appropriate to the language.
2. For example: forms of address, greetings/leave-taking appropriate to the time of day and the degree of formality; feelings and emotions with appropriate emphasis, for example, gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance.
3. Terms may relate to any context (see 1 above), and may result from any special study, interest, work skill, and may be demonstrated within the normal assessment activities attached to specific units, as appropriate.
4. (See also 5, 8 and 9) Concept of the infinitive and other root forms in all commonly used and appropriate structures. Understanding and use of a range of irregular verbs; more complex verb forms as appropriate, for example, separable/inseparable and impersonal verbs. Reflexive verbs and pronouns and a range of verbs + prepositions where appropriate. A range of modal verbs in various modes and tenses, for example, *must/can, should* with infinitive or other form as appropriate to the language. Understanding and limited use in appropriate contexts of verbs in passive voice.
5. All commonly used sentence forms for main and subordinate clauses - see 9. Negatives, including a wide range of qualifiers. All of these structures within a range of tenses - see 8. Interrogative forms including use of subjunctive in polite commands and negative forms as appropriate.
6. Understanding and generally accurate use of complex sentences for description, debate, argument and implication (see 4, 5, 8 and 9).
7. For example, formal and informal, familiar and unfamiliar modes of address; use of colloquial or more formal vocabulary as appropriate to purpose.
8. Regular and commonly-used irregular verb forms as in 4 and 9, in a range of past, present and future tenses for speaking and writing, with receptive use only where use is limited to specific contexts, for example, French – written past historic; use and understanding of

pluperfect; understanding and use as appropriate of imperfect subjunctive or other appropriate form in a wide range of meanings, for example, modal verbs; future perfect and conditional perfect tenses in simple and compound sentences, for example, *if I had.. I would have....* Understanding and limited use of pluperfect subjunctive in more complex clauses; understanding and limited use as appropriate of present subjunctive or other commonly understood subjunctive form to convey reported speech or possibility, wishing and requesting as appropriate.

9. Co-ordinating and subordinating conjunctions, to facilitate confidence in compound sentences as appropriate, with generally correct word order and in a range of tenses; relative pronouns in routine contexts and most commonly-used inflections, for example, for subject and direct object, with understanding of a range of relative clauses (see 4, 5 and 8).
10. Active use of a range of reference sources, including dictionaries of synonyms and specialist dictionaries, or other specialist sources as appropriate.

Assessment Definitions

Case studies/Written reports or other written material/Audio or videotapes and transcripts

These may take the form of any written or recorded (spoken) account/scenario/report, selected by the tutor or by learners, which enables learners to apply information to specific situations. It sets the scene and gives a range of information. This is then used as the springboard for group discussion/activity and/or individual responses in spoken or written form, depending on the level.

	Content
Level 3	Choice of materials should be guided by the context of the material studied; they should be authentic wherever possible, and may contain some unpredictable language and a range of grammatical structures appropriate to the level, for example, an unlimited range of tenses. If spoken, they may be delivered at a normal speed, and if written they should be in a quantity appropriate to the relevant stated word limits for Level 3 Reading and Listening units.

Oral Question and Answer/Role-Play - to assess speaking

Language used or expected must be appropriate to the level. Care must be taken to ensure oral question and answer as an assessment method is used to check the ability to communicate, rather than knowledge of a specific topic, especially at lower levels. At Level 3, it may also be used to check background knowledge as specified in a given unit. Learners at all levels will be assessed in questioning as well as giving answers.

Activities can range from simple questions/quizzes, conducted tutor to learner/learner to learner to check learned responses at lower levels, to more complex, open questions at Level 3. Pictures (for example, cue cards) and objects can also be used as prompts, and role-play may appropriately use dialogue frames, single words or bullet points in English or the target language. Activities rely at all levels on response and immediate feedback from tutor and other learners, and may be followed up by another activity to complete the evidence, for example, a dialogue frame followed by giving the answers to 1 or 2 questions (Level 1) – such as marking where a place is on a map, or writing down the correct price paid for an article.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Responses by tutor and/or other learners

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record/notes/witness statement
- Learner notes
- Audio/video record

	Activity	Assessment method
Level 3	The activity will include more complex questions and answers based on a wide range of structures, which require choice and transference of learning within a range of contexts appropriate to the units being assessed.	Assessment by tutor or peer, with a degree of self-assessment.

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills



Spoken Report/Presentation or Group Discussion – to assess speaking

The topic for presentation or discussion may be selected by the tutor or the learners to enable learners to share knowledge and ideas.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor comment or checklist
- Peer comment or checklist
- Self assessment at higher levels

Evidence could include:

- Tutor record of observation
- Learners' notes
- Audio or video record

	Activity	Assessment method
Level 3	Presentations may be based on personal opinions or on research of information and should include answering questions from the group; it may include complex language but prompts such as bullet points may be used. Group discussions should include opinions, arguments and negotiation as appropriate and may be stimulated by articles, video clips.	Tutor or peer observation; self assessment and evaluation.

Written Question and Answer – to assess reading or listening comprehension

Listening and reading may be assessed through either speaking or writing, but because of the difficulty of keeping evidence; they are most often assessed through writing, although the classroom activity and preparation may centre on oral work.

Written questions or answers may be given in English or the target language: when the target language is used for questions, the language used must be appropriate to the level, and in either case, care must be taken to ensure the questions do not demand answers in the target language using grammar or vocabulary not yet encountered. Care must also be taken to ensure the focus in marking written answers is on assessing the correctness of the answer, without undue emphasis on the grammatical accuracy of the written answer: it must only be sufficient to communicate the meaning unambiguously. Written Question and Answer can range from simple tasks at lower levels, to more complex, open questions at Level 3.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Responses by individual learners
- Peer assessment (where appropriate for short answers/checklists)

Evidence could include:

- Learner responses in English or the target language
- Tutor comment

	Activity	Assessment method
Level 3	Written answers prompted by questions in English or the target language. Activities may include multiple choice answers, summaries, descriptions, in English or the target language. Learners should be encouraged to make use of/interpret knowledge rather than just recall information. The process may be time limited.	Assessment by tutor; assessment by peers and self will depend on the language used and the nature of the activity.

NOCN Level 3 Award in Language Skills

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Language Skills



Written description/Written question and answer/Essay/Written report/Log or diary – to assess writing

Written answers expected must be appropriate to the level. In all cases the quantity, complexity and demand for accuracy will be appropriate to the requirements of the unit being assessed. At Level 3, work may require evidence of research, analysis and evaluation of specific topics as appropriate to the unit studied.

The learning may be assessed by:

- Tutor - against clear criteria

Evidence could include:

- Any piece of written work

	Activity	Assessment method
Level 3	Learners will use common structures and expressions accurately, and complex language with reasonable accuracy; work should be structured coherently. Activities may include any form of appropriate written activity, such as essays, reports.	Tutor assessment

5. How will the qualifications be 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.

Although units are content-free and can be delivered in a variety of contexts, it may be helpful to consider some examples of content for a typical Level 3 class for, for example, part-time adult learners or 16-19 college learners, who want a general introduction to the language. For these examples, see Appendix 1.

Tutors are advised to provide an Assessment Planning Sheet for a Unit to demonstrate how requirements of units will be fulfilled.

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 the assessment activities (please see [page 17-21](#)). This grid includes a general description of the activity and 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.

Centres are particularly reminded of the need to provide reliable evidence of achievement for Speaking units: please see suggestions in Appendix 1. **Tutors should aim to record each learner at least once** (i.e. one task) in order that standardisation by outcome is achievable, and a Recording Record must be kept.

A combination of the following methods of recording achievement for Speaking units is recommended:

- *Recording*
- *Signature/comment by the tutor on the task brief*
- *Individual or group witness statements*
- *Tutor checklists.*

Tutors are advised to use a Record of Learners' Assessments (centre-devised) for each unit, as these provide a useful summary of achievement which the internal verifiers and external verifiers can refer to when completing the Recommendation for Award of Credit. It is also a useful method of summarising internal verification sampling.

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 qualifications or units of the qualifications 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 these qualifications to learners. All procedures for the use of the qualifications or units of the qualifications, 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 qualifications, or units of the qualifications, will need to demonstrate the ability to manage and deliver the units and/or the qualifications, including adherence to quality assurance and assessment regulations.

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

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 Qualification Specific Information

There is a rigorous quality assurance process including internal verification structures, standardisation requirements and the appointment of internal verifiers (IVs) by the Centre, and external verifiers (EVs) by the OCN. IVs and EVs will be qualified and experienced language teachers and trainers and experts in language teaching methodology, levels of achievement and the design of assessment. They will also relate closely to their OCN.

Before the start of each academic year (or at other appropriate times) Centres are required to provide OCNs with a list of languages and levels they wish to offer for the coming year. They will also be asked to confirm internal verification arrangements (see 'Centre Languages Proposal' form in Appendix 2). On receipt of this information, OCNs will liaise with Centres to ensure that Centres have access to training for new tutor assessors and that sufficient, competent internal verifiers are in place to operate quality assurance procedures.

Internal Verification

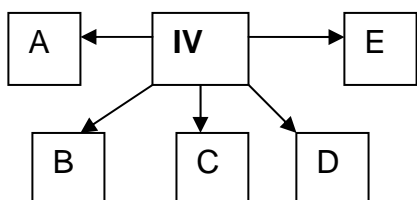
1. Each Centre will appoint an experienced language teacher – often the programme co-ordinator or manager - as the Centre internal verifier.

The role and responsibility of the internal verifier can be found on the NOCN website within the Learning Providers section under Recognised Centre Area, together with sample record keeping templates. In addition to carrying out internal verifier duties, the internal verifier will support tutor assessors in languages in the following aspects:

- Designing assessment tasks appropriate to the unit specifications and Assessment Descriptors for Languages
- Ensuring tasks are appropriate to the level being assessed, as defined in the Detailed Level Descriptors
- Embedding assessment tasks into classroom activity
- Recording evidence appropriately.

2. Internal verification meetings will be held within the Centre at appropriate points in the year, usually twice each year, and as agreed with OCNs and external verifiers.

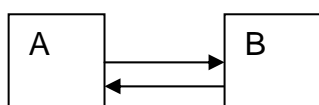
If the Centre internal verifier is competent in all languages offered, a model of internal verification can operate within the Centre, whereby the internal verifier relates directly to each tutor assessor, thus:



3. If the Centre internal verifier is not competent in all languages offered, s/he will remain in control of internal verification management, processes, and record keeping, and liaison with the external verifier, but must also make arrangements for further internal verification of the other languages.

The process is as follows:

- Where two or more tutor assessors are competent in the language, at least two of them must receive initial internal verification training, so that the assessments of each tutor assessor can be sampled by another competent assessor/internal verifier (usually alongside the model above):



- Where there is only one tutor assessor for a particular language, the Centre internal verifier must agree with the OCN an arrangement for external sampling. (It is emphasised that the Centre internal verifier will still be responsible for supporting the tutor assessor within the circle of language tutor assessors).
- The external sampling process may be **either** by liaison with another local provider, through a visit made to an internal verification meeting or through the use of postal exchange of simple assessments, **or** it may be by postal sample to an external expert (see below). The sampling will be brokered by the OCN and managed by the Centre internal verifier, and the Centre's external verifier will require evidence that it has taken place.

The sampling will be:

- A sampling of tasks designed, at the start of the year, for all new tutor assessors.
- A mid-year sampling of completed assessments for all single tutor assessors in a Centre, covering each level offered; as a general rule, two tasks from each unit assessed should be selected, and indicative of the range achieved, for example, one assessment considered to be well above the level, one at an average level and one just sufficient to achieve would be appropriate. OCNs will advise Centres of the appropriate sample where necessary.
- A register of external experts will be held by the Lead OCN: these experts will be drawn either from the pool of existing internal verifiers and external verifiers known to OCNs, or from external sources compiled by the Lead OCN. All external experts will have appropriate qualifications in the language and experience of teaching languages, understanding of national levels of achievement, and knowledge of the content of the Language Skills Award, including the Level Descriptors for each level.

External Verification

1. External verifiers will be appointed to Centres by OCNs:
 - External verifiers are qualified and experienced in languages and language teaching.
 - External verifier visits may include visiting classes using the Award and Certificate, visiting an internal verification meeting or meeting with the Centre internal verifier. Details of the role of the external verifier can be found on the NOCN website within the Learning Providers section under Recognised Centre Area.
2. OCNs will **either** conduct an area end-of-year external verification and standardisation event, attended by Centre internal verifiers and some tutor assessors, **or** in the event that this is not feasible in the locality, they will arrange Centre-based final verification events. In either case at least **two** qualified people, (i.e. assessors/internal verifiers/external verifiers), will be present for each language to be verified. The purpose of these events is to allow standardisation across languages and levels, to agree the award of credit, and to share expertise in order to promote continuous improvement.
3. External verifiers' reports will inform both OCNs and Centres about training needs for tutors or internal verifiers, if observed within Centres, and OCNs will consider these needs and the actions required to remedy any problems when agreeing the Centre offer for the following year.

7.3 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.

Appendix 1: Tutor Guidance

This Appendix is intended to offer useful suggestions for transforming the requirements of the Assessment Criteria into classroom activities. Tutors are urged to bear in mind that flexibility is a key feature of the qualifications, and that the lexical content should be designed to match the needs and aspirations of the learner group. The Assessment Criteria are at all times the essential reference point for achievement of the unit.

These suggestions must be used in conjunction with the Achievement Criteria, Achievement Descriptors and Assessment /Definitions in Sections 4 and 5.

Units at Level 3 are worth 6 credits each, and as such recognise the considerable distance to be travelled between competence at Level 2 and competence at Level 3. There are, therefore, various ways in which the units could be grouped to achieve the Award or Certificate, and this will largely depend on the skills of the learner group at the start of the course. At Level 3, learners may be expected to work independently, and indeed, to fulfil tasks in Reading and Writing, would need time to work independently. With learners whose skills are already very secure at Level 2, and who are keen to put in considerable independent learning time, the achievement of two units in one year, with one class a week, is possible, but may not be the most common pattern of delivery. Units are individually accredited, so various delivery patterns may be appropriate for different groups, for example:

- 2 units per year.
- Year 1: one unit (perhaps Reading)/Year 2: two units (perhaps Speaking and Listening)/Year 3: one unit (perhaps Writing).
- As above, but with one unit in Year 2 and two in Year 3.
- One unit each year: inevitably, some learners would achieve only individual units, while others will accumulate an Award or Certificate, but this approach could suit the needs of many learners. Careful tracking from year to year would be necessary.
- 4 units in one year, with weekend workshops, or other tutorial support, if learners demonstrate appropriate prior knowledge.

Where only certain units are completed each year, this does not mean that only those skills are learnt and practised in each year: it means that only those skills are **assessed** in each year. Tutors should consider how the delivery pattern will affect the assessment pattern: it **may** be possible to cross-reference evidence, and it would be good practice to mirror real-life situations by using the same context/topic in which to practise more than one skill.

However, there are two important considerations:

- When a learner is assessed on listening skills, for example, it is vital that s/he is not dependent exclusively on listening and interpreting the target language as spoken by another learner, who may or may not demonstrate good speaking skills.
- It may be easier and simpler to keep assessment records for each unit separately, rather than to cross-reference extensively.

For both these reasons, tutors are recommended to follow good practice by devising integrated tasks where this offers a relevant and authentic opportunity to practise more than one skill, but to assess and record evidence for each skill separately.

Guidance concerning the quantity of evidence and the volume of language to be contained in assessment tasks is given within the units. However, a few points might usefully be emphasised.

NB The role of the internal verifier in supporting tutors in the planning process is vital. At this level, the units offer more opportunities to vary the range and context of tasks, and thus more opportunity for error in the choice of tasks. It is important the learners are not disadvantaged because incorrect combinations of tasks have been chosen.

Listening

- The Assessment Descriptors state that both English and the target language can be used. At this level the target language may be favoured, but this should never lead to a situation where the learner is disadvantaged because one skill is not as developed as another, for example, their Listening is better than their Writing, which is very common. There are occasions where English may lead to a more precise assessment, for example, when asking about formality or language, but again, it should not be over-used. When questions are in the target language, care must be taken not to give away the answer in the question. Questions in English should be separated from questions in the target language, for example, have a Section A and a Section B, with different kinds of questions in each.
- Note that the Assessment Information Grid suggests that oral question and answer and discussion could be used to assess some of this unit. Unless the discussion is in English, which is not recommended in a language class, considerable skill on the part of the tutor will be needed to extract sufficient precise answers from a whole group to cover the full task, and there could be issues of authenticity if a discussion is followed by writing up the answers. Who actually understood the original text? Might one learner take on another's wrong interpretation? In practice, a discussion following a listening extract is good classroom practice, but it might be more appropriate to assess this as a Speaking task, or a Writing task following the discussion, rather than to assess the accuracy of the learners' understanding of the extract itself. Where oral questions will be useful is where a learner needs to be asked supplementary questions to clarify something they have given in their answers to the questions, or to cover absence with an individual opportunity to answer questions.
- Learning Outcome 1 specifies 'passages', whereas Learning Outcome 2 specifies 'discussions'; suggestions are given about content, and care must be taken to cover a sufficient range of differing contexts, as well as the range of different topics.
- There is guidance in the unit on the minimum number and total length of the sources in each Learning Outcome; within those parameters, there could be a number of listening passages of varying length.
- 1.3 and 2.4 specify a 'range of specific questions': there is no prescription, and questions will depend on the length of the extract in general, but as a guideline, at least two and generally not more than four on any one source is suggested.
- When designing and giving a title to the assessment activities, it is important to label them explicitly, showing, for example, which of 2.2 or 2.3 the task covers, or even whether it covers both, and how long it is, for example, 'Extract from TV debate 23.10.06: A.C. 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 (1.5 minutes). Another task must then cover 2.3.

Speaking

- It is strongly recommended that learners do a presentation to cover one of the topics in Learning Outcome 1. The presentation should include questions and answers, generally prepared to some extent in advance by the group. This could then be recorded for evidence, as a matter of course, as **the aim must be to record each learner at least once.**
- The second task could then be in the context of a survey, interview or negotiation situation, where several groups could take place at once, probably on several occasions, with the tutor circulating with a checklist of what s/he is expecting (see the descriptors a-g) in the unit; this checklist could either be one per learner as the tutor listens to a small group, and the checklist is then used as that learner's evidence, or it could be a group checklist, after which the tutor writes a brief, individual Witness Statement. (Please refer to Learning Providers Section, Recognised Centre Area on NOCN Website or your OCN if you need an example of a suitable Witness Statement template).
- For Learning Outcome 2, group discussions, which are in any case the backbone of Speaking practice at this level, could be used as assessment activities. However, tutors must be skilful in facilitating the discussion, as they must be able to draw out enough from each learner to be sure they have achieved the criteria. Probably several discussions will be necessary, with a number of learners 'signed off' (perhaps privately) each time. A good method might be to give one learner the task (prepared beforehand) of starting the discussion off, thus giving a good opportunity for the tutor to witness Speaking skills. A Group Witness Statement is an excellent method of recording discussion. A good template and method of use is essential, however, so again, please apply to your OCN for assistance.
- The unit gives definitions within it of the level of Speaking expected (a-g): a class record with these definitions across the top, with a tutor's initial showing confirmation of each learner's skill as they progress through the year, is recommended.

Reading

The general comments made about the Listening unit apply.

Note however:

- The Assessment Criteria specify 'question types', not just 'questions'. There should be a mixture of types, perhaps starting with some closed questions to extract specific information, and moving to open questions requiring a more discursive answer.
- Care must be taken with the (generally recommended) use of the target language – see Listening above.
- The number of questions will vary, depending on how many sources are used. 3-5 may be appropriate.

Writing

Guidance about volume is given in the unit, together with a list (a-g) of definitions to describe the level and range expected. Note particularly:

- The types of writing must vary appropriately, as required in the unit, to ensure that range of writing skills for different purposes is demonstrated.
- Care should be taken with the recording of evidence: at this level a recording sheet specifically designed to track the three pieces of work, and with the definitions (a-g) printed at the top so that the tutor's signature confirms their achievement, is recommended.

A class tracking sheet with these definitions across the top and an initial showing the tutor's confirmation of that level of skill, is an alternative.

Suggested Tracking Forms (centre-devised)

- A Tutor Planning sheet per unit
- A Class Record of Achievement
- An Individual Learner Record per unit
- A Recording Record for Speaking units
- Class Competence Record for Speaking and one for Writing, if not subsumed within Individual Learner Records.

Appendix 2: Centre Languages Proposal Form

The Verification Strategy requires providers to give OCNs the following information, prior to the start of the course. Languages can be added during the course of a year, in consultation with the OCN.

**NOCN Level 3 Award in
Language Skills
NOCN Level 3 Certificate in
Language Skills**



Accreditation start date: 01/07/2005
Accreditation end date: 31/12/2010
Certification end date: 31/12/2013

National Open College Network (NOCN)
The Quadrant
Parkway Business Park
99 Parkway Avenue
Sheffield
S9 4WG

Tel. 0114 227 0500
Fax. 0114 227 0501

Email: nocn@nocn.org.uk
Web: www.nocn.org.uk

© NOCN 2008