



PART OF **nocn** GROUP

Use of Language in Assessment Policy

Version 1.0

March 2022

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1. Scope

1.01 This policy has been created to outline NOCN's approach to the facilitation of the training and assessment of NOCN products in languages other than English.

1.02 This policy and procedure applies to:

- a) NOCN regulated qualifications, units and assessments.
- b) NOCN non-regulated products including Endorsed Programmes and Assured Courses.
- c) NOCN End Point Assessments.

1.03 The intended audience for this document is:

- a) NOCN Directors and Board of Trustees.
- b) NOCN core, sub-contracted and associate staff, including EQAs.
- c) All staff in NOCN recognised and partner centres.
- d) All individuals receiving products or services from NOCN.
- e) Qualification Regulators.

2. Purpose

2.01 The purpose of this document is to:

- a) Confirm which products NOCN will allow training and/or assessment to take place in a language other than English.
- b) Outline the provisions and requirements where training and/or assessment takes place in a language other than English.
- c) Outline the approval process centres must follow to be approved to deliver training and/or assessment in a language other than English.

3. Policy Statement – End Point Assessments

3.01 All training and assessment activities in relation to NOCN's End Point Assessment services must be delivered in English, except for where the proficiency in another language is a skill being assessed by the apprenticeship standard. The assessment of apprentices in any other language is not permitted, except for British Sign Language, which may be permitted if a Reasonable Adjustment has been requested and approved.

3.02 Apprentices are required to hold the appropriate level of English language skills as dictated by the minimum requirements for certification.

4. Policy Statement – Regulated Qualifications, Units and Courses

4.01 NOCN is UK-based Awarding Organisation and therefore the largest proportion of its service users will be proficient in English, including its employed staff and contractors. Therefore, all product materials, resources, policies, guidance documents and quality assurance activities will be produced and conducted in English as standard.

4.02 The Centre approval process requires centres to have proficient understanding of the English language to enable NOCN to carry out its required quality assurance activities. This includes ensuring that any correspondence from the Centre, including documentary evidence, such as policies, procedures, schemes of work and staff CVs are provided to NOCN in English.

- 4.03 Communication from NOCN, including both written and verbal, will also be conducted in English as standard, and therefore Centre staff members must have sufficient proficiency in English to allow the facilitation of communication between NOCN and the Centre.
- 4.04 The requirements of language assessment and the allowances which NOCN will be able to provide depends on the location of the assessment for each individual learner. Each of the following sections provides further detail.

I. Assessment Conducted in England and Scotland

- 4.05 For centres and learners based in England and Scotland, all training and assessment of NOCN qualifications must be conducted in English, except for where the proficiency in another language is a skill being assessed by the qualification. The assessment of learners in any other language is not permitted, except for British Sign Language, which may be permitted if a Reasonable Adjustment has been requested and approved.
- 4.06 Centres based in England must ensure that their learners have an appropriate level of understanding of English to be registered against any NOCN qualification and to meet its entry requirements. This must be established by the initial assessment process.

II. Assessment Conducted in Wales, Northern Ireland or Ireland

- 4.07 As NOCN works across the United Kingdom and in Ireland, it may, for some qualifications, be able to produce its qualification and marketing materials in Welsh or Irish (Gaelige) to facilitate accessibility. NOCN will respond to each request confirming whether it will be possible and the expected timescales for the materials to be provided.
- 4.08 For centres based in Wales, Northern Ireland or Ireland, NOCN will permit for assessments to take place in Welsh or Irish (Gaelige) respectively, as long as there has been a prior agreement from NOCN. Centres should contact assurance@nocn.org.uk for further information. Requests for assessments to take place in Welsh or Irish will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by NOCN and will take into account its feasibility, the level of demand, the availability of a quality assurer who is proficient in the required language and the impact on the validity of the award.
- 4.09 NOCN is required to ensure that it takes all reasonable steps to ensure that any assessment which takes place in a language other than in English is of the same standard and level of demand as learners who complete the assessment in English. This will be completed through NOCN's quality assurance activities. For further information, please refer to the NOCN Risk-Based Approach to Centre Quality Monitoring Policy and Procedure. Welsh or Irish is to the same standard as the assessment in English.
- 4.10 In circumstances where an assessment is planned to take place in Welsh or Irish, NOCN will attempt to allocate an External Quality Assurer (EQA) who is proficient in the relevant language. Where this is not possible, NOCN will allocate an English speaking EQA to carry out the required scrutiny of the Centre's assessment decisions and practices. Where this is the case, NOCN will require the Centre to arrange for any translation services to be completed. Centres should note that this may extend the standard timeframes for learner certification.

III. Assessment Conducted in Other Countries

- 4.11 Centres who are not based in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland or Ireland are referred to as international centres by NOCN. International centres who wish to deliver assessments in a language other than in English, a separate application to deliver in the specific language

should be made to NOCN. NOCN will not permit a qualification or product to be assessed in another language if the qualification or product:

- a) Specifically requires learners to be proficient in English.
- b) Requires a learner's English skills regarding reading, writing, listening or speaking to be assessed.
- c) Is assessed through an externally-set assessment.
- d) Is deemed as a Medium or High-risk qualification by NOCN.
- e) Is a competency-based product (i.e., is vocational in nature with competence rather than knowledge forming a larger part of the product's assessment).

4.12 If an international Centre wishes to deliver assessments in a language other than English, the Centre should express their interest to their Business Development Contact if they are a new Centre, or to the Quality Assurance Team if they are an existing Centre. NOCN will formally review each Centre's application to assess in other languages to determine if approval can be provided.

4.13 In order to deliver an assessment in a language other than English, the international Centre must be able to:

- a) Confirm how they will ensure that learners are appropriately informed of NOCN's policies and procedures (including regarding malpractice, appeals and complaints) if they do not hold English comprehension.
- b) Have access to an experienced translator, who does not perform any other role for the Centre and does not have a Conflict of Interest in the outcome of the assessment in carrying out translation services.
- c) Ensure access to a translator within reasonable notice, who must be able to provide live translation services verbally whilst a NOCN representative is present. This will usually be conducted virtually.
- d) Accept that any charges associated with sourcing and using translation services must be paid for by the Centre.

4.14 In all instances where a translator is used, the Centre is responsible for ensuring that the translator is appropriate and appropriately qualified. The Centre must have its own policy and processes in place for how it reaches its decision(s) to appoint its translator(s). Records of these checks must be provided to NOCN upon request.

4.15 All quality assurance activities conducted internationally by NOCN will be carried out in English as standard, regardless of the language used within the assessment. This includes any findings documented to the Centre on the NOCN EQA report. Therefore, even where assessment is carried out in another language other than English, all Centre staff who are involved in the delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of NOCN products must hold sufficient proficiency in the English language to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with NOCN.

IV. Certification

4.16 Where a learner completes the assessment for a unit or qualification in a language other than English and where the objective of the unit or qualification was not for the learner to gain skills in, or knowledge or understanding of that language, NOCN will ensure that the language of the assessment is clearly identifiable on the certificate.

5. Document Control

- 5.01 This policy is maintained by the NOCN Quality Assurance Team and will be reviewed and updated where necessary to reflect updated legislation, customer feedback, improvements of operation and changes to the regulatory environment. If you have any queries regarding the contents or the use of this policy, please contact the Quality Assurance Team directly on assurance@nocn.org.uk or by telephone on 0300 999 1177.
- 5.02 All NOCN policies and procedures are signed off by the NOCN Responsible Officer. The latest versions of which can be found on our website here: <https://www.nocn.org.uk/support/nocn-group-policies/>.