Endorsed Programme Handbook For Approved Centres

Requirements for approved centres to deliver NOCN Endorsed Programmes

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1. Introduction

1.01 This document provides guidance for all organisations who have gained NOCN Endorsed Programme approval for one or more identified training activities, it confirms the quality assurance and review process which will be undertaken by NOCN and outlines how an organisation can claim certification.

What is an Endorsed Programme?

1.02 NOCN Endorsed Programme approval provides formal recognition of the quality of the delivery, content and management of an organisation's training activities. Organisations are able to demonstrate high quality and continuous improvement, and that their courses:

a) Have clear aims and objectives.
b) Provide a valuable and worthwhile training experience.
c) Meet defined delivery, content and management standards which benefit their organisation and those who participate within the training activities.

1.03 NOCN Endorsed Programmes are a great area for innovation and new developments, as the programmes can be quickly updated to meet changing requirements, unlike regulated qualification which are more fixed.

1.04 NOCN Endorsed Programmes remain owned by the training organisation and are Endorsed by NOCN Group, this protects your Intellectual Property.

1.05 NOCN Endorsed Programmes can be designed to meet specific needs of a region or a business's CPD requirements and can even be tailored to specific manufacturing or software processes to support industry. Although they are not regulated by any Qualification Regulator, they are structured and managed to the same quality standard as regulated qualifications to maintain validity and credibility of the training.

1.06 NOCN manage learner data, and issue unique, secure certificates with the NOCN logo.

1.07 NOCN Endorsed Programmes do not provide formal external validation of the individual participant assessment process.

1.08 NOCN Endorsed Programmes are not allocated credit values but endorsed units are allocated credits values to aid registration costs.

Support Available for Centres

1.10 Organisations who are seeking to become a Centre with NOCN to deliver Endorsed Programmes or centres who are already approved are encouraged to use the below contact details for any questions they may have.

1.11 For any queries related to approval, or the endorsement of additional programmes following approval, please contact the Business Development Team at business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk, or contact your Business Development contact directly.

1.12 For any queries related to the registration and/or certification of learners, please contact the Customer Experience Team at nocn@nocn.org.uk

2. Gaining Approval and Associated Fees

2.01 To become an NOCN Endorsed Centre for Endorsed Programmes or units you need to follow the Endorsed process:

- Complete the Endorsed Application Form
- Complete the Endorsed programme content sheet
- Send all the documentation including the required document to OnBoarding@nocn.org.uk
- Pay the Endorsed Centre recognition fee

2.02 Each organisation that is approved for their training activities receives formal notification of that approval.

2.03 Applicants will be guided through the Endorsed recognition process by a member of the Business Development team.

Set-up and Approval Fees

2.04 The NOCN Endorsed Centre Approval Fee, which is applicable for all new centres, is **£500**. This is a one-off fee and includes the review of the endorsed programme. This fee is split into two payments:

2.4.1 £300 Application fee payable upon submission of application
2.4.2 £200 Approval fee payable upon confirmation of endorsement

2.05 For further Endorsed Programme reviews, the following charges are agreed upon approval and apply:

a) Up to 130 GLH size programmes **£150**
b) Between 130 – 370 GLH size programmes **£250**
c) Over 370 GLH size programmes **£350**

2.06 The NOCN Registration and Certification Fees per learner are:

a) Registration and E-Certificates = **£7.50**
b) Additional Paper Certificates purchased through the Hub = **£10**

2.07 Approvals will be based on the training activity presented with the application, this should include all the requested documents stated in the application form.

2.08 All documentation will then be sent to a reviewer to review and sign off, once reviewed your will be formally notified of approval.

Unit Approvals

Please follow the same process as the Endorsed Programme Approval and Application

- Centres that want us to endorse or develop units for them the following charges are:
  - To write a unit £450 per unit or possible reduction if more than one
  - To review unit £75 per unit
  - To register against individual units it would be based on the ICV tariff from NOCN's Annual tariff

Additional Programme Approvals

2.09 If you wish to add further training activities to your Endorsed Programme approval then you should complete an Additional Endorsed Programme Application Form, which is part of the Application Form, as well as an Additional Endorsed Programme Content form. The costs for approval of an additional training activity are outlined above.

2.10 In submitting an additional application, you should provide a full explanation of the training activity, including the aims and objectives as requested on the application form.

2.11 If you require further support or advice, please contact the Business Development Team.

3. NOCN Endorsed Programme Agreement

3.01 The NOCN Endorsed Programme Agreement sets out the terms and conditions for Centre approval in relation to the delivery of Endorsed Programmes. The agreement must be agreed by the Centre's Head of Organisation, or their delegated representative, to confirm that the Centre will operate in line with NOCN requirements. This must be completed before registrations are permitted by NOCN.

3.02 The Head of Organisation, or their delegated representative, should ensure that the agreement is available to all those who are involved within the organisation's Endorsed Programme training activity to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.

Using Endorsed Programme Certification

3.03 The agreed wording on the learner certificates will be discussed at the approval stage. Your own organisation's logo can be included on the certificate; there may be an additional cost for this service.

3.04 Following approval, NOCN will contact you to discuss the process for registering learners and applying for certificates. If you required further support with this, please contact the Customer Experience Team.

4. NOCN Endorsed Programme Requirements

4.01 This section contains the questions centres will need to consider as part of both devising and delivering their programme to satisfy NOCN of the validity and quality of their programme. To support centres in devising and delivering a programme of quality, NOCN has set out the criteria it will review for an Endorsed Programme to support best practice. These criteria are separated into the below areas:

a) Programme objectives, structure, purpose and duration
b) Method of assessment
c) Assessment objectives & criteria
d) Resources
e) Agreed programme outcomes
f) Subject / sector knowledge
g) Training and Learning

4.02 This section contains further guidance for centres on evidencing best practice in the above areas.

Objectives, purpose and assessment

4.03 Centres will need to demonstrate a clear rationale, aims and objectives of their programme to ensure value in its delivery and completion.

4.04 Centres will need to have clear delivery plans, including what content will be covered as part of the programme, the method of how this will be delivered, as well as whether the programme will make use of e-learning/remote learning.

4.05 Assessment and learning materials may be subject to actions as part of this review. This will take the form of an email or discussion with the reviewer along with an agreed realistic timescale for these to be completed.

4.06 Centres will need to have clear delivery plans, including what content will be covered as part of the programme, the method of how this will be delivered, as well as whether the programme will make use of e-learning/remote learning.

4.07 Centres should consider the length of their programme in terms of contact hours for learners to ensure that the programme remains focused, whilst also ensuring learners are given sufficient opportunity to fulfil the aims of completion.

Leadership and Management

4.08 To support robust development and delivery on an Endorsed Programme, centres will need to have in place effective leadership and management structures and ways of working. This includes ensuring continuous improvement in Centre practices through effective evaluation, self-reflection and improvements.

4.09 To support effective management controls, centres are required to have policies in place which are effectively understood and supported by Centre staff. As a minimum, centres are expected to have the following policies and procedures in place:

a) **Complaints Policy and Procedure** – The complaints policy and procedure should document how a Centre will respond to all complaints efficiently and effectively.

Timescales and responsibilities should be documented to ensure transparency and fairness in the complaints process. Learners must be aware that they should follow the Centre's own complaints policy and procedure first before escalating to NOCN.

b) **Equal Opportunities Policy** - Diversity, equality, and inclusion are central to NOCN's policies and beliefs. Centres must have an Equality Opportunities Policy that clearly details how it will protect the interests of all learners. The policy should reflect the most current legislation in relation to access to equal opportunities.
c) **Health and Safety Policy** – Centres must have a documented policy stating its commitment for the protection of health and safety of employees and learners. The Centre's practices must be in line with the most up to date health and safety legislation and guidance generally and in relation to their provision.
d) **Maladministration Policy and Procedure** - Centres must have their own policy and procedure regarding maladministration. The policy and procedure must be comprehensive and contain as a minimum:

    a. Definitions and examples of incidents or actions that constitute as maladministration by both learners and Centre staff.
    b. The process for how incidents of maladministration should be reported within the Centre when identified.
    c. The process for how NOCN is informed of suspected or proven cases of maladministration as soon as they are identified.
    d. The Centre's process for how they will ensure that incidents of maladministration are investigated thoroughly, when requested to do so by NOCN.

Centre management should encourage the provision of feedback from learners who attend their course. Centres are encouraged to create and issue surveys and evaluation questionnaires to learners to support them in gaining feedback.

4.10 Findings from collection of learner feedback activities should be reviewed and used to inform quality improvement measures within the Centre. It may also be appropriate to review learners who are at different stages, to identify issues with particular parts of the process.

4.11 It is important that evaluation is used to ensure that the organisation's processes and strategies are working. Findings from evaluations should be reviewed to determine if any quality improvement measures are required within the Centre.

4.12 Centres are encouraged to curate their own Quality Improvement Plan, which should state the required improvement, who this impacts, what actions were taken to address the weakness and how this has improved the process/quality within the Centre and for who.

Resources

4.13 Prior to delivering Endorsed Programme activities, centres must ensure that there are adequate and appropriate physical resources in place.

4.14 The Centre is responsible for using only appropriate, safe venues which will be conducive to training and learning. This includes ensuring that the venue provides a comfortable atmosphere for learners, including in terms of hygiene, noise levels, temperature and the provision of clean toilet facilities.

4.15 All venues must be risk-assessed and deemed appropriate before their use. Centres must ensure that learners will have access to any equipment and supporting documentation they may require to allow them to complete assessments and that the equipment is suitable.

4.16 Centres are responsible for the appointment of staff who hold appropriate competence and experience regarding the delivery of the Endorsed Programme. The Centre should provide support to their staff in terms of continuous professional development to ensure that they keep their knowledge and experience current.

4.17 Where a Centre makes use of e-learning, the Centre should ensure that the resources are appropriate and that access to all learners is made available. Centres should also ensure that the content is maintained to ensure currency and relevancy.

4.18 Endorsed Programme approval allows organisations to use the NOCN logo on publicity and promotional material for approved training activities. This includes the organisation's website. The NOCN logo should not be used without the permission of NOCN. The NOCN brand guidelines are available on the NOCN website: https://www.nocn.org.uk/centre-marketing-portal/

4.19 Centres approved to use the NOCN logo are responsible for ensuring that it is used appropriately and in accordance with our brand guidelines, both in relation to materials produced and/or used to promote or otherwise identify NOCN Endorsed Programme training activities. Endorsed Programme organisations are expected to routinely survey material produced and to monitor their own use of the logo.

Administration

4.20 Centres must ensure that they have a suitable workforce to allow accurate and timely administration of Endorsed Programmes. What is appropriate will depend on the structure and size of a Centre, however, the key point is to ensure that any administrative tasks required by the Centre are completed to ensure timely learner induction, registration and certification.

4.21 Centres are required to ensure NOCN timescales are met at all times and therefore centres are expected to carry out their own monitoring of their administrative functions to ensure activities are being completed in a timely manner and that the functions are appropriately resourced.

4.22 Centres must ensure a timely and accurate upload of learner achievements to NOCN. Certificates must only be claimed for when a learner has successfully completed the Endorsed Programme. NOCN requires centres to ensure that checks are carried out on the accuracy and validity of result claims before they are submitted to NOCN.

4.23 Once centres receive certificates, they must check all certificates for accuracy before securely distributing these to learners in a timely manner. Centres must ensure that they have their own internal procedures for the checking and logging of certificates. Centres should keep a record of certificates received and sent, including keeping the details of the relevant dates and tracking numbers. This must be provided to NOCN upon request.

4.24 Once NOCN issues a certificate, it is the responsibility of the Centre to ensure that the certificate is obtained by the learner.

Training and Learning

4.25 Centres must ensure that their learners are appropriately informed by providing them with information and support on the Centre's policies and procedures, including those on

complaints, malpractice, health and safety and equal opportunities.

4.26 During a learner's induction at a Centre, the Centre must ensure that the learner is aware of how their data will be used. Learners must be willing to share their full name and date of birth, to be registered with NOCN. Learners must be aware of their rights regarding their data; however, they must be aware that if they choose not to share their data with NOCN they cannot be registered and therefore cannot complete any training with the Centre.

4.27 Where there are any pre-requirements needed for a learner to attend the course, these should be checked and monitored as part of each learner's induction.

4.28 Where assessment is part of the programme, centres must ensure that this is conducted in a formal and appropriate manner and ensure that the outcomes of each assessment activity are recorded and stored appropriately. Learner work should be authenticated in all cases, including where e-learning or e-assessment is used. Centres have a responsibility to ensure that their assessment methodologies are inclusive, ethical and appropriate regarding the learner being assessed.

4.29 Where distance learning or self-study is used, centres must ensure that they have robust systems and controls in place. This includes ensuring that materials are appropriate and that they are distributed to all relevant learners in a timely and orderly manner. Centres must ensure that there is a resolution system in place in case learners have any questions regarding the material they are provided with and that learners are regularly and appropriately monitored. Centres should consider checking learner understanding, as well as the authenticity of learner work.

5. Endorsed Programme/Unit Monitoring

5.01 Following approval, a NOCN Reviewer will be allocated to quality review the Endorsed programme/unit to ensure that it meets all the requirements stated in section 4. An annual email will be sent to the centres to clarify that there have been no changes to the programme or unit, if there have been changes the Reviewer will undertake a quality review of the updated programme or unit.

5.02 Centres must identify any changes that have taken place in relation to the delivery, content or management of your training activity, including any changes to staffing. If any changes are made without notification to NOCN then the programme is no longer valid.

6. Withdrawal of Programme/Unit or Centre Approval

6.01 If you decide that you no longer wish to use the NOCN Endorsed Programme for your identified training activity, you are required to remove all NOCN Group logos from all of your resources, promotional materials and website once withdrawal is confirmed.

6.02 Withdrawal of NOCN Endorsed Programme approval may be initiated by NOCN if it is found that you have failed to meet the agreed standards or agreed terms and conditions set out in the signed Agreement. This will be communicated in writing to your Head of Organisation.

6.03 **Please note:** You must notify NOCN as soon as possible where there is a significant change within your organisation which impacts on your Endorsed Programme approval. This would include a change in Head of Organisation or Endorsed Programme contact.

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