

Specification for Edexcel Level 1 to 6 NVQs in Construction and the Built Environment (QCF)

Edexcel NVQ/competence-
based qualifications

Edexcel, a Pearson company, is the UK's largest awarding organisation offering vocational and academic qualifications and testing, to employers, training providers, colleges, schools, and other places of learning in the UK, and in over 85 countries worldwide.

Our specialist suite of qualifications include NVQs, Apprenticeships, WorkSkills, Functional Skills, Foundation Learning, as well as our exclusive range of BTECs, from entry level right through to Higher National Diplomas.

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Introduction

We offer a range of NVQs for the construction and built environment industry. **The structures for these NVQs are given on our website (www.edexcel.com)** – they show the units that must be taken to gain the NVQs. The individual units are also given on the website and they show the learning outcomes and assessment criteria that must be met to achieve the units.

These NVQs have been accredited to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and are eligible for public funding as determined by the Department for Education (DfE) under Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

The NVQ qualifications feature in the funding lists published annually by the DfE and the regularly updated website: www.education.gov.uk/. The QCF Qualification Number (QN), which is shown in the structure for each NVQ, should be used by centres when they wish to seek public funding for their learners. Each unit within a qualification will also have a QCF unit code.

The QCF qualification and unit codes will appear on learners' final certification documentation.

Key features of the Edexcel NVQs for the construction and built environment industry

These qualifications:

- are nationally recognised
- are based on the ConstructionSkills National Occupational Standards (NOS). The NOS, assessment requirements and qualification structure(s) are owned by ConstructionSkills the Sector Skills Council.

What is the purpose of these qualifications?

These qualifications are appropriate for employees in the construction and built environment sector working across a broad range of areas. They are designed to assess occupational competence in the workplace where learners are required to demonstrate skills and knowledge to a level required in the construction and built environment industry.

Who are these qualifications for?

These qualifications are for all learners aged 16 and above who are capable of reaching the required standards.

Edexcel's policy is that the qualifications should:

- be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- ensure equality of opportunity for all wishing to access the qualifications.

Do learners require any qualifications or previous experience to take these qualifications?

Learners do not need any previous experience or qualifications to take these NVQs at level 1 or level 2. However, for levels 3 and above, we recommend that learners have a relevant NVQ at a lower level and/or relevant experience.

What are the benefits of these NVQ qualifications to the learner and the employer?

These qualifications allow learners to demonstrate competence against the NOS which are based on the needs of the construction and built environment industry as defined by ConstructionSkills. They contribute to the development of skilled labour in the sector. Some NVQ qualifications contribute towards the competence element of an Apprenticeship.

What progression opportunities are available to learners who achieve these NVQs?

These qualifications relate to competences identified in the NOS. Once a qualification has been achieved at a particular level, learners can progress to the next level or broaden their competencies by undertaking a different pathway at the same level. Progression is also possible to knowledge-based qualifications.

How are NVQ qualifications graded and assessed?

The overall grade for NVQ qualifications is a 'pass'. The learner must achieve all the required units within the specified qualification structure.

To pass a unit the learner must:

- achieve **all** the specified learning outcomes
- satisfy **all** the assessment criteria by providing sufficient and valid evidence for each criterion
- show that the evidence is their own.

NVQ qualifications are designed to be assessed:

- in the workplace or
- in conditions resembling the workplace, as specified in the assessment requirements/strategy for the sector, or
- as part of a training programme.

Assessment strategy

Annexe D explains how to obtain the assessment strategy for NVQ qualifications. They have been developed by ConstructionSkills in partnership with employers, training providers, awarding organisations and the regulatory authorities. The assessment strategy includes details on:

- criteria for defining realistic working environments
- roles and occupational competence of assessors, expert witnesses, internal verifiers and standards verifiers
- quality control of assessment
- evidence requirements.

Evidence of competence may come from:

- **current practice** where evidence is generated from a current job role
- a **programme of development** where evidence comes from assessment opportunities built into a learning/training programme whether at or away from the workplace
- the **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** where a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment criteria within a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess without undertaking a course of learning. They must submit sufficient, reliable and valid evidence for internal and standards verification purposes. RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, several units or a whole qualification
- a **combination** of these.

It is important that the evidence is:

Valid	relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
Authentic	produced by the learner
Current	sufficiently recent to create confidence that the same skill, understanding or knowledge persist at the time of the claim
Reliable	indicates that the learner can consistently perform at this level
Sufficient	fully meets the requirements of the standards.

Types of evidence (to be read in conjunction with the assessment strategy - see *Annexe D*)

To successfully achieve a unit the learner must gather evidence which shows that they have met the required standard in the assessment criteria. Evidence can take a variety of different forms including the examples below. Centres should refer to the assessment strategy for information about which of the following are permissible.

- direct observation of the learner's performance by their assessor (O)
- outcomes from oral or written questioning (Q&A)
- products of the learner's work (P)
- personal statements and/or reflective accounts (RA)
- outcomes from simulation, where permitted by the assessment strategy (S)
- professional discussion (PD)
- assignment, project/case studies (A)
- authentic statements/witness testimony (WT)
- expert witness testimony (EPW)
- evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The abbreviations may be used for cross-referencing purposes.

Learners can use one piece of evidence to prove their knowledge, skills and understanding across different assessment criteria and/or across different units. It is, therefore, not necessary for learners to have each assessment criterion assessed separately. Learners should be encouraged to reference the assessment criteria to which the evidence relates.

Evidence must be made available to the assessor, internal verifier and Edexcel standards verifier. A range of recording documents is available on the Edexcel website: www.edexcel.com. Alternatively, centres may develop their own.

Centre recognition and approval

Centre recognition

Centres that have not previously offered Edexcel qualifications need to apply for and be granted centre recognition as part of the process for approval to offer individual qualifications. New centres must complete both a centre recognition approval application and a qualification approval application.

Existing centres will be given 'automatic approval' for a new qualification if they are already approved for a qualification that is being replaced by the new qualification and the conditions for automatic approval are met. Centres already holding Edexcel approval are able to gain qualification approval for a different level or different sector via Edexcel online.

Approvals agreement

All centres are required to enter into an approvals agreement which is a formal commitment by the head or principal of a centre to meet all the requirements of the specification and any linked codes or regulations. Edexcel will act to protect the integrity of the awarding of qualifications, if centres do not comply with the agreement. This could result in the suspension of certification or withdrawal of approval.

Quality assurance

Detailed information on Edexcel's quality assurance processes is given in *Annexe B*.

What resources are required?

Each qualification is designed to support learners working in the construction and built environment sector. Physical resources need to support the delivery of the qualifications and the assessment of the learning outcomes and must be of industry standard. Centres must meet any specific resource requirements outlined in the *Assessment strategy* available on the Edexcel website: www.edexcel.com.

Staff assessing the learner must meet the requirements within the overarching assessment strategy for the sector.

Unit format

Each unit in this specification contains the following sections.

Unit title:					The unit title is accredited on the QCF and this form of words will appear on the learner's Notification of Performance (NOP).
Unit reference number:					This code is a unique reference number for the unit.
QCF level:					All units and qualifications within the QCF have a level assigned to them, which represents the level of achievement. There are nine levels of achievement, from Entry level to level 8. The level of the unit has been informed by the QCF level descriptors and, where appropriate, the NOS and/or other sector/professional.
Credit value:					All units have a credit value. The minimum credit value is one, and credits can only be awarded in whole numbers. Learners will be awarded credits when they achieve the unit.
Guided learning hours:					A notional measure of the substance of a qualification. It includes an estimate of the time that might be allocated to direct teaching or instruction, together with other structured learning time, such as directed assignments, assessments on the job or supported individual study and practice. It excludes learner-initiated private study.
Start date:					This is the date at which the unit comes into effect.
Unit summary:					This provides a summary of the purpose of the unit.
Assessment requirements/evidence requirements:					The assessment/evidence requirements are determined by the SSC. Learners must provide evidence for each of the requirements stated in this section.
Assessment recording:					This provides a summary of the assessment recording to be used for the unit.
Learning outcomes:	Assessment criteria:	Evidence type:	Portfolio reference:	Date:	
			The learner should use this box to indicate where the evidence can be obtained eg portfolio page number.	The learner should give the date when the evidence has been provided.	
Learning outcomes state exactly what a learner should know, understand or be able to do as a result of completing a unit.		The assessment criteria of a unit specify the standard a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome, or a set of learning outcomes, has been achieved.		Learners must reference the type of evidence they have and where it is available for quality assurance purposes. The learner can enter the relevant key and a reference. Alternatively, the learner and/or centre can devise their own referencing system.	

Further information

Our customer service numbers are:

BTEC and NVQ	0844 576 0026
GCSE	0844 576 0027
GCE	0844 576 0025
The Diploma	0844 576 0028
DiDA and other qualifications	0844 576 0031

Calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes.

Useful publications

Related information and publications include:

- *Centre Handbook for Edexcel QCF NVQs and Competence-based Qualifications* published annually
- Functional Skills publications – specifications, tutor support materials and question papers
- *Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualification and Credit Framework* (published by Ofqual, August 2008)
- the current Edexcel publications catalogue and update catalogue.

Edexcel publications concerning the Quality Assurance System and the internal and standards verification of vocationally related programmes can be found on the Edexcel website.

NB: Some of our publications are priced. There is also a charge for postage and packing. Please check the cost when you order.

How to obtain National Occupational Standards

To obtain the National Occupational Standards for these qualifications please go to www.ukstandards.org.uk.

The National Occupational Standards for these qualifications are owned by ConstructionSkills, the Sector Skills Council.

CITB-ConstructionSkills
Bircham Newton
King's Lynn
Norfolk
PE31 6RH

Telephone: 01485 577577
Fax: 01485 577793
Email: call.centre@cskills.org

Professional development and training

Edexcel supports UK and international customers with training related to NVQ and BTEC qualifications. This support is available through a choice of training options offered in our published training directory or through customised training at your centre.

The support we offer focuses on a range of issues including:

- planning for the delivery of a new programme
- planning for assessment and grading
- developing effective assignments
- building your team and teamwork skills
- developing student-centred learning and teaching approaches
- building functional skills into your programme
- building effective and efficient quality assurance systems.

The national programme of training we offer can be viewed on our website (www.edexcel.com/training). You can request customised training through the website or by contacting one of our advisers in the Training from Edexcel team via Customer Services to discuss your training needs.

The training we provide:

- is active
- is designed to be supportive and thought provoking
- builds on best practice
- may be suitable for those seeking evidence for their continuing professional development.

Annexe A: Progression pathways

The Edexcel qualification framework for the Construction and Built Environment sector

Level	General qualifications	Diplomas	BTEC vocationally-related qualifications	BTEC specialist qualification/professional	NVQ/competence
8					
7					Edexcel Level 7 NVQ Diploma in Built Environment Design and Consultancy Practice (QCF) Edexcel Level 7 NVQ Diploma in Construction Senior Management (QCF)

Level	General qualifications	Diplomas	BTEC vocationally-related qualifications	BTEC specialist qualification/professional	NVQ/competence
6					Edexcel Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Built Environment Design Management (QCF) Edexcel Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Construction Contracting Operations Management (QCF) Edexcel Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Construction Site Management (QCF) Edexcel Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Senior Site Inspection (QCF)
5			Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HN Diploma in Construction		
4			Edexcel BTEC Level 4 HN Certificate in Construction		

Level	General qualifications	Diplomas	BTEC vocationally-related qualifications	BTEC specialist qualification / professional	NVQ/competence
3		Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Certificate, Subsidiary Diploma, Diploma and Extended Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment	Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Award, Extended Certificate and Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment (QCF)	We have too many qualifications to list in this space. Please see www.edexcel.com for further information.
2		Edexcel Level 2 Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment	Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate, Extended Certificate and Diploma in Construction (QCF)	Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Award, Certificate and Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment (Craft) and Construction and the Built Environment (Technician)	We have too many qualifications to list in this space. Please see www.edexcel.com for further information.
1		Edexcel Level 1 Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment	Edexcel Level 1 Award, Certificate, Diploma in Construction (QCF)	Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Award, Certificate, Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment	We have too many qualifications to list in this space. Please see www.edexcel.com for further information.
Entry			Edexcel Entry Level BTEC Award in Construction (Entry 3) (QCF)		

Annexe B: Quality assurance

Key principles of quality assurance

- A centre delivering Edexcel qualifications must be an Edexcel recognised centre and must have approval for qualifications that it is offering.
- The centre agrees, as part of gaining recognition, to abide by specific terms and conditions relating to the effective delivery and quality assurance of assessment. The centre must abide by these conditions throughout the period of delivery.
- Edexcel makes available to approved centres a range of materials and opportunities to exemplify the processes required for effective assessment and provide examples of effective standards. Approved centres must use the guidance on assessment to ensure that staff who are delivering Edexcel qualifications are applying consistent standards.
- An approved centre must follow agreed protocols for: standardisation of assessors; planning, monitoring and recording of assessment processes; internal verification and recording of internal verification processes and dealing with special circumstances, appeals and malpractice.

Quality assurance processes

The approach to quality assured assessment is made through a partnership between a recognised centre and Edexcel. Edexcel is committed to ensuring that it follows best practice and employs appropriate technology to support quality assurance processes where practicable. The specific arrangements for working with centres will vary. Edexcel seeks to ensure that the quality-assurance processes it uses do not inflict undue bureaucratic processes on centres, and works to support them in providing robust quality-assurance processes.

The learning outcomes and assessment criteria in each unit within this specification set out the standard to be achieved by each learner in order to gain each qualification. Edexcel operates a quality-assurance process, designed to ensure that these standards are maintained by all assessors and verifiers.

For the purposes of quality assurance, all individual qualifications and units are considered as a whole. Centres offering these qualifications must be committed to ensuring the quality of the units and qualifications they offer, through effective standardisation of assessors and internal verification of assessor decisions. Centre quality assurance and assessment processes are monitored by Edexcel.

The Edexcel quality-assurance processes will involve:

- gaining centre recognition and qualification approval if a centre is not currently approved to offer Edexcel qualifications
- annual visits to centres by Edexcel for quality review and development of overarching processes and quality standards. Quality review and development visits will be conducted by an Edexcel quality development reviewer
- annual visits by occupationally competent and qualified Edexcel Standards Verifiers for sampling of internal verification and assessor decisions for the occupational sector
- the provision of support, advice and guidance towards the achievement of National Occupational Standards.

Centres are required to declare their commitment to ensuring quality and appropriate opportunities for learners that lead to valid and accurate assessment outcomes. In addition, centres will commit to undertaking defined training and online standardisation activities.

Annexe C: Centre certification and registration

Edexcel Standards Verifiers will provide support, advice and guidance to centres to achieve Direct Claims Status (DCS). Edexcel will maintain the integrity of Edexcel QCF NVQs through ensuring that the awarding of these qualifications is secure. Where there are quality issues identified in the delivery of programmes, Edexcel will exercise the right to:

- direct centres to take action
- limit or suspend certification
- suspend registration.

The approach of Edexcel in such circumstances is to work with the centre to overcome the problems identified. If additional training is required, Edexcel will aim to secure the appropriate expertise to provide this.

What are the access arrangements and special considerations for Edexcel NVQ qualifications?

Centres are required to recruit learners to Edexcel qualifications with integrity.

Appropriate steps should be taken to assess each applicant's potential and a professional judgement should be made about their ability to successfully complete the programme of study and achieve the qualification. This assessment will need to take account of the support available to the learner within the centre during their programme of study and any specific support that might be necessary to allow the learner to access the assessment for qualifications. Centres should consult Edexcel's policy on learners with particular requirements.

Edexcel's policy on access arrangements and special considerations for Edexcel qualifications aims to enhance access to the qualifications for learners with disabilities and other difficulties (as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and any amendments to the Act) without compromising the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding or competence. Please refer to *Access Arrangements and Special Considerations for BTEC and Edexcel NVQ Qualifications* for further details. www.edexcel.com.

Annexe D: Assessment requirements/strategy

Please go to the ConstructionSkills website (www.cskills.org) for the ConstructionSkills Assessment Strategy.

Annexe E: Additional requirement for qualifications that use the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title

For information please go to www.ofqual.gov.uk to access the document '*Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title*'.

