



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



## QCF tests and trials – Phase 1 project summaries

**Lead organisation:** ASDAN

**Project title:** Developing, testing and trialling units, credits and qualifications in generic skills

**Project summary:** Units and qualifications are to be variously modelled, developed, tested and trialled in a range of generic skills, as they articulate with personal, learning and thinking skills, to include introductions to wider key skills, research and presentation skills (currently part of ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness), life skills, work-related and career planning skills, at Entry level and Levels 1, 2 and 3. The developments at Entry level and Level 1 will feature aspects of personal and social development and general vocational-based learning, with a view to producing a coherent package that will meet the foundation learning tier qualification strategy. Units will be modelled from existing qualifications to trial how these could meet framework requirements. In addition, it will trial Certificate of Personal Effectiveness qualifications that meet the framework specifications with learners. It will also include the development of new units that are not currently approved within NQF but which may prove complementary to existing units.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level, Levels 1, 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** ASDAN/NfAYPA

**Project title:** Developing, testing and trialling units and credits in personal and social development through the NfAYPA (Network for Accrediting Young People's Achievement)

**Project summary:** The project will develop, test and trial units in a range of personal and social development areas. Some of the units will be those that have been identified and agreed across the network of organisations involved in NfAYPA and other organisations through a QCA project to develop core PSD units. Some will be units from NfAYPA members submitted via the awarding bodies approved by the regulators involved in this project, ASDAN or NOCN. In particular the project will test and trial a valid and reliable quality assurance system through existing awarding bodies within the Network, that is acceptable to Network

members and that meets regulatory requirements that tests the process for future submission of units through awarding bodies. The project aims to undertake the above across a minimum of six provider organisations participating in the project, including those providers that are Learning and Skills Council funded.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level and Level 1

**Lead organisation:** ASET

**Project title:** Units of Assessment for the Health and Social Care Sector

**Project summary:** The project aim is to re-specify existing units and develop a range of new units relating to the health and social care sector and fitting the Qualifications and Credit Framework specifications. This proposal fits with the sector strategies being developed by Skills for Care and Development and Skills for Health. Units will support the Learning and Skills Council priorities as well as the sector qualification strategies. Credit will be assigned building on the experience gained through ASET's involvement with the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales project, and with reference to the newly developed guidance materials for the framework.

**Country coverage:** aspire to cover England, Wales, Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** ASET

**Project title:** Developing a flexible suite of units and qualifications relating to health and safety

**Project summary:** The project aims to develop a range of credit-based units and qualifications related to the health and safety sector, which contributes to the testing of an operational model for the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It will apply existing and new methods of quality assurance and assessment to the range of units and qualifications developed. The project will carry out a trial with learners, exploring the potential for mutual recognition and transfer of credit, where appropriate.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** British Institute of Innkeeping (BIIAB)

**Project title:** Diploma in Licensed Retail Operations

**Project summary:** The project will test the suitability of the new framework to satisfy the needs of learners within the industry, to meet the expectations and demands of the industry

itself, and to prove BIIAB's capability in meeting the related requirements. Using the guidance materials BIIAB will develop units to the requirements outlined in the working specification for tests and trials and the unit pro forma. BIIAB will build units together into qualifications using the rules of combination guidance and evaluate the systems and processes to ensure they are robust and effective. Units and qualifications, developed as part of the trial, will be piloted with an agreed number of candidates through a variety of training providers. Interim evaluation reports will be produced to evaluate the value to the industry and learners, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the design features of the Qualifications and Credit Framework.

**Country coverage:** England and Wales

**Levels:** Levels 2 or 3

**Lead organisation:** Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE)

**Project title:** Framework trial and test development – extended schools and children's centre environments

**Project summary:** The project will test a more flexible and accessible approach to units and qualifications so that they can be tailored to individual job roles in the school support and playwork staff area. The project will ensure that the units and qualifications meet the changing needs of school support staff and raise the skills and knowledge needed for existing and emerging new roles, eg for the children's workforce, and to deliver extended services. The project will trial significant changes in the 14-19 agenda, extended schools and children's centres by upskilling staff and providing career pathways that meet the targets in the government's Children's Workforce Development Strategy. The CACHE pilot will provide experience, evidence and evaluation of the potential of the framework and its benefits to its candidates and employers.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

**Project title:** Test and trial project - The development of a credit-based Level 2 qualification in construction

**Project summary:** CCEA has developed a series of occupational 'taster' units to help learners make informed choices of potential areas of work and career. The project will develop progression pathways to other levels of provision and test the Qualifications and Credit Framework as a means to address issues of coherence and progression. Specifically, the project will develop and extend selected units from the Occupational Studies qualification and translate them into a Level 2 Construction qualification. The project will look to satisfy the

needs of learners while addressing an identified skill shortage and promote capacity building within CCEA and ensure that staff have the knowledge to move forward following the test and trial period. Objectives are:

- to build and evaluate capacity to develop units/qualifications in line with the working specification
- to develop units that test the validity of the unit specification and meet the needs of learners
- to develop a qualification based on credit accumulation and rules of combination
- to pilot the units and qualification with learners and centres in Northern Ireland
- to provide feedback to the regulatory bodies on the appropriateness of the new framework specifications and supporting guidelines

**Country coverage:** Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Level 2

**Lead organisation:** Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)

**Project title:** Diploma in Financial Planning

**Project summary:** The project will enable the testing and trialling process to evaluate the practicality of dissolving the higher-level National Qualifications Framework criteria in a qualification that has a strong technical focus but does not require candidates to complete a synoptic unit and does not feature any mandatory units. These characteristics were designed into the qualification in order to enable the maximum degree of flexibility in the choice of units from both an employer and employee perspective. With the support of a standards setting body (FSSC), the qualification meets a very significant market demand because of the relevance and flexibility that arises from the way it has been constructed after significant input from financial service practitioners.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Higher levels

**Lead organisation:** City & Guilds

**Project title:** To test the suitability of the specification requirements in relation to vocational qualifications in professional cookery

**Project summary:** The project will look at re-specifying units in Professional Cookery vocational qualifications at levels 1 and 2 in order to meet the framework requirements around the use of a unit pro forma, new level descriptors and credit, so that an analysis and evaluation of these specifications can be conducted in this sector. These will be trialled with

learners to test their ability to stand alone as units and to test the flexibility of the framework with other awarding bodies around credit accumulation and transfer.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** City Lit

**Project title:** Visual Arts – New Adult Pathways

**Project summary:** The project will test the viability and potential for development of a unitised framework in Visual Arts to appropriately meet the diverse needs of adult learners up to Level 3 and to test progression between units, the relationship between credit accumulation and the award of qualifications. The project will test whether an increased number of students in Visual Arts achieve accreditation, so that a clear structure for progression across specialist adult learning providers in London can be established, which can be further developed and replicated in other subject sectors.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level, Levels 1, 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** Edexcel

**Project title:** Flexible Level 2 BTEC qualifications in the framework

**Project summary:** The project aims to test the Qualifications and Credit Framework concepts of unit/qualification development for a qualification and credit framework and how learners/providers will engage in the processes from registration to certification (eg including processes such as the assigning of credit, web-based accreditation, the required IT systems, learner registration, learner certification and learner achievement record). The project aims to provide feedback on whether the framework can support a range of qualifications/learning programmes across sectors and learning and training contexts. A central part of the project aims is to test the proposed re-specification of the PSA Level 2 targets for adults and to see how this can be articulated in qualifications and how the framework can support the targets.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Level 2

**Lead organisation:** e-skills UK

**Project title:** ITQ

**Project summary:** ITQ is the N/SVQ for IT user skills. It is a cross-sector qualification covering everybody who uses technology in their jobs (approximately 20 million people in the

UK). The ITQ trial will create a ITQ 'framework' using the unit guidelines, level descriptors and rules of combination guidance developed for the Qualifications and Credit Framework. ITQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 will be covered by the project. Development work began in September 2006 and will continue until March 2007 when the new qualifications will be tested with centres and learners in the Learning and Skills Council's three regions: the North East, East of England and the South East.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Levels 1, 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** e-skills UK

**Project title:** IT Professional

**Project summary:** The project will form the basis to create and test a unit and credit-based apprenticeship bringing together a variety of different achievement into a single aggregated whole. This also will require investigation of partial achievement, which is an important aspect for apprentices who might change sectors or learning paths. The project will start the work to create a professional pathway for IT professionals using the Qualifications and Credit Framework. The units will form some of the key building blocks for future qualifications in the sector, promoting the use of a wider range of employer-recognised achievement and facilitating bite-sized learning. It will therefore test the ability of the specification to deliver what employers and learners require, particularly in the context of using national occupational standards as the basis for units, and investigating the roles of sector skills councils and awarding bodies in this process. The project will involve the development of a methodology for recognising employer-assessed training within the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It will also examine the role of global vendor units in the framework and the role of partnership working from the National Qualifications Framework and its applicability to the framework.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Lead organisation:** Lantra

**Project title:** Identifying needs in Lantra's competence framework and developing units and qualifications to meet the Qualifications and Credit Framework tests and trials

**Project summary:** Through the Sector Skills Agreement, Lantra will be using the Competence Framework to identify and record the training needs of the sector. The identification of training needs will come from the occupational profiles and job descriptions on the Competence Framework constructed from National Occupational Standards and

functional maps through discussions with industry. The project will then develop units with credit and level for land-based service engineering, amenity, horticulture and agricultural livestock (pigs). The units will be developed from National Occupational Standards and existing accredited and non-accredited learning and will be included in the Qualifications and Credit Framework. The project will use rules of combination to form qualifications from the developed units. The second year of the tests and trials will involve testing the Qualifications and Credit Framework with learners in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Lantra will report on each stage of the project, focusing on priority one and three, testing the usability and usefulness of the specifications and trialling the extent to which the Qualifications and Credit Framework delivers anticipated benefit to learners.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

**Project title:** Teacher qualifications for the Lifelong Learning Sector

**Project summary:** As set out within the DfES policy document *Equipping our teachers for the future: Reforming initial teacher training for the learning and skills sector* (2004), from September 2007 all new entrants to teaching in the sector will be required to achieve a new qualification. This qualification will be mandatory for anyone who teaches publicly funded provision. Those for whom teaching, tutoring or training is their main role will be required to progress to a further qualification appropriate to role. Developed collaboratively by LLUK and a group of national awarding bodies, the Level 3 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector consists of one six-credit unit. Underpinned by the new professional standards, the award provides threshold status to teach across the sector. The tests and trials of the award are taking place across England, representing the following constituencies: work-based learning; further education; adult and community learning; justice; and local government. The award is the first of three teaching qualifications to be developed within the Teacher Qualifications Framework. LLUK is currently developing units of assessment to comprise the other two qualifications: Level 3/4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector; and the Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. Tests and trials of these qualifications will occur as they come on stream. From January 2007, LLUK will be involved in consultations with stakeholders to identify the many teacher-related roles within the sector. Units of assessment to represent these roles will also be developed within the teacher qualification framework, leading to the facility to combine units to create fit for purpose qualifications for all constituencies. LLUK is contributing to QCA evaluations by documenting the development process.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Level 3

**Lead organisation:** Maritime Skills Alliance

**Project title:** Maritime 'Gateway' to Qualifications Project

**Project summary:** The project will test and evaluate whether a qualifications and credit framework opens up access and progression routes in the maritime sector. By mapping to the key principles contained in the Maritime Sector Qualifications Strategy, the project will look at how the framework can widen access to learning opportunities, qualifications and employment through the development of 'pick and mix' units to meet specific needs. Qualifications will be developed following the rules of combination guidelines, and methods of assessment that meet the needs of learners will be tested. The project will also test and evaluate the impact of credit accumulation and transfer in the sector.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Level 2 (others TBC)

**Lead organisation:** Newham College

**Project titles:** Pre-apprenticeship programmes in the railway engineering sector; Pre-apprenticeship programmes in the fashion and jewellery sectors

**Project summary:** With a particular focus upon the learner and college perspective, the trial will develop units and qualifications and trial these with learners enrolled at the college. All four stages will be undertaken with a focus on the college systems and processes used to track learners and recognise their achievements. IAG will also play an important role in the work. Newham will work with Edexcel and NOCN. The project has strong support from the relevant sector bodies.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** NCFE

**Project title:** Applying the working specification to learning currently outside of the National Qualifications Framework within the Child Development and Well Being and Education Training sectors

**Project summary:** This project aims to test if NCFE units and qualifications can be developed and/or redeveloped to meet the requirements of the specification for the qualifications and credit framework. This project focuses on awards that are currently certificated outside of the National Qualifications Framework within the Child Development and Well Being and

Education and Training sectors. As part of the project, NCFE will develop units in line with the working specification to identify how they have been used as non National Qualifications Framework provision and if they can be maintained and accredited. NCFE will also identify aspects of the National Qualifications Framework criteria, eg flexibility, which has prevented these units from being accredited previously. NCFE evaluation will provide the regulatory authorities with feedback that can be used to inform development of the new criteria and any supporting documentation. The NCFE units will also develop transferable skills that contribute to the foundation learning tier and provide potential progression opportunities to Support Work in Schools qualifications.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level, Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** National Open College Network (NOCN)

**Project title:** NOCN Qualifications and Unit Progression Project

**Project summary:** NOCN and OCNs have long held the view that much locally accredited provision is not easily placed within National Qualifications Framework as a result of its regulatory constraints, particularly those relating to assessment, but that this provision represents valuable and legitimate learning. The project will develop processes and criteria for identifying those units in locally accredited provision that have been developed in response to legitimate but local need, but which are appropriate for inclusion in a national framework, and in qualifications. The overarching objective of the project is to test a central means by which accredited provision currently outside the National Qualifications Framework can be brought within the new framework in as inclusive a way as possible.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Entry level, Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** NOCN

**Project title:** Offender Learning Skillstrain

**Project summary:** OCNs have for many years worked with OLSU, and more recently OLASS, to develop and accredit a wide range of units and programmes offered in prisons throughout the country. Units from the Social and Life Skills programme have now been incorporated into the NOCN Progression Qualifications and are being used in prison education departments and in the National Probation Service, as well as in the voluntary and community sector. In prisons this learning and skills development has occurred in areas not accredited through the education departments and thus has not been accounted for in either education budgets or included for the purposes of achievement targets. The transfer of

funding for Offender Learning to the learning and skills councils and the identification of new lead providers gives an opportunity to test out a holistic learning environment that can encompass all learning activity and bring it under the umbrella of the quality assurance processes required by accreditation. The project has a number of specific objectives, but in overarching terms it will provide the central means by which accredited provision can be made available in the entire offender learning environment and test the efficacy of seamless transition between the differing agencies to the benefit of learners through credit accumulation. The development will lead to inclusion of a wider range of learner achievement within a national framework of units and qualifications. It will enable learners to build on achievements from custody to community and facilitate achievement of full qualifications in small steps, wherever the learning is received.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level, Levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** OCR

**Project title:** Accreditation of previously non-accredited learning (Learndirect CLAIT model)

**Project summary:** The project will test and evaluate the effectiveness of the framework in accrediting previously non-accredited learning. Records of candidate achievement preserved electronically as a result of candidates taking Learndirect courses will be sourced, and checks run to verify whether these records equate to the requirements of a qualification specification. Once gaps have been identified, new units will be developed using the unit pro forma, guidelines and rules of combination. An awarding process will then be established to enable certification of candidate achievements. The environment in which the project will take place will be the Learner Support Environment – the virtual learning environment used by Learndirect candidates.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Entry level, levels 1 and 2

**Lead organisation:** Professional Status for Traffic and Transportation / Transport for London

**Project title:** Professional Status for Traffic and Transportation

**Project summary:** The project will involve a set of major employers in a key sector area testing the application of the framework specification in a distinct professional and technical group of occupations including mid-career professionals as well as the more conventional initial professional development. Bringing together a variety of professional institutions and sector skills councils, the objective is to have a coordinated set of units and qualifications required by the traffic and transport occupations, developed from national occupational

standards, which meet the framework specification requirements and provide a rigorous and extensive test of the framework's feasibility.

**Country coverage:** England

**Levels:** Levels 3, 4 and 5

**Lead organisation:** Science, Engineering, Manufacturing Technologies Alliance (SEMTA)

**Project title:** Testing credit in relation to national occupational standards and vocational qualifications in the engineering sector

**Project summary:** The engineering sector is facing great change and this includes the need to deliver qualifications that will support the long-term achievement of the priorities set out in the sector skills agreement. Above all, employers need a system for credit and qualifications that will add value and help to achieve sustained levels of improved performance. It is important therefore that the proposed arrangements for credit are practical, cost effective, simple to operate and support the existing qualifications that are supported by the sector. The project will test a range of the proposed requirements for a qualifications and credit framework in the context of a range of engineering units and qualifications based on national occupational standards.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Level 3

**Lead organisation:** SFEDI

**Project title:** Business start-up framework project

**Project summary:** SFEDI is leading a partnership of providers and awarding bodies to:

- provide diverse accredited routes to people engaged in learning and development when starting an enterprise
- promote flexible forms of delivery, assessment and achievement in their learning and development
- bring non-accredited provision, designed to support business enterprise, into the new framework
- improve the quality and consistency of what is offered to support business enterprise
- encourage awarding bodies to use systems of quality and recognition that keep bureaucracy to a minimum for learners and providers
- collect information on potential benefits to learners, providers and other stakeholders.

**Country coverage:** England and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 2 and 3

**Lead organisation:** Skillsmart

**Project title:** Trialling credit-based occupational qualifications in the retail sector and the systems to support these

**Project summary:** The project will test whether credit-based units, when used as the basis for recognising achievement, makes a difference to take-up of learning and qualifications within the retail sector. It will test whether, for employers, there will be less need to retrain new but experienced workers as they will have proof of their skills; and for providers', whether there is greater commitment to learning from both individuals and employers. The project will use the framework specification to trial the acquisition and accumulation of credit using the newly accredited units, which make up the occupational qualifications (NVQs) for Retail at Levels 1, 2 and 3 across all four stages. It will also test the infrastructure and systems required to support a unit and credit-based qualifications system and evaluate if it does provide a more inclusive, simple and flexible model.

**Country coverage:** England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**Levels:** Levels 1, 2 and 3