Qualification Specification for:

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number

- **Qualification No: 601/8944/7**

Qualification Regulation Information

Qualification Number: 601/8944/7

Operational start date: 01 September 2016
Operational end date: 31 August 2022
Certification end date: 31 August 2024

Qualification review and certification end dates are provided for all nationally approved qualifications to ensure that they remain current and valid. The review date is the last date by which learners may be registered on a qualification, and the certification end date is the last date their achievements can be certified. Learners have up to 1 year after the qualification review date to complete this qualification and claim their certificate.

All OCN NI Qualifications are published to the Register of Regulated Qualifications (**http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/**). This database contains details of the available regulated qualifications, units and structures.

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Foreword

About OCN NI

The Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) is a UK recognised Awarding Organisation based in Northern Ireland. We are regulated by CCEA Regulation to develop and award regulated professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level up to and including Level 5 across all sector areas. In addition, OCN NI are also regulated by Ofqual to award similar qualifications in England.

The Regulated Qualifications Framework

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) was introduced on 1st October 2015 to replace the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). The RQF is the single framework for describing all regulated qualifications in England and Northern Ireland.

Contents

QUALIFICATION REGULATION INFORMATION 2

FOREWORD 3
About OCN NI 3
The Regulated Qualifications Framework 3

CONTENTS 4

INTRODUCTION 6
The History of Essential Skills 7
Essential Skills Qualifications at a Glance 7

QUALIFICATION SUMMARY: OCN NI LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN ESSENTIAL SKILLS – APPLICATION OF NUMBER 8
Purpose of the qualification 8
Progression Opportunities 8
Qualification Target Group 8
Entry Requirements 8
Initial Assessment 8
Delivery Languages 8

CENTRE REQUIREMENTS FOR DELIVERING THE QUALIFICATION 9
Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval 9
Centre Staffing 9
Qualifications requirements for teaching Essential Skills 9
Developing Essential Skills programmes and activities 9

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT 10

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT 11

ADMINISTRATION ARRANGEMENTS 13
Assessment Opportunities 13
Resits 13
Assessment arrangements 13
Learners with Particular Requirements 13
Retention of Evidence 14
Registration 14
Certification 14
Charges 14

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF CENTRE PERFORMANCE 15
Internal Verification 15
Standardisation 15

OCN NI SUPPORT FOR ESSENTIAL SKILLS 16
Equality, Fairness and Inclusion 16

Introduction

This document explains OCN NI's requirements for the delivery and assessment of the following qualification:

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number

This specification sets out:

- Centre requirements for delivering and assessing the qualification
- The structure and content of the qualification
- Assessment requirements for the qualification
- OCN NI's quality assurance arrangements for the qualification

OCN NI will notify centres in writing of any major changes to this specification. We will also publish changes on our website at **www.ocnni.org.uk**

This specification is provided online, so the version available on our website is the most up to date publication. It is important to note that copies of the specification that have been downloaded and printed may be different from this authoritative online version.

The History of Essential Skills

The Northern Ireland government launched its Essential Skills for Living Strategy in 2002. The aim of the strategy was to improve adult literacy, numeracy and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in Northern Ireland. A suite of Essential Skills qualifications was developed as part of this strategy. The suite of qualifications comprises qualifications from Entry level up to Level 2 in Literacy/Communication and Numeracy/Application of Number, and qualifications at Level 1 and 2 in ICT. The qualifications were designed to be suitable for learners in education, training, work and everyday life situations who would like to gain a nationally accredited qualification.

A review of Essential Skills level 1 & 2 Certificates in Communication and Application of Number was initiated in 2015 to refresh these particular qualifications and ensure they were suitable for learners from age 14 upwards. The result of this review is a set of revised specifications for the delivery of level 1 & 2 Communication and Application of Number from September 2016.

Essential Skills Qualifications at a Glance

Title and Level	Qualification Number
→ OCN NI Entry Level Certificate in Essential Skills – Adult Literacy (Entry 1-3)	601/8226/X
→ OCN NI Entry Level Certificate in Essential Skills – Adult Numeracy (Entry 1-3)	601/8225/8
→ OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number	601/8943/5
→ OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication	601/8941/1
→ OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Information and Communication Technology	601/8213/1
→ OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number	601/8944/7
→ OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication	601/8942/3
→ OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Information and Communication Technology	601/8214/3

Qualification Summary: OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number

Purpose of the qualification

The aim of this qualification is to improve the learners' ability to understand, use, calculate and manipulate mathematical information and interpret results.

These capabilities are applied to:

- number
- measures, shape and space
- handling data

Progression Opportunities

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essentials Skills – Application of Number enables progression to other recognised qualifications at level 2 and above. This qualification will assist a learner gain entry to employment.

Qualification Target Group

The qualification is targeted at learners who:

- wish to develop further skills in numeracy
- wish to progress in education, training and/or employment
- wish to improve their personal development and life skills

Entry Requirements

Learners must be aged 14 or over to take this qualification. There are no subject specific entry requirements for this qualification however centres must ensure that the level of the qualification is suitable for the learners. See 'Initial Assessment' below.

Initial Assessment

Centres should undertake screening and/or initial assessment of learners before commencement of the course to ensure learners are working towards the appropriate level of Essential Skills qualification. Centres are expected to develop their own approaches to screening/initial assessment based on best practice.

Delivery Languages

This qualification is available in English only.

Centre Requirements for Delivering the Qualification

Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval

Existing OCN NI Recognised centres must apply for and be granted approval to deliver the qualification prior to the commencement of delivery. New centres must apply and be granted OCN NI Recognised Centre status and qualification approval prior to delivery of the qualification.

Centre Staffing

Centres are required to have the following roles in place as a minimum, although a member of staff may hold more than one role*:

- Centre contact
- Essential Skills Co-ordinator
- Tutor
- Assessor
- Internal Verifier

*Note: A person cannot be an internal verifier for their own assessments.

Qualifications requirements for teaching Essential Skills

Centres must ensure that staff delivering and assessing the qualification are both qualified to teach Essential Skills in Northern Ireland and competent to do so. They should have a thorough understanding of the relevant core curriculum.

Developing Essential Skills programmes and activities

Essential Skills qualifications have been designed to enable centres to develop programmes and learning activities within a wide range of contexts suited to the needs of the learners. This might include: education & training, employment & the workplace, personal, social and community activities. This is not an exhaustive list.

Whatever context is used to underpin the learning programme the developmental activities within the programme should be based on the relevant core curriculum.

Structure and Content

Essential Skills - Application of Number Level 2 has three components:

- Representing information
- Carrying out calculations
- Interpreting results and presenting findings

Learners must demonstrate that they meet the following standards.

Title	OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number	
Level	Two	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	45	
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	60	
Skill Standard	**Coverage and range**	**Assessment**
Representing 1. Understand routine and non-routine problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations. 2. Identify the situation or problems and identify the mathematical methods needed to solve them. 3. Choose from a range of mathematics to find solutions. **Calculating** 4. Apply a range of mathematics to find solutions. 5. Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage. **Interpreting** 6. Interpret and communicate solutions to multi-stage practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations. 7. Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications.	a) Understand and use positive and negative numbers of any size in practical contexts; b) Carry out calculations with numbers of any size in practical contexts, to a given number of decimal places; c) Understand, use and calculate ratio and proportion, including problems involving scale; d) Understand and use equivalences between fractions, decimals and percentages; e) Understand and use simple formulae and equations involving one- or two-step operations; f) Recognise and use 2D representations of 3D objects; g) Find area, perimeter and volume of common shapes; h) Use, convert and calculate using metric and, where appropriate, imperial measures; i) Collect and represent discrete and continuous data, using ICT where appropriate; j) Use and interpret statistical measures, tables and diagrams, for discrete and continuous data, using ICT where appropriate; k) Use statistical methods to investigate situations; l) Use probability to assess the likelihood of an outcome.	**Externally set and externally marked assessment** One paper covering all three components

Scheme of Assessment

To achieve the qualification, learners must be assessed against the Level 2 Application of Number standards: representing information; carrying out calculations; interpreting results and presenting findings.

Assessment requirements.

Skill Standard	Coverage and range	Assessment
Representing 1. Understand routine and non-routine problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations. 2. Identify the situation or problems and identify the mathematical methods needed to solve them. 3. Choose from a range of mathematics to find solutions. **Calculating** 4. Apply a range of mathematics to find solutions. 5. Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage. **Interpreting** 6. Interpret and communicate solutions to multi-stage practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations. 7. Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications.	a) Understand and use positive and negative numbers of any size in practical contexts; b) Carry out calculations with numbers of any size in practical contexts, to a given number of decimal places; c) Understand, use and calculate ratio and proportion, including problems involving scale; d) Understand and use equivalences between fractions, decimals and percentages; e) Understand and use simple formulae and equations involving one- or two-step operations; f) Recognise and use 2D representations of 3D objects; g) Find area, perimeter and volume of common shapes; h) Use, convert and calculate using metric and, where appropriate, imperial measures; i) Collect and represent discrete and continuous data, using ICT where appropriate; j) Use and interpret statistical measures, tables and diagrams, for discrete and continuous data, using ICT where appropriate; k) Use statistical methods to investigate situations; l) Use probability to assess the likelihood of an outcome.	**Externally set and externally marked assessment** One paper A paper will assess approximately 80% of the 'coverage and range' statements. Time: 1 hr 30 mins Use of calculators is permitted.
Each paper will include 30-40% of each of the process skills representing, calculating, and interpreting.		
Assessment Outcome: Pass or Fail CCEA Regulation requirements stipulate that OCN NI sets the pass mark between 60% and 70%.		

The Essential Skills qualification in Application of Number at Level 2 is part of a progression based set of skills qualifications. At each level of the qualification, these subsume the previous level's skills standards and indicative coverage and range statements.

Administration Arrangements

Assessment Opportunities

OCN NI will offer external assessment of Essential Skills as per published dates available on the OCN NI website. https://www.ocnni.org.uk/essential-skills/

Resits

Learners may be entered for external assessment up to three times within the academic year. The assessor should be satisfied that learners have completed sufficient remedial work before being entered for a resit.

OCN NI will take the appropriate precautions to protect the integrity of the qualification and learner achievement by identifying and recording papers taken by individual learners and ensuring through its processes that learners completing a resit will not take the same test.

Assessment arrangements

Centres must ensure that they comply with the current Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations'. Further guidance can be obtained from OCN NI's Essential Skills Team.

Centres must ensure that:

- all hard and electronic copies of materials are treated as confidential and stored securely at all times
- external assessments are presented to learners as 'unseen'
- external assessments are completed in an environment that is free from noise/disturbance
- learners are continuously supervised by a suitable and reliable person for the duration of the task. A suitable person cannot include the learners' tutor.
- learners are **not** given any assistance whilst completing the task
- externally marked assessments are carried out under examination conditions

Learners with Particular Requirements

Assessment within the OCN NI Essential Skills qualification in Application of Number at Level 2 is designed to be accessible and inclusive. The assessment methodology is appropriate and rigorous for individuals or groups of learners. If a learner has a particular requirement and access arrangements, please refer to the OCN NI Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy. This provides guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that can be accessed to ensure the individual needs of the learner are met.

OCN NI are committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. For learners with disabilities who are classified as disabled under the terms of the DDA and cannot use assistive technology, a human scribe may be used. Centres must seek approval from the OCN NI in advance.

Retention of Evidence

OCN NI has published guidance for centres on the retention of evidence. Details are provided in the OCN NI Centre Handbook and can be accessed via the OCN NI website.

Registration

Learners are registered for this qualification online via the OCN NI registration and awards system QuartzWeb. To obtain a username and password for this secure area, please contact a member of the Customer Services Team: customerservices@ocnni.org.uk. Registrations must be processed in line with published dates or agreed timeframe.

Certification

Certificates will be sent to centres within 20 working days from the date of the verified results. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that certificates received from OCN NI are held securely and distributed to learners promptly and securely.

Charges

OCN NI publishes all up to date qualification fees in its Fees and Invoicing Policy document. Further information can be found in the centre log-on on the OCN NI website.

Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

External verification visits and monitoring activities will be conducted annually to confirm continued compliance with the conditions of recognition, review the centre's risk rating for the qualification and to assure OCN NI of the continued and consistent practice of quality activities supporting the integrity of the qualification.

Internal Verification

The centre internal verifier will be responsible for ensuring that learners are fully prepared for entry to the external assessment, and the delivery and preparation for assessment of the qualification should be monitored within the model of internal quality assurance. The Centre must agree a working model for internal verification with OCN NI prior to delivery of any programme; this will be in the form of an Internal Verification Plan.

Internal Verifiers must:

- have direct or related relevant experience in assessment and verification
- attend OCN NI's internal verifier training in order to be approved by OCN NI
- ensure delivery and support is appropriate to the needs of the learner
- maintain up-to-date records supporting the standardisation of delivery and learner preparation
- provide evidence to support the readiness of learners for assessment

Standardisation

Centres offering Essential Skills qualifications are required to hold internal standardisation events. Centres will be requested to contribute assessment materials and learner evidence for the standardisation event.

Awarding Organisations offering Essential Skills in Northern Ireland work closely with CCEA Regulator to ensure the consistency of standards and practice.

OCN NI Support for Essential Skills

OCN NI provides the following support for Essential Skills:

- Exemplar assessment materials
- A section on the OCN NI website dedicated to Essential Skills which will include access to NI Essential Skills Curriculum Standards
- Advice on the conduct and administration of Essential Skills qualifications
- Professional development events for assessors and internal verifiers
- Centre briefings/visits
- Support on becoming an accredited centre for Essential Skills

For further information about Essential Skills support contact OCN NI on 028 9046 3990.

Equality, Fairness and Inclusion

OCN NI has considered the requirements of equalities legislation in developing the specification for this qualification.

For further information and guidance relating to access to fair assessment and the OCN NI Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policies, centres should refer to the OCN NI website.

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