

# National Qualifications Framework – Edexcel Level 2 and 3 NVQs in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools

## Automatic Approval Process and Frequently Asked Questions

### Part One – AUTOMATIC APPROVAL PROCESS – KEY INFORMATION

#### What happens next?

The following qualifications are being replaced. If you meet the following criteria for the current NVQs, you are entitled to automatic approval for the replacement NVQs at the same level.

NVQ Title	Last Registration	Last Certification
Q5000039 – Edexcel Level 2 NVQ for Teaching Assistants (100/2662/9)	29 Feb 2008	28 Feb 2010
Q5000040 – Edexcel Level 3 NVQ for Teaching Assistants (100/2663/0)	29 Feb 2008	28 Feb 2011

#### The following are the new replacement qualifications:

Q5000330 – Edexcel Level 2 NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools (QAN: 500/3701/8)

Q5000331 – Edexcel Level 3 NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools (QAN: 500/3702/X)

#### **Criteria for Automatic Approval:**

- Centres approved for the NVQs being replaced within the last 6 months will receive Automatic Approval for the new NVQs (as they have so recently been through the rigorous approval process).
- Centres approved over 6 months ago for the NVQs being replaced, will receive Automatic Approval for the new NVQs, if they fulfil the following eligibility requirements, which are:
  - registered candidates within the last two years on the replaced NVQ
  - received a sanction level 2 or lower reported on the e-QRF within the last year for the replaced NVQ.

Any centre meeting these requirements will receive automatic approval for the NVQ at the level for which they are currently approved.

### **How do I obtain a copy of my centre's approved qualification structure?**

To obtain a copy of the qualification structure you will need to access your 'programme definition' through your Edexcel Online account and select the NVQ tab,

- Go to Qualifications on the left hand side
- Select Reports where you will be asked to select programme definitions.
- Select the programmes from the 'Currently Approved Award Codes' option and submit.

The programme definitions are sent to your Edexcel Online mailbox. You can access this by clicking on "mailbox" at the top of the Edexcel Online screen. Please ensure that copies of the programme definitions are distributed to all relevant personnel, as they contain important administrative and course delivery information.

### **If my centre does not meet the automatic approval criteria outlined on the previous page, what do I need to do to seek approval?**

If your centre does not meet the criteria outlined above, you will need to complete and return a NVQ QA form to Approvals, BTEC Quality Standards, One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. If you have any queries relating to this process please email [approvals@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:approvals@edexcel.org.uk)

The NVQ QA form and guidance can be found on the Edexcel website - [NVQ Qualification Approval \(NVQ QA\)](#)

### **If my centre has been given automatic approval to offer the new NVQs, but does not wish to have approval to offer them, what do I need to do to withdraw approval?**

If your centre does not wish to offer the new NVQ for which your centre has been given automatic approval and would like approval to be withdrawn, please write to:

Quality Standards Team  
One90 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 7BH

Requests for further advice and queries about approval may be directed to:  
[approvals@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:approvals@edexcel.org.uk)

## Part Two – GENERAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How will these new qualifications access funding?

This new Edexcel NVQ qualification will be listed on the current DCSF Funding Lists (Section 96 and 97 as appropriate) and subsequent DCSF update circulars.

The replaced Edexcel NVQ title listed in part 1 above, which expired on 29 Feb 2008, will no longer attract public funding as of that date. Please note that candidates already registered with Edexcel on this NVQ title will be funded to complete their programme.

It is appreciated that centres in Wales and Northern Ireland operate under different funding arrangements; please contact your Edexcel Regional Office if you have particular queries (see below).

#### For Centres in Wales:

Cardiff Regional Office  
Unit C  
Fairway House  
Links Business Park  
St Mellons  
Cardiff  
CF3 0LT

Tel: 0292 079 4865  
Fax: 0292 036 2830

#### For Centres in Northern Ireland:

Bristol Regional Office  
Cribbs Business Centre  
Hollywood Lane  
Cribbs Causeway  
Bristol  
BS10 7TW

Tel: 0117 950 1908  
Fax: 0117 950 1115

### Where can we obtain copies of the DfES funding listings?

For funding information please see the [LSC Learning Aims Database](#).

### Why is there a change in qualification coding?

QCA have changed the way in which they code NVQs accredited to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Instead of the previous system of allocating Q numbers for each NVQ they now allocate a Qualification Accreditation Number (QAN), which consists of an eight figure number. In addition, individual units are no longer allocated a U number, but instead start with a letter and then seven digits.

The new style of coding will run alongside the old, which remains valid in relation to existing NVQ Qualifications and NVQ units that have previously been allocated Q and U numbers.

Edexcel systems will continue to use Q numbers for NVQ approvals and registrations. For qualifications and units allocated QAN codes we will generate unique Q and U numbers, beginning with 'Q5' and 'U5' respectively, these Edexcel codes should be used when completing all Edexcel documentation.

The Edexcel generated codes will not appear on certificates; these will be linked to the NQF QAN codes, which will appear on all certification. All other forms from other bodies relating to NVQs (e.g. for funding) should be completed using the NQF QAN codes.

The QCA qualification accreditation codes needed to apply for funding are listed against the new titles on page 1 of this document.

## When can we register candidates on the revised Edexcel NVQ programmes?

You may register candidates from **1 March 2008** onwards, provided that you have either:

- Received an automatic approval letter
- Received a letter of approval from Edexcel following a full application using the NVQ1 Application Form.

Information about registration arrangements are given in the Edexcel Information Manual which is on the Edexcel website at [www.edexcel.org.uk/sfc](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/sfc)

## Can I advertise and market the new qualifications?

Yes, if you have received an automatic approval letter or if you have received your approval letter following submission of the NVQ1 Application Form. If you have applied via the NVQ1 but are still awaiting your formal Approval Letter, then any marketing must make it clear that you are awaiting approval from Edexcel. Candidates must be made aware of the exact, correct title of the qualification they are working towards.

## What support materials will be available and how can I order copies?

The following products will be available:

Code	Title	Media	When available
N019912	Edexcel Level 2 NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning Candidate Log Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper based</li></ul>	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2008
N019913	Edexcel Level 3 NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning Candidate Log Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper based</li></ul>	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2008
N019914	Edexcel NVQs in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools CD Rom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CD Rom</li></ul>	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2008

Both the CD-ROM and the printed Candidate Logbooks can be ordered in the normal way from:

Edexcel Publications  
Adamsway  
Mansfield  
Notts  
NG18 4FN

Tel: 01623 467 467  
Fax: 01623 450 481  
Email [publications@linneydirect.com](mailto:publications@linneydirect.com)

## **Part Three – NVQ SPECIFIC FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ISSUES**

### **Why have the National Occupational Standards (NOS) changed?**

The supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL) NOS and NVQs have been developed to reflect changes in support staff roles arising from workforce reform. They still cover the teaching assistant role but have been broadened in scope to include new roles and responsibilities such as cover supervision, exam invigilation, pastoral care and others. The change in title reflects the wider range of job roles covered by the new qualifications.

### **Are the new qualifications relevant to learning support staff in secondary schools?**

The STL NVQs apply to anyone who provides direct support for teaching and learning in any type of school – primary (including foundation stage), secondary, special or pupil referral units.

### **What are the rules governing the choice of optional units for the new level 2 NVQ?**

The level 2 NVQ requires candidates to achieve seven units of competence from the national occupational standards. There are five mandatory units that all candidates must achieve. In addition, each candidate is required to achieve two of the optional units. Selection of optional units will be a matter of choice for the candidate in consultation with his/her employer, bearing in mind employment requirements and the candidate's career aspirations.

The TDA has developed a unit selection tool to help candidates choose appropriate units. This can be accessed via the online NOS guidance (please see web address below).

### **What are the rules governing the choice of optional units for the new level 3 NVQ?**

The level 3 NVQ/SVQ requires candidates to achieve ten units of competence from the national occupational standards. There are six mandatory units that all candidates must achieve. In addition, each candidate is required to achieve four of the optional units. The optional units are in five groups:

- Group A - supporting pupils' learning
- Group B - meeting additional support needs
- Group C - providing pastoral support
- Group D - supporting the wider work of the school
- Group E - working with colleagues (no more than 2 units allowed from this group)

Apart from the restriction on the number of units that may be taken from Group E, any combination of optional units may be selected. A mixture of optional units can be selected from within the same group or from several different groups. Selection of optional units will be a matter of choice for the candidate in consultation with the school, bearing in mind employment requirements and the candidate's career aspirations.

The TDA has developed a unit selection tool to help candidates choose appropriate units. This can be accessed via the online NOS guidance -

<http://www.tda.gov.uk/partners/supportstafftraining/NOS/Supporting/nosguidance.aspx>

### **Are there any units in the existing teaching assistant NVQs that transfer to the supporting teaching and learning NVQs?**

Candidates may be able to use evidence previously collected/assessed via an accredited prior experiential learning (APEL) process. There is an old to new mapping document on the TDA website which may help with this process. This can be accessed via the online NOS guidance.

There are, however, some imported units from other NVQs and, where these are identical, they may be directly transferred into the STL NVQs using the accepted authentication process.

### **Is there a requirement for independent assessment?**

No. Feedback from the consultation on the assessment strategy for the NVQs was overwhelmingly against the requirement for an independent assessor or external assessment.

## **Who should assess the units imported from the Children's Care Learning and Development NOS?**

Assessors for these units need to be occupationally competent in the units and to meet the requirements of the assessment strategy of the imported unit suite.

## **How do we cope with other specialist units when we have no assessors with the required occupational expertise?**

You could use assessors for other NVQs, such as the health awards, to assess relevant units within the STL NVQs. You might be able to arrange an exchange of assessors with another centre if you don't have access to a particular area of expertise. Expert witnesses may also be used in this situation. You might also want to support people with the appropriate occupational expertise to achieve the assessor and/or verifier awards.

Where more than one assessor is involved in assessing a candidate's evidence, there must be a named assessor who is responsible for coordinating the assessment process. The coordinating assessor is responsible for developing an overall assessment plan including details of where specialist assessors and expert witnesses will be required and when the specialist assessment should be scheduled. S/he will also make assessment judgements for units whose assessment relies extensively on expert witness testimony or where parts have been assessed by different assessors and/or expert witnesses.

## **What is the role of the expert witness and how is it different to witness testimony?**

Given the wide range of units in the new NVQs it is unlikely that any one assessor will have the occupational expertise to assess across all the units. Expert witnesses can be used to address any gaps in the technical and occupational competence of assessors, and also for confidential or sensitive activities that are not appropriate for assessor observation.

Expert witnesses are identified and trained by the centre and must meet the criteria stated in the assessment strategy. Witnesses are other people who may have been present at a particular incident, or able to provide evidence of consistency of practice. They do not necessarily have a working knowledge of the relevant national occupational standards or direct experience of working in the area for which they are providing testimony of the candidate's performance.

## **Can the evidence of expert witnesses contribute to all the units?**

Yes. Expert witnesses can contribute to the evidence for any of the STL units. However, as a minimum, a qualified or appropriately supervised trainee assessor must take the lead role in the assessment of the mandatory units of the qualification. Assessment evidence identified by the expert witness can be considered by the assessor for inclusion towards the mandatory units but only as supplementary evidence.

## **What are the occupational expertise requirements for expert witnesses?**

The assessment strategy for these qualifications describes the occupational expertise requirements for everyone involved in the assessment and verification of the new qualifications, including expert witnesses. The assessment strategy is available from your awarding body and the TDA website.

## **What qualifications will the expert witness have to have?**

None, however they must be able to prove their competence in the units with which they are involved. L20 – support competence achieved in the workplace – which is also included as STL69, is a useful unit for those who are interested in gaining recognition for their expertise and contribution to the assessment process.

## **Why isn't there any range/scope in the majority of the STL units?**

Feedback from consultation indicated that users want standards that are as clear as possible. There was also a significant amount of concern expressed about the overall assessment burden for the TA NVQs; caused in part by the extensive scope requirements of some of the units. Removing the scope aims to make the NOS easy to read and accessible.

**Why are there still some STL units with scope/range statements?**

Only a small number of the STL units include scope or range. These are all imported units. Because they were developed and are owned by other standards setting bodies, it is not possible to change the content of the unit. However most of the imported units have no scope/range requirements.

**What is the purpose of the unit glossary?**

The glossary defines key terms used in the unit and gives examples of the situations or activities covered by those terms. It provides guidance on possible areas to be covered in the unit and for which evidence should be obtained if relevant to the candidate's work role.

**What will the evidence requirements be?**

The evidence requirements will be based on the TDA Assessment Guidance. This has been produced by the TDA and has been released to awarding bodies. Evidence requirements will be made available in the Sector Guidance for Centres and the Candidate Log Books.