

Vital information for managers, tutors and administrators

Flexibility, personalised curriculum, and user friendly learning and assessment.

Just some of the things our centres tell us they like about our qualifications.

But ...

There's always a but.

Flexibility brings the need for special care in setting up courses and registering learners.

None of us wants the situation where a learner can't be awarded a qualification because of an oversight on our part – but it can happen.

This issue of your Update will help you get things right, whether you're a manager, tutor, or administrator.

1. Make sure you're using up-to-date qualifications and units

If you're using an NOCN national qualification (one listed on the NDAQ, the National Database of Accredited Qualifications), this is absolutely crucial.

Look on the NOCN website under 'Qualifications' and then either NQF or QCF qualifications to find the latest qualification guide and unit list.

These are the definitive documents that must be followed. Some unit lists are within the guides, while some are separate.

Qualification guides also give accreditation (registration) and certification end dates.

2. Follow the Rules of Combination

Many qualifications have Rules of Combination. These are rules that

state how mandatory and optional units, and units from different levels can be combined. Rules of Combination are given in the qualification guides.

3. Use units from only one qualification/unit list

This applies to all qualifications, but the huge flexibility of Step-UP and Qualifications in Progression - with hundreds of units that can be put together in thousands of ways - can lead to difficulties. Make sure you:

- Check the Rules of Combination carefully.
- Use only units from a single unit list on the NOCN website. For instance, if learners are doing a Level 1 Certificate in Progression, make sure you've chosen units from that list only.
- Don't mix units from Step-UP and Qualifications in Progression. (Not all units are common to both sets of qualifications, and those that are common have different NOCN unit codes.)

4. Check the qualification is suitable for the age of your learners

Some NOCN qualifications are for learners age 16 upwards at the time of registration. An increasing number, including Step-UP, Art and Design, and Careers Education and Preparation for Working Life, are for 14 upwards. Qualification guides give the age ranges a qualification is approved for.

5. Name the qualification

It's important when learners are being registered for a national qualification that the name of the qualification is given. If you don't, you could end up paying more for learner registration.

6. Choosing a course title

When you register learners you can choose a course title that will appear on your learners' certificates. This is in addition to the national qualification name.

However, you can't use the words Award, Certificate, or Diploma, for any course, or use 'Access to ...' unless it's a recognised Access to Higher Education course.

7. Foundation Learning and NOCN qualifications

NOCN currently has 27 qualifications listed in the Progression Pathways Catalogue.

Step-UP and the Qualifications in Progression appear in the 'combined' section of the list. This means one Step-Up qualification or Qualification in Progression can meet both Personal and Social Development and Vocational strands of Foundation Learning.

For more information contact your OCNSWR Development Manager

Bristol Colleges, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire
Peter Oakley (01242 225517)

Bristol, BANES, Bournemouth and Poole, Dorset and Somerset
Chris Latham (01752 831500)

Devon and Cornwall
Vickie Bishop (01752 831507)

Or contact OCNSWR Office Manager
Lisa Otter (01752 831500)