

# Success for NOCN Functional Skills

**NOCN was one of the most successful Awarding Organisations (AOs) when the first of the Functional Skills qualifications to be approved for use in 2010-11 were added to the National Database of Accredited Qualifications**

Ofqual approved only 21 out of around 200 Functional Skills qualifications submitted by AOs first time round. Five AOs had no Functional Skills qualifications accepted at all. Only two AOs had more qualifications approved than NOCN, and NOCN is expecting more success in the next round of approvals. NOCN is the only AO to have had L1 English listed, and one of only two AOs to have had L1 Maths listed in the first round of approvals.

## Most flexible of all AOs

NOCN's success with Functional Skills reflects the close relationship between OCNs and its centres.

During the FS pilots, we've listened to you and responded to your feedback, and we believe we now have one of the most flexible and user-friendly assessment arrangements of all AOs. For instance:

- Assessments can be taken on demand
- Entry level assessments are internally assessed and externally verified
- Level 1 and 2 assessments have eight marking windows a year

- Level 1 and 2 results are available within 20 working days of the marking window
- Assessments at all levels are built round everyday themes
- Entry level assessments can be contextualised by centres

## Sample assessments

Sample NOCN Functional Skills assessments are on the NOCN website - see <https://www.nocn.org.uk/learnin-g-providers/functional-skills/nocn-functional-skills-sample-assessments>

## If you're interested

If you'd like to know more about how NOCN Functional Skills might be used in your organisation, contact your Development Manager – see details on the right.

## ULN? Huh?

Many staff in our centres are confident in their knowledge of Unique Learner Numbers and their importance, but others are less sure.

ULNs are required for learners doing QCF qualifications and Functional Skills, and beneficial for all learners. From a practical point of view, they make sure that all the units and qualifications achieved by a learner are linked to the learner.

## Use a ULN – avoid problems

Using a ULN will avoid the problems that can arise when, say, a learner is registered by a centre as Janet Smith one time, and Jan Smith another time. Without her ULN our database treats her as two learners, and this means she may not get a certificate for her qualification, and the centre may not get recognition for her achievement.

## More about ULNs

For those who'd like to know a bit more about ULNs, the NOCN website has produced a simple guide.

It can be accessed in the Learning Providers section of the NOCN website, at <http://www.nocn.org.uk/learnin-g-providers/unique-learner-number>.

The web page has links to everything anyone could possibly want to know about ULNs, so if you want to become really expert, here's a good starting point.

**For more information contact your OCNSWR Development Manager**

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**Alternatively, contact OCNSWR Office Manager**  
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