

UK Vocational Qualification Reform Programme – Qualification and Credit Framework Tests and Trials – Public Funding Arrangements (England) for 2007/08

Date of issue 14 June
Audience External

Purpose

- 1 This paper clarifies the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding arrangements for the second year of the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) Test and Trials in England.
- 2 This paper will be of interest to lead organisations involved in the QCF tests and trials.

Background

- 3 The UK Vocational Qualification Reform Programme (UK VQ RP) responds to a widely accepted need for reform of the adult qualifications landscape in order that we can arrive at qualifications which employers support, which are more responsive to individual learner needs, and which are capable of recognising a wide range of achievement. The programme of reform is critical to the introduction of a demand led system in that it identifies employers, through Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), as having a critical role in both the development and approval of vocational qualifications.
- 4 The reform programme encompasses both the reform of sector qualification strategies and the development of a new unit based qualification framework, which supports credit accumulation and transfer, known as the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF). The QCF will, in time, replace the current National Qualifications Framework (NQF). In England it is intended that the QCF will be 'open for business' from August 2008.

Eligibility for Public Funding in England

- 5 As part of the development of the QCF, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) are testing and trialling key features of the framework. The LSC has committed to supporting the trials as a priority for public funding in [Raising Our Game: Our Annual Statement of Priorities](#). The tests and trials began in 2006/07 and will continue in 2007/08. The trials have been arranged into two phases:
 - Phase 1 test and trials started in September 2006.

- Phase 2 test and trials started in February 2007.

6 Overall, 28 of the QCF Test and Trials have been approved as eligible for public funding (of which 11 were included in Phase 1). A list of the approved trials can be found in the Annex to this paper.

What is provision is eligible?

- 7 To be eligible for public funding the trial proposals had to evidence the following:
- Support from Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)
 - In line with LSC targets and priorities
 - Supporting enhanced achievement and progression of adult learners
- 8 QCF Test and Trials included in the second phase that are trialling the Level 2 Design Principles will be considered to be target bearing and count towards the achievement of the PSA targets.
- 9 Confirmation of the eligibility of provision for funding does not however guarantee funding. Providers will need to agree any funding with their LSC Area Partnership Team.

Which providers are eligible?

- 10 Only existing providers who are currently directly or indirectly funded by the LSC will be eligible to receive public funding for the trials. Where funding has been confirmed, providers who wish to be involved in the QCF Test and Trials in England must also satisfy the following requirements:
- there must be no quality, equality and diversity, or health and safety related reason for them not to be involved
 - they must have the capacity to provide whatever additional support is required by learners, for example information, advice and guidance
 - learners must be 19 years old or above
 - there must be agreement to support the use of unique learner numbers with all learners on trial provision
 - providers are expected to participate in the evaluation of the QCF Test and Trials conducted by QCA.

Funding Approach

- 11 The trials have been identified as priority provision for public funding within existing LSC funding streams and agreed allocations. There is no new additional money made available to the LSC specifically to support the QCF Test and Trials.
- 12 The majority of the QCF Test and Trials should either be able to partially displace existing provision delivered by a provider in the relevant sector, or displace other low priority provision.
- 13 As 2007/08 is a transitional year before the introduction of the Demand-led Systems in 2008/09, and because the QCF is still at a developmental stage, the LSC has not been able to introduce significant changes to the funding

systems for the QCF Test and Trials. The funding for the QCF Test and Trials, therefore, will need to operate within the existing funding methodology and guidance, including the fees policy and existing learner eligibility rules. Please refer to the relevant guidance on the LSC's internet site for further guidance (<https://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/funding-policy/>).

Next Steps

- 14 It is intended to begin to model what particular amendments within the introduction of a demand led system might be necessary to more specifically take account of the unique features of VQ Reform and the QCF, from 2008/09 (this is likely to include modelling approaches to supporting units). Further information and guidance on this will follow the publication of the Leitch Implementation Plan which is now anticipated in July.
- 15 For further information please contact us on:
cvhqualificationsandframeworkreform@lsc.gov.uk.

Annex A: Phase One QCF Test and Trials Eligible for Public Funding

Confirming eligibility for funding does not guarantee funding. Providers will need to be in close consultation with their LSC Area Partnership Teams to discuss funding arrangements.

A full description of all of the Test and Trials included in Phase Two of QCF Test and Trials can be found on QCA's website: http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/QCA-06-2961_QCF_project_summaries_nov06.pdf.

	QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
A	p. 1	Developing, testing and trialling units, credits and qualifications in generic skills	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.	ASDAN	Entry and Level 1-3	14 – Preparation for Life and Work
B	p. 3	Framework trial and test development – extended schools and children's centre environments	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.	Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE)	Level 2 - 3	13 – Education and Training
C	P. 5	Visual Arts – New Adult Pathways	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.	City Lit	Entry and Level 1-3	09- Arts, Media and Publishing
D	P. 5	Flexible Level 2 BTEC qualifications in the framework	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. 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 in the Land-based sector.	EDEXCEL / LANTRA	Level 2	03 - Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care

QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector	
E	P. 5-6	ITQ	The ITQ trial will create an 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.	e-skills UK	Level 1 - 3	06 – Information and Communication Technology
F	p. 6	IT Professional	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 work to create a professional pathway for IT professionals within the QCF.	e-skills UK	Level 1 - 4	06 – Information and Communication Technology
G	p. 7	Teacher qualifications for the Lifelong Learning Sector	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.	Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)	Level 3 - 5	13 – Education and Training
H	p. 8	Pre-apprenticeship programmes in the railway engineering sector and in the fashion and jewellery sectors	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.	Newham College	Level 1 - 2	4.3 - Transportation Operations and Maintenance

	QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
I	p. 9	NOCN Qualifications and Unit Progression Project	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.	National Open College Network (NOCN)	Entry and Level 1-3	14.1 - Foundations for Learning and Life
J	p. 9-10	Offender Learning Skillstrain	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.	National Open College Network (NOCN)	Entry and Level 1-2	14.1 - Foundations for Learning and Life
K	p. 12	Trialling credit- based occupational qualifications in the retail sector and the systems to support these	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. 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.	Skillsmart Retail	Level 1 - 3	07 – Retail and Commercial Enterprise

Annex A: Phase Two QCF Test and Trials Eligible for Public Funding

Confirming eligibility for funding does not guarantee funding. Providers will need to be in close consultation with their LSC Area Partnership Teams to discuss funding arrangements.

A full description of all of the Test and Trials included in Phase Two of QCF Test and Trials can be found on QCA's website:
<http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/qcf-tests-and-trials-phase2-project-summaries.pdf>.

	QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
A	p. 19-20	SFEDI Enterprise Project	The project is led by SFEDI and focused on meeting the needs of entrepreneurs who are starting or about to start a business. There is a growing demand for flexible accredited provision for learners who are not in a position to start an enterprise straightaway and need units related to understanding enterprise and pre-enterprise standards.	Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative (SFEDI)	Level 2 - 5	15 - Business, Administration and Law
B	p. 1-2	Employer Training Framework	As part of the SQS pilot, Skillfast-UK has identified two key companies in England to develop employer-training programmes. Both companies currently offer in-house training programmes. They are closely aligned with two centres of vocational excellence, which are key lead providers for Skillfast-UK, in the North West and the Yorkshire and Humber region.	Skillsfast UK and ABC Awards	Level 2 - 3	04 - Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
C	p. 2-3	Level 1 Certificate in an Introduction to Youth Work	ABC awards will work with the Prince's Trust to develop an appropriately levelled and credit valued nationally recognised qualification in collaboration with the Princes Trust - the Level 1 Certificate in an Introduction to Youth Work, according to the QCF specification.	ABC Awards	Level 1	01 - Health, Public Services and Care
D	p. 4	Level 2 'Vehicle Maintenance and Repair (Light Vehicle)' qualification	Automotive Skills aim to reform qualifications used in the automotive sector. The sector currently has separate NVQs and VRQs based on the same sets of national occupational standards (NOS) within the Level 2 Apprenticeship in Vehicle Maintenance and Repair (Light Vehicle). They will use these existing NOS to develop credit and levelled units to the QCF specification.	Automotive Skills	Level 2	04- Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies

QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
E p. 11	Testing and trialling a cross-sector qualifications matrix	The aims of this trial are to design and test a cross-sector flexible qualification programme for level 2 and 3 learners. The qualification matrix will cover business and administration, health and safety, marketing and sales, customer service and management. Shared units will be identified and research into the application of common units will be undertaken during the trial period.	Council for Administration (CfA)	Level 2 - 3	15 – Business, Administration & Law
F p. 11-12	Testing and trialling a unit and credit approach to Apprenticeships	CfA is seeking to build an Apprenticeship using a unit and credit approach. There will be a link here with the Apprenticeship blueprint and the development of an Apprenticeship as a qualification.	Council for Administration (CfA)	Level 2 - 3	15 – Business, Administration & Law
G p. 7-8	Trialling credit-based vocational units / qualifications in the polymer sector	The project will be undertaken within the polymer sub-sector of the Cogent industries. This sector traditionally delivers training to its staff based on NVQs and often delivers training using part NVQs through a 'pick and mix' approach. The project will concentrate on Level 2 process operators within the chemical sector, supporting work already done in this area by Cogent and industry to develop a Gold Standard role profile.	Cogent SSC Ltd	Level 2	04- Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
H p. 8-9	Trialling credit-based vocational units / qualifications in the chemical sector	The project will be undertaken within the chemicals sub-sector of the Cogent Industries. This sector traditionally delivers training to its staff based on the NVQs and often delivers training using a 'pick and mix' approach. The project will concentrate on Level 3 process technicians within the chemical sector. This will support work that has already been done around this key role by Cogent and industry to develop a Gold Standard role profile.	Cogent SSC Ltd	Level 3	04- Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
I p. 9-10	Developing a unit and credit based approach to Apprenticeships	ConstructionSkills are working with a range of partners to develop a unit and credit based approach to Apprenticeships. This links into the apprenticeship blueprint and the work on Apprenticeships as a qualification.	Construction Skills	Level 2 - 3	05 – Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

	QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
J	P. 12	Operating Process Plant L2 credit Framework	EU Skills aim to develop a Level 2 qualification for process plant operators that provide sufficient flexibility for companies to select those units which match individual business and employee needs.	EU Skills	Level 2	04- Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
K	p. 14-15	Playwork QCF Testing	Meynell Games are an employer organisation seeking to develop a viable route to qualifications through aspects of volunteering and compatible with the SkillsActive Sector Qualifications Strategy.	Skills Active and Meynell Games	Level 2	01 – Health, Public Services and Care
L	p. 18-19	TUC unionlearn / TUC Education programme	The TUC unionlearn/TUC Education programme is available to learners who are members of TUC affiliated unions. The units range from Level 1 to Level 3 in a number of pathways, for example, health and safety, pensions, equality and diversity, and ICT. The unionlearn/TUC Education programme is mapped against the standards setting body ENTO, which works within the footprint for LLUK.	NOCN/TUC	Level 2 - 3	14 - Preparation for Life and Work
M	p. 16-17	Work with Parents Vocational Qualifications	Parenting UK, The Parenting Forum Northern Ireland, Lifelong Learning UK and City & Guilds will be testing the new Work with Parents units and qualifications. The units and qualifications are aimed at practitioners in the Parental and Family Support Services sector who may be new to this area of work and those who already have some of the necessary knowledge and skills.	Parenting UK	Level 2 - 3	01 - Health, Public Services and Care
N	p. 22	Highways Maintenance (Construction)	With the support of Construction Skills SSC, SQA will test the market for an associated VRQ in Highways Maintenance (Construction). The trial will use the current structure of the Highways Maintenance (Construction) NVQ to develop an associated vocationally related qualification (VRQ).	SQA	Level 2	05 – Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

	QCA Page Ref	Trial Title	Brief summary:	Lead organisation	Level	Sector
O	p. 23-24	Voluntary sector management and governance awards	Test and trial credit-based units, mapped to NOS and focussing on trustees in the voluntary and community sector (VCS). UK Workforce Hub is equivalent to a Standard Setting Body (SSB).	UK Workforce Hub	Entry and Level 2 - 3	15 - Business, Administration and Law
P	p. 24-25	Level 4 Foundation Diploma in Art and Design	University of the Arts, London is developing a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design at level 4 (with some interlocking units at level 3).	UAL Art and Design	Level 4	09- Arts, Media and Publishing
Q	p. 5-7	Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) for the Children's Workforce Strategy	This qualification will include a series of transferable units that make up the core skills and knowledge that have been identified as essential for the children's workforce.	CWDC	Level 3	01 – Health, Public Services and Care