

Guidance for submitting rules of combination into the web-based accreditation system for the Qualifications and Credit Framework

Version 3



Qualifications and Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



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About this document

This guidance is for organisations submitting qualifications for accreditation to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). The accreditation process includes submitting the qualification's rules of combination to the web-based accreditation (WBA) system.

It provides a step-by-step guide through a series of illustrated examples. These examples highlight particular features to use in WBA when developing rules of combination.

The WBA system is in the process of being upgraded to better support the QCF. It is intended that these 'tactical changes' support its operation during the initial development of the QCF, and that the system is fundamentally redeveloped over time. During the time WBA is available, the look and feel of the system may change, and better functionality, such as the ability to amend and extend units and qualifications (where appropriate), will be delivered. However, the basic principles about specifying rules of combination in the WBA system, set out in this document, will still apply.

As part of these ongoing changes, the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) logo, though not shown on the screenshots in this document, is now displayed in the WBA system. The logo is displayed in fields that hold information that will be made public via the NDAQ website.

This document should be used with the WBA system found at wba.qca.org.uk and *Guidance for developing rules of combination for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, version 3 (QCA/08/3956).

Key features to use when developing rules of combination in WBA

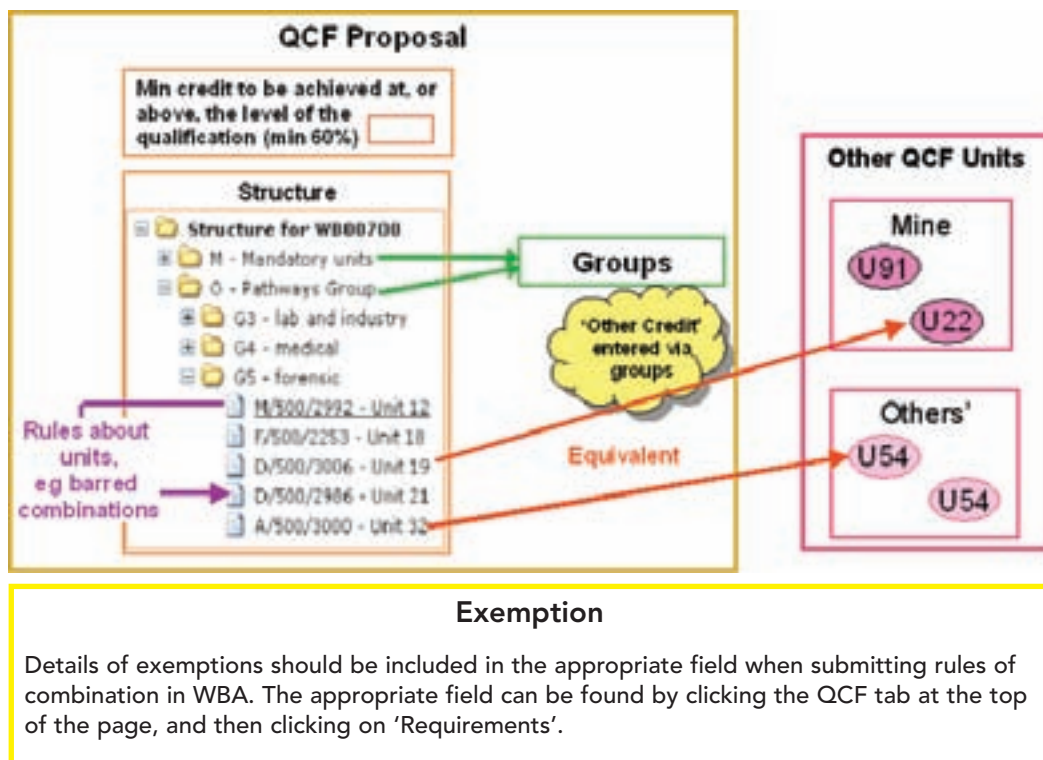
This section focuses on the key features to use when developing rules of combination in WBA. By 'key features' we mean the mechanisms in the WBA system that are used to describe rules of combination. For example one of these features is the use of groups. Putting units in groups and making rules about them is one of the ways in which rules of combination are defined in WBA.

For more detailed information on some of the concepts and requirements of QCF rules of combination that are explored below, please refer to *Guidance for developing rules of combination for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, version 3 (QCA/08/3956).

The graphic on the following page illustrates the five key elements used to develop rules of combination in WBA, listed here:

- 1 groups and the rules that are made about those groups in terms of how many units, other groups or credits contained within them that the learner must achieve
- 2 units and the rules specific to them, for example if they are barred combinations
- 3 rules about relationships to units outside the qualification in question, for example equivalent units
- 4 an overarching rule that states the minimum amount of credit that must be achieved at the level of the qualification or above
- 5 exemptions.

The five key elements used to develop rules of combination in WBA



Tree structures

The entry of rules of combination in WBA is built around the concept of tree structures – the branches (groups) at the top house the ones below. This means that the rules that are set for a group apply to anything that is placed within it.

In the example above, Group M (the mandatory units) and Group O (the optional pathways) belong to the parent group (the overall structure of the qualification). Rules that are set for these groups apply at the level of the qualification. You can tell that Groups M and O sit inside the overall structure group because they are indented to the right and the +/- signs sit directly under the groups they are in. Groups G3, G4 and G5 sit inside Group O. Rules made about these groups and the units that sit inside them work in combination with the rules set for the group in which they sit, Group O.

In this example, by using rules about groups (as set out below), it is required that the learner must complete the mandatory units of the qualification (Group M). Group O has been used to specify that learners must complete one of the groups below, in this case a pathway. The rules for G5 specify how many credits the learner needs from this group to achieve the pathway.

The way rules of combination such as these are built and expressed is the focus of the guidance that follows.

Building rules of combination using tree structures allows both complex and precise rules to be specified.

Groups

Groups are the main mechanism by which rules of combination are developed in WBA. Generally units with similar characteristics will be placed in the same group, for example mandatory units.

Once you have created your group, you should then set the rule for that group to specify what the learner must achieve within the group, for example specifying that all the mandatory units must be completed. You can develop more complex rules of combination through a more complex use of groups, for example groups sitting inside other groups as part of a tree structure.

Minimum and maximum values

The term ‘sub-components’ refers to what is in the group. Often this will mean the units, but in some cases it might refer to pathways or sub-groups within a group (see Examples 3, 4 and 5, pages 18–29). You must set the minimum value of sub-components or credits that a learner must achieve to meet the requirements for the group when specifying your rules of combination. Minimum values set the required amount of credit or number of sub-components that can be counted from a group.

The maximum value setting is used less often. You may use it in combination with the minimum value, for example specifying that the learner must gain a minimum of two credits from one group and a maximum of five credits from another group.

The maximum value is used less often because it is usually enough to set the minimum value, as this sets out what the learner is *required* to achieve, meaning the minimum that will count towards the qualification.

Maximum values generally only need to be used when the group is one of a number that sit inside a group above. In this case, the maximum value may be used to set the maximum credit that can count from a sub-group, for instance to make sure learners achieve some credit from the other sub-groups within the group, ensuring that they do not over specialise.

Qualification related unit data

Through qualification related unit data, you can make rules about individual units within a specific qualification, for example barring one unit with another. This feature is illustrated in Example 4 (page 21). This example contains units at different levels that cover the same subject matter. The units at different levels but with similar content are barred so that the learner can only count credits from the achievement of one of them.

Any rules set in this section only apply to the unit in that specific qualification. They are not automatically replicated if the unit is used in a different qualification. To access this section, select a unit and click on the ‘Qual. related data’ button in ‘Qualification structure’.

You can also use the qualification related unit data section of WBA to indicate whether a unit is mandatory or optional in terms of where it sits in the qualification. For example you may want to specify that if a learner chooses to

complete a certain combination of optional units he or she must also complete a particular unit – in this instance the additional unit is mandatory.

The majority of users will not use this function, as the easiest way to designate whether units are mandatory or optional is by using groups, for example placing mandatory units in a group and requiring the learner to gain all the credit from these units. The consequence of having this field in WBA is that it must be completed for the rules of combination engine to work. So even if your unit is already within a mandatory or optional group, you must indicate whether it is optional or mandatory in the ‘Qual. related data’ section.

After feedback from users, the regulators updated the system so it automatically sets the checkbox for each unit as optional. This means that users only have to use this function on the few occasions it is actually needed. When you copy a proposal, the units will retain this information, so in most cases you should only have to set the mandatory/optional checkbox in the qualifications related data section once.

All the examples shown in this guidance are constructed with the units, marked as optional in this section. Although they do contain mandatory units, they have been designated as such through the use of groups.

Credit at the level of the qualification or above

This field, entered via the ‘Additional details’ tab under ‘Qualification structure’, provides the opportunity to set an *additional* rule about the credit that can count towards the qualification from different levels. In effect, this rule is an overarching one that sits above the others that have been set out through groups and units. It sets a further requirement, on top of those set through groups and units, about the level at which the credit that counts towards the qualification is achieved.

This feature is not necessary in the development of most qualifications. The rules made through groups should ensure that learners gain the majority of their credit from the level of the qualification or above. If the groups do not ensure this and the ‘Minimum credit to be achieved at, or above, the level of the qualification’ feature is not used, then the qualification will fail the rules of combination engine. Example 3 (page 18) illustrates the use of this feature in a qualification’s rule of combination.

The majority of the credit must be achieved at the level of the qualification or above, so the credit value entered in this field must be more than 50 per cent of the credit value of the qualification.

Processes for developing rules of combination in WBA

This section of the guidance picks out some of the key processes for developing rules of combination and gives information on where further guidance can be found. Most of the features are accessed via the 'Qualification structure' tab. Example 1 (page 9) illustrates the basic process for developing rules of combination within WBA.

Adding new units

New units are added through the 'Structure summary' tab by selecting a group for the units to sit in and clicking the button 'Add new units'. Units can be added to the QCF unit databank (through WBA) via either a dummy proposal or as part of a specific qualification development. Please see Example 1 (page 9) for more guidance on adding new units through WBA.

Linking existing units

You can link existing units to particular groups in your qualification structure by clicking on the 'Link existing unit' button. This allows you to search all the units that you have permission to include in your qualification – your own units, shared units and any restricted units you are entitled to use.

Adding new groups

You can add new groups by clicking the 'Add new group' tab in the 'Structure summary' screen. You should click on the group that you want the new group to sit in. You can click and drag the group to a new position in the qualification structure if required. Groups can also be selected and then deleted via the 'Qualification structure' page.

Setting rules for groups

Rules for groups can be set when they are added or by clicking on the 'View/edit group' button at a later date. The examples that follow illustrate the different ways in which rules can be set for groups using this function.

Running the rules of combination engine

The rules of combination engine checks that all the rules you have set for a particular qualification are specified correctly. This means that it checks if they are logically consistent and meet any rules for the QCF that can be checked mathematically, for example that the majority of the credit comes from the level of the qualification or above¹. Once you are happy with the structure of your qualification and are sure that you entered all the necessary information, access the engine by clicking on the 'Rules of combination engine' tab, and click on 'Run rules of combination engine'. You can run the rules of combination engine at any point during the development process to check whether the rules you already set are correct. It is possible to run the rules of combination engine before units have been marked as complete. The rules of combination engine will note that the units are still in draft, but it will still perform all other checks.

Example 2 (page 13) illustrates the use of the rules of combination engine.

Information on all the different functions within the QCF section of WBA can be found in the *Web-based accreditation user's guide*, version 5 (QCA/07/3109), which can be downloaded from the WBA website at wba.qca.org.uk.

¹ *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08/3726)*, section 1.19.

Submitting rules of combination: Illustrated examples

This section of the guidance provides a step-by-step guide to submitting rules of combination to WBA through a series of illustrated examples, from entering units into the QCF unit databank to developing rules of combination for qualifications with different pathways to checking your qualification structure via the rules of combination engine.

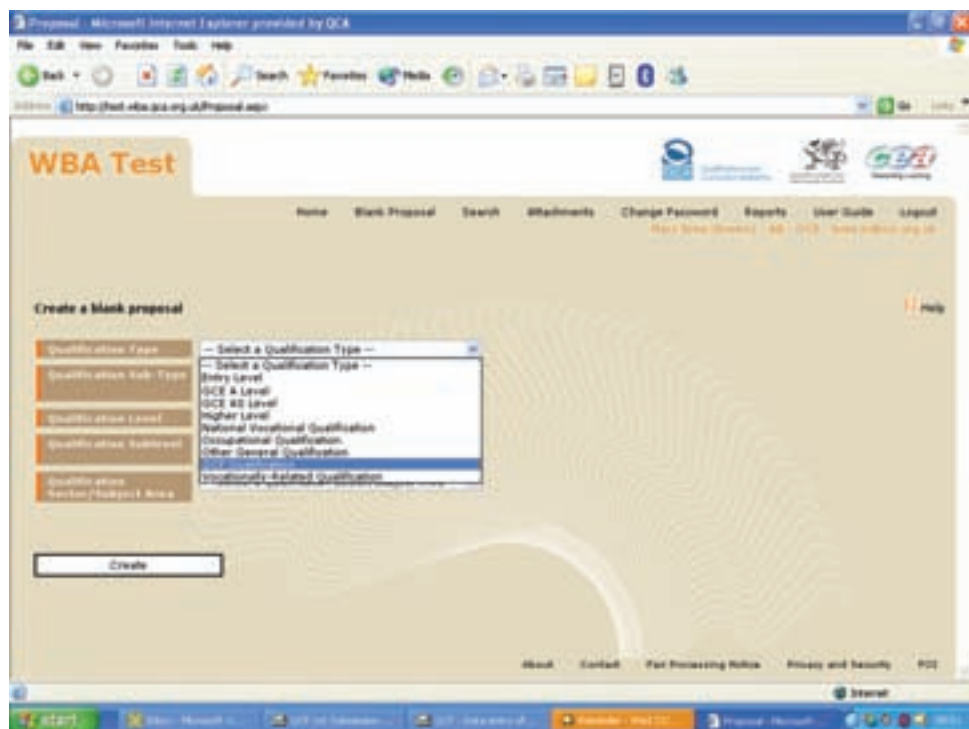
The examples highlight particular features to use when developing rules of combination, for example tree structures. The examples have been developed to illustrate the simplest way of constructing rules of combination for different types of qualifications.

Often when developing a rule of combination for a particular qualification, there will be a number of different ways to construct the rule. For example you may bar individual units through the function in 'Qual. related data' or by using groups. Users should consider what they believe to be the most straightforward way to present information about rules of combination to learners, centres and employers.

Example 1: Getting started

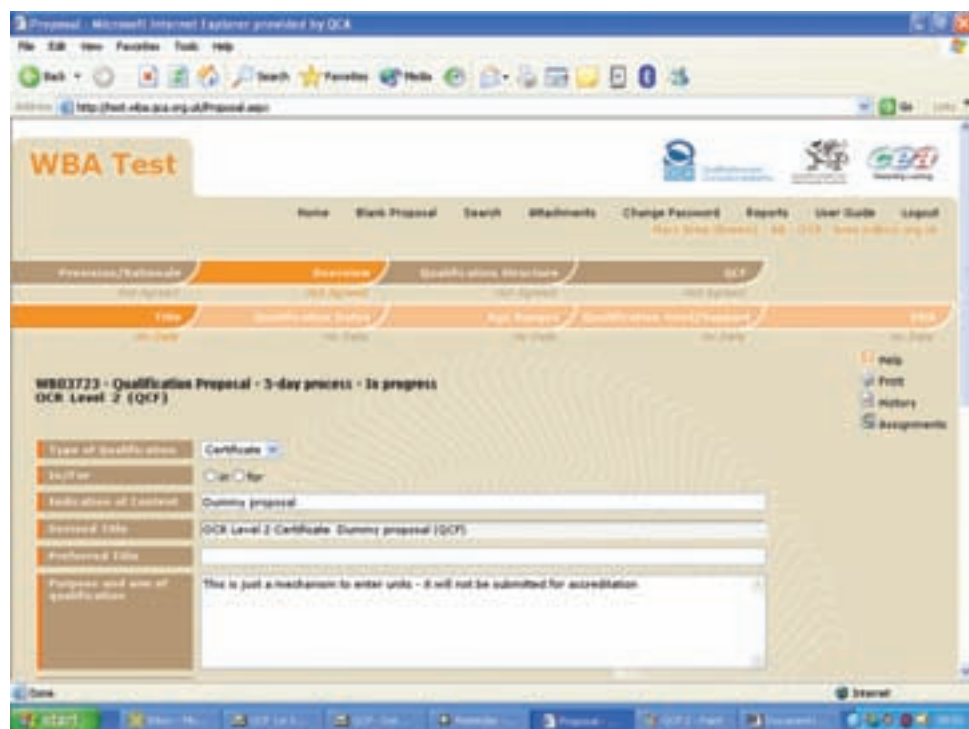
This example is about getting started. It details the processes that need to be followed to submit units to the QCF unit databank. Once the units for a particular qualification are in the databank you can start to develop your rules of combination. The example illustrates the following processes:

- accessing the QCF unit databank via WBA
- entering units in the QCF unit databank
- completing the unit template
- marking units as complete.



Developing QCF qualifications in WBA

Select 'QCF qualification' to enter the QCF section of WBA.



Entering units

There are two ways in which you can enter your units into WBA. You can either create a dummy proposal and attach all your units to that proposal, or you can do it via a particular qualification and attach only those units relating to that qualification. Creating a dummy proposal is recommended, as it allows you to submit all your units at once outside the context of a particular qualification and allows you to keep all your QCF units in one place. Click on 'Qualification structure' to add your units.

If you enter your units using a dummy proposal, you can access them when building a particular qualification by selecting 'Link existing unit' in the 'Qualification structure' screen.

Completing the unit template

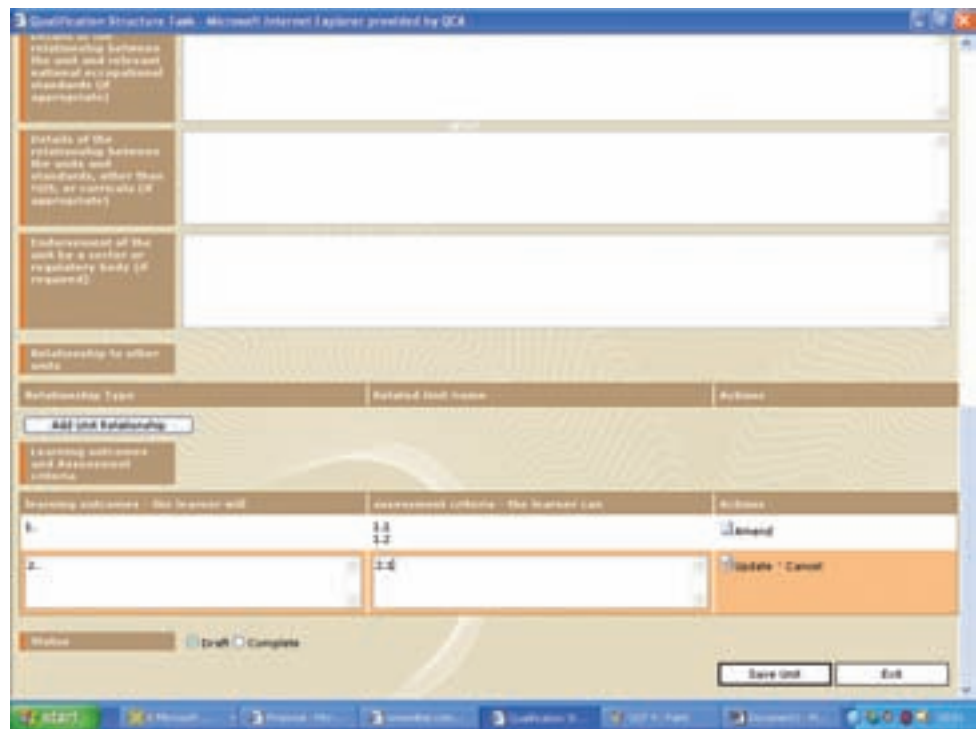
Detailed guidance on completing the unit template can be found in *Guidelines for writing credit-based units of assessment for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*, version 3 (QCA/08/3873).

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled 'Qualification Structure Tool - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by QCA'. The main heading is 'Add a new unit within the qualification structure'. The form includes the following fields:

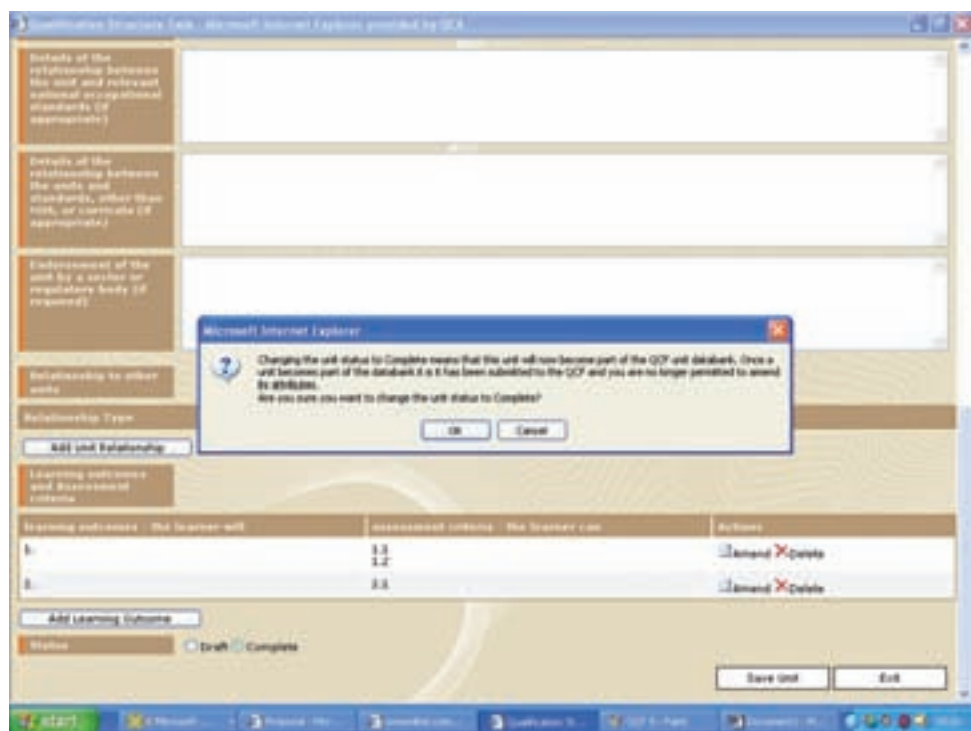
- Unit title:** Safety in Plumbing Activities
- Issuing Body:** City and Guilds of London Institute
- Issuing Reference:** 601/1/022
- Unit Level:** Level 2
- Unit Sector/Subject Area:** 04.2 Manufacturing Technologies, 04.3 Transportation Operations and Maintenance, 04.4 Architecture
- Unit Learning System:** Pass
- Unit Guided Learning Hours:** 60
- Package and use of unit:** This unit...
- Unit available from date (dd/mm/yyyy):** 01/01/2007
- Unit expiry date (dd/mm/yyyy):** 31/03/2008
- Unit review date (dd/mm/yyyy):** 31/03/2008
- Unit credit value:** 6
- Availability for use:** Available to a defined group of AOs to award credit (restricted)
- Restrictions on the availability of this unit for other awarding organisations?:** This unit can be used by...

The unit screen for QCF units is the same as the unit screen for NQF units with a few necessary additional fields, for example the 'Availability for use' field. The screen contains a 'Guided learning hours' (GLH) field that may not be relevant for some qualifications. If there is no GLH value for your unit, set this field to zero.

Select the availability for use of the unit from the drop-down menu. Units may be shared or restricted. If your unit is restricted, then use the text box to the right of 'Restrictions on the availability of this unit for other awarding organisations?' to list the awarding organisations that have access to the unit.



You must add the units' learning outcomes and assessment criteria in pairs. Click on the button 'Add learning outcome' and then type in the learning outcome and related assessment criteria. Before you can add another pair you must click 'Update' in the orange box under 'Actions'.



Marking your unit as complete

Once you are happy that all the information in your unit is correct you should mark it as complete. However, please note that once a unit is marked as complete it is submitted to the QCF unit databank and can no longer be amended.

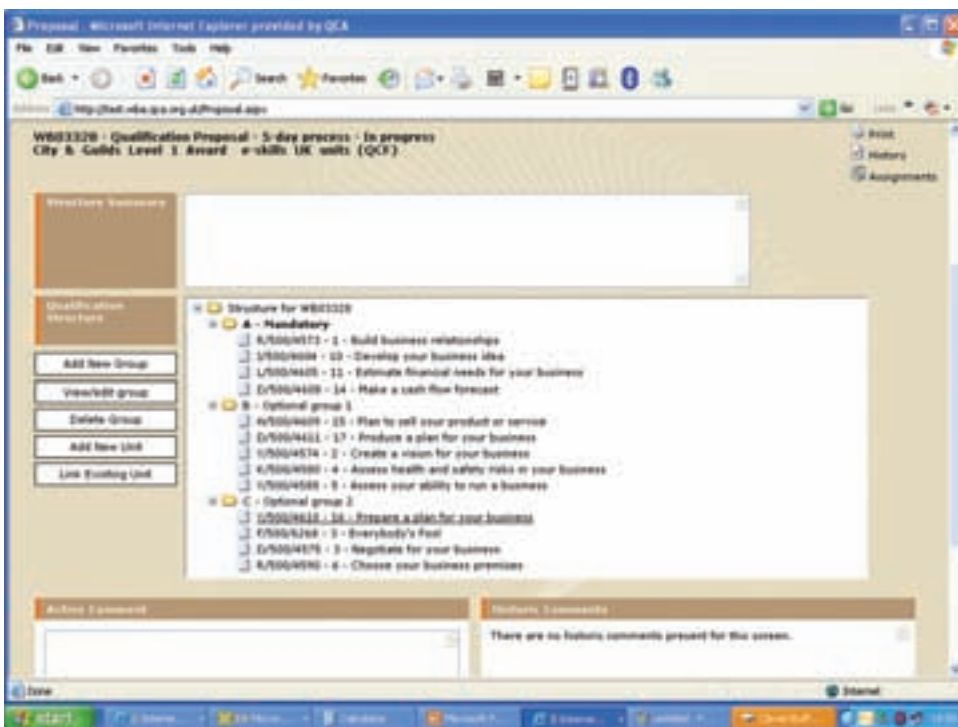
Once in the QCF unit databank, units are available for other awarding organisations to use as part of their qualification proposals. They can either use them as an equivalent unit or other credit and/or include them in their optional/mandatory units (according to permissions set on those units) in a qualification structure.

You can start building rules of combination from your own units while they are in draft form and mark them as complete once they are ready to form part of a qualification proposal to be submitted for accreditation.

Example 2: Qualifications with mandatory and optional units

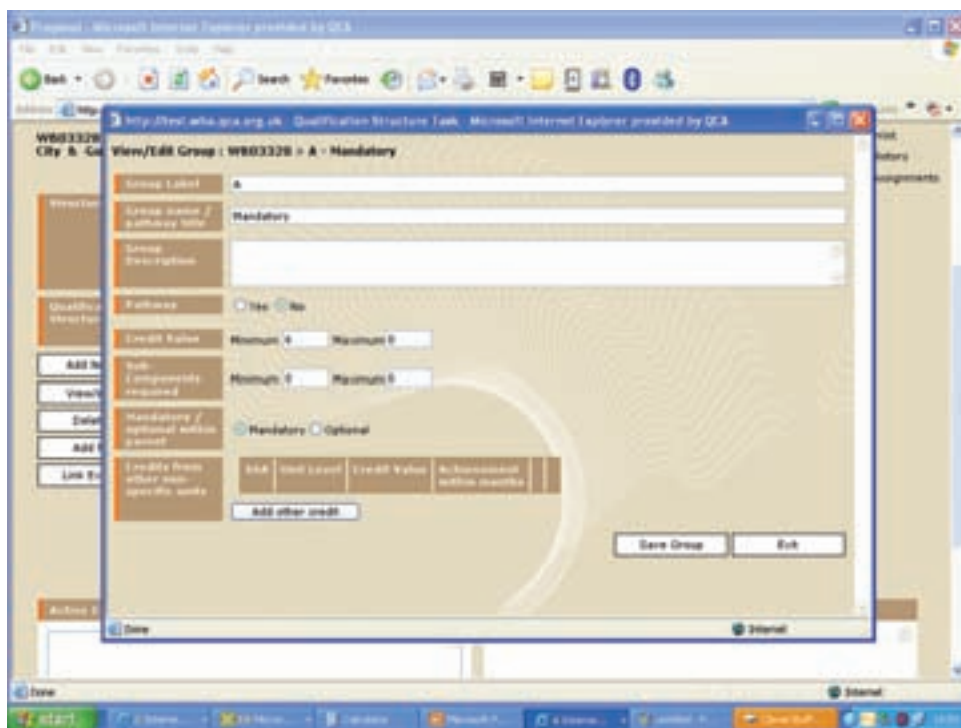
This example illustrates how rules of combination can be developed to ensure that a learner achieves a certain combination of credits from mandatory units and different optional groups. It also illustrates the mechanism used to state that credit can be counted from another qualification or awarding organisation, and shows how the rules of combination engine works.

This example shows a group of mandatory units and two optional groups. Learners must complete all the mandatory units, five credits from the first optional group and only one credit from the second optional group.



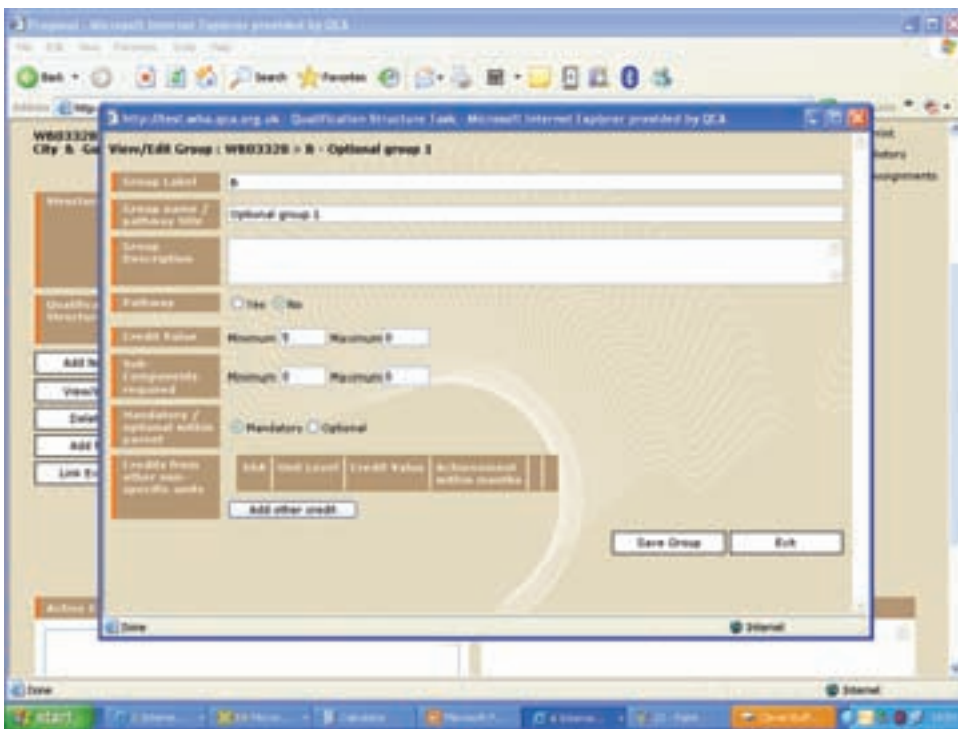
The first step is to create the groups that set out the structure of the qualification. In this case there is one group (Group A) for the four mandatory units and two separate optional groups (Groups B and C). Group B has five units from which the learner must achieve five credits, and Group C contains four units from which the learner must achieve one credit only.

The previous screenshot shows the structure of the qualification. All three groups sit inside the group for the overall qualification. In this example all of the groups must be completed to achieve the qualification.

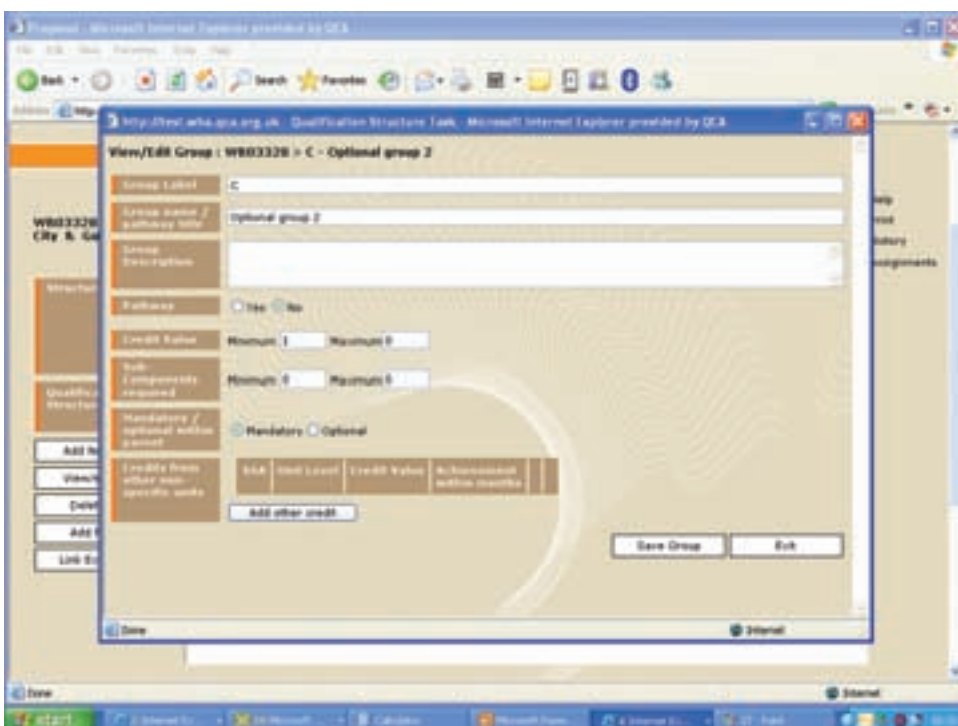


Now that the structure of the qualification has been set up using groups, the rule for each group must be set. To do this click 'View/edit group'. The screenshot above shows the rule set for the mandatory group (Group A). The rule states that the learner must achieve at least six credits, meaning for this qualification (as the credit value of the units in that group is six) they have to complete all the units in the mandatory group. This rule could have been set by requiring four sub-components (the four units in the group) to be achieved.

This group is set as mandatory to show that the learner must complete this group according to the rules set for it. As described above, the rules set for this group through credit value require a learner to achieve all the units in this group.



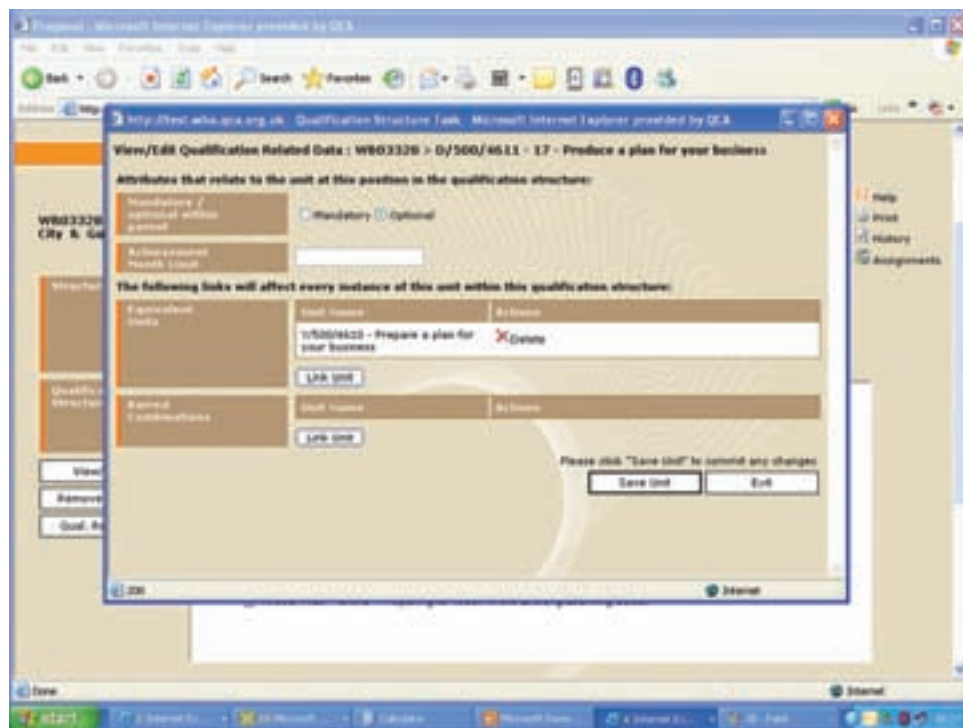
The screenshot above shows the rules set for the first optional group of units (Group B). The rule for this group is that the learner must achieve a minimum of five credits from the optional units in the group. This group is set as a mandatory group. This does not mean all the units in the group are mandatory, but instead that it is mandatory for the learner to complete the group. In this case, as the credit value of the units in the group is greater than five, it means that the learner only has to complete some of the units within it.



In this qualification, the learner is required to achieve only one credit from the second group of optional units (Group C). The previous screenshot illustrates how this rule is set.

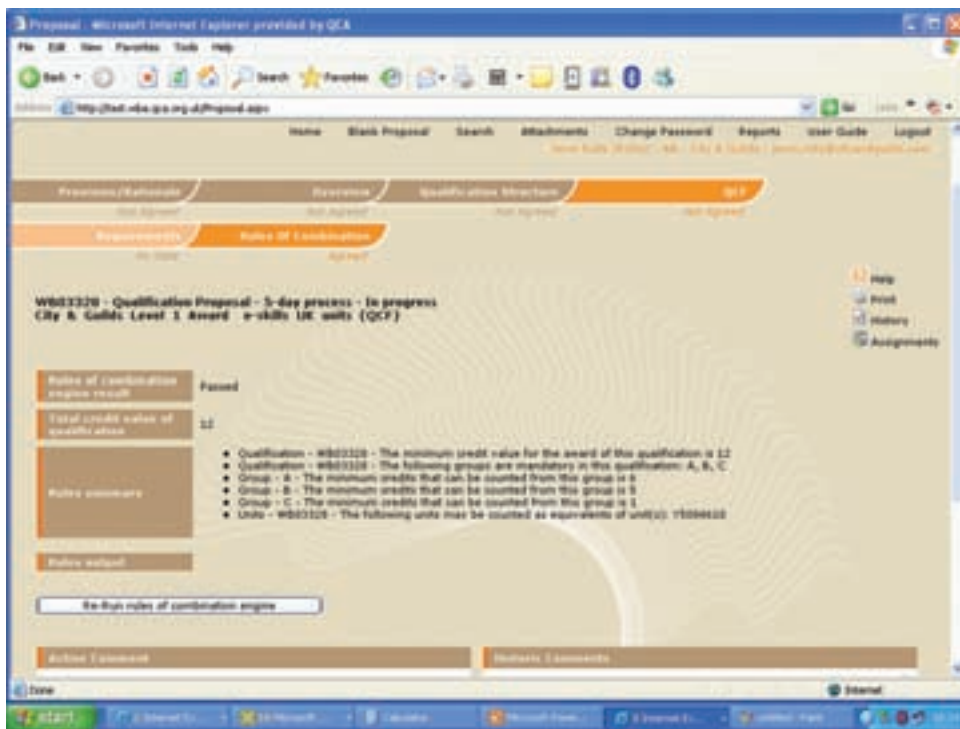
In the 'Credit value' section the minimum is set at one and the maximum is set at zero. This sets the requirement that the learner only needs to achieve one credit from this group.

Again, the group is set as mandatory as the learner is required to gain some credit from the units in this group.



In this example, the learner is able to count credits from another qualification or awarding organisation.

To set this rule, select the unit you are willing to accept an equivalent. Then click the 'Qual. related data' tab and click the 'Link unit' button. Then use the search function under 'Equivalent units' to locate the unit you are willing to accept from the QCF unit databank. In the example above, an equivalent unit has been added.



Once you have completed the steps in the following checklist, you are ready to run the rules of combination engine:

- enter the groups that set out the structure of the qualification
- put the relevant units into relevant groups
- set the rules for each group
- set some rules for the overall qualification, for example whether it is an Award, Certificate or Diploma and the accreditation start and end date
- enter any qualification related unit data.

You can access the engine by clicking on the 'Rules of combination' tab. Once you are in this section, click on the button 'Run rules of combination'. This tells the system to check all the rules you have entered for the specific qualification to make sure they are correct.

The rules of combination engine will return one of three outcomes:

- pass
- pass with warnings
- fail.

If the outcome is 'fail', then the engine will generate some text to tell you why, and you must go back to the relevant section of the WBA system to make the necessary amends.

If the outcome is 'pass', then the description of your rules of combination that the engine provides in 'Rules summary' should be checked to ensure it accurately reflects the rules you intended to submit.

The 'pass with warnings' outcome is used to flag things that are allowable but may need to be checked, for example when a qualification has two pathways with different credit values.

The outcome in this example is 'pass'. The engine has confirmed that the total value of the qualification is 12 credits. The learner must get six credits from the mandatory group (Group A), five credits from the first optional group (Group B) and one credit from the second optional group (Group C), making a total of 12 credits.

The text that the rules of combination engine provides is intended for you to use to check that you have specified your rules of combination as intended. It is not designed to be the description of the qualification provided to learners. This is entered in the 'Structure summary' box above where groups and units are added. You should describe the rules of combination here in the most straightforward and accessible way for learners, providers and employers. There is no expectation that you use the technical language set out in this document.

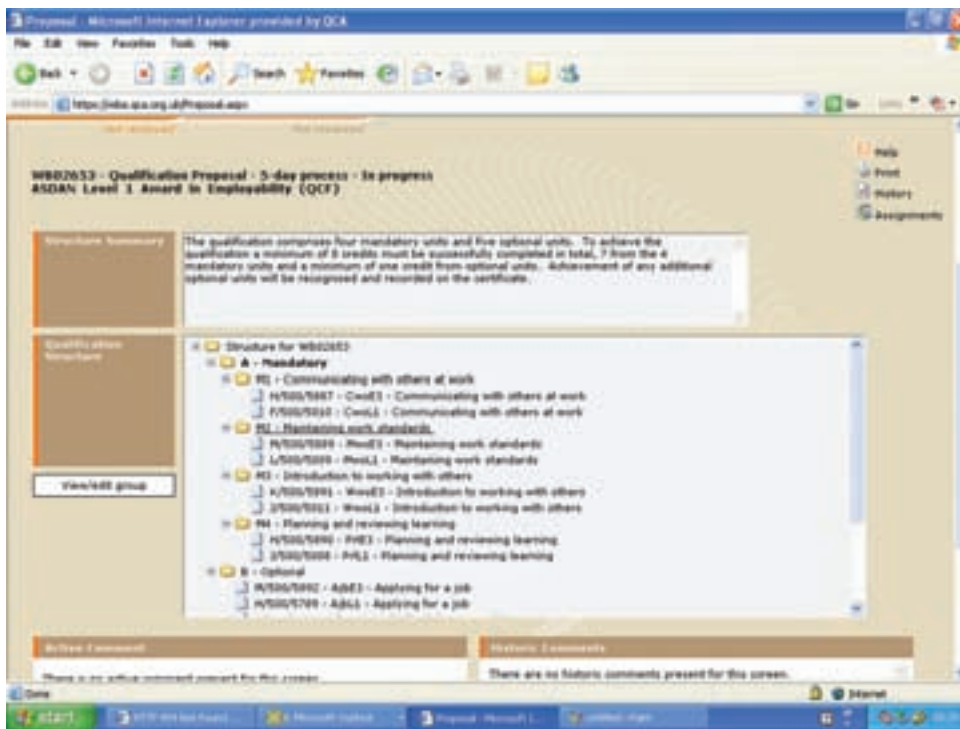
The rules of combination engine calculates the credit value of qualifications. There is no opportunity for you to enter the credit value of a qualification as the rules of combination engine calculates this from the rules you specify. It records this value on the rules of combination screen and the additional details section (located under qualifications structure). This ensures that correct credit values are calculated for all qualifications.

Example 3: Qualifications with units/credits from the level below – meeting the majority rule

This example shows when the overarching rule to ensure that the learner achieves more than 50 per cent of the credit at the level of the qualification or above is required.² In this example, the rules of combination for two separate qualifications are structured to give the learner the option of achieving a qualification at Entry level or level 1, depending on the level at which he or she achieves the most credit.

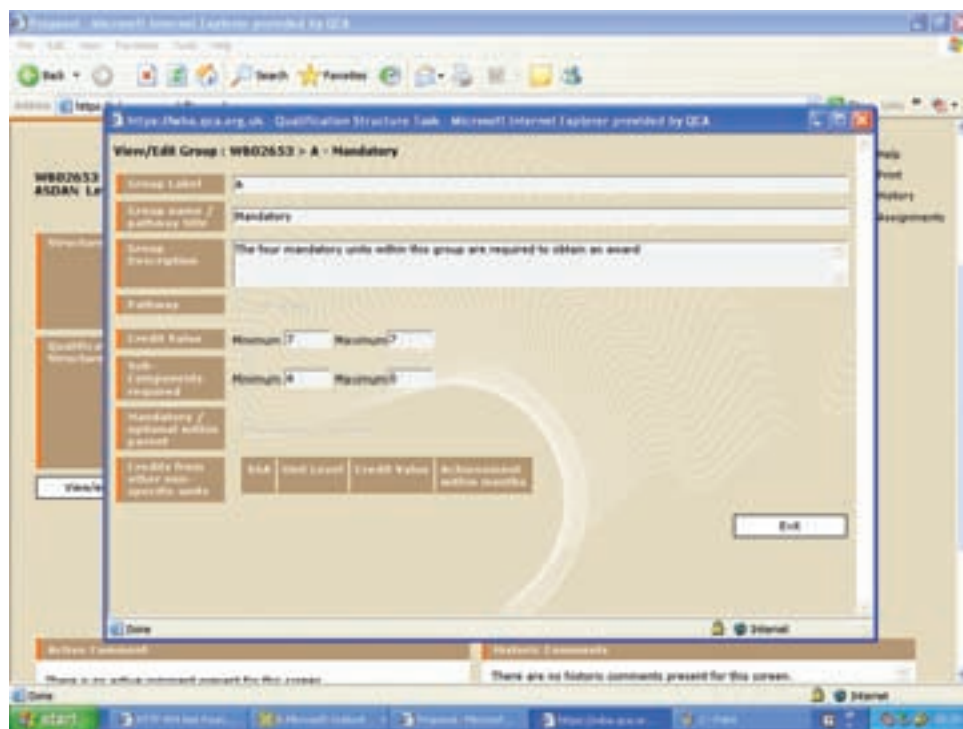
The learner must achieve a minimum of eight credits, seven of which must come from mandatory units available at both level 1 and Entry 3, and a minimum of one credit from the optional units also available at both levels. To gain the level 1 qualification, the learner must achieve five of the eight credits that can count towards the qualification at level 1. To achieve the Entry 3 qualification, the learner must achieve the requirements of the qualification with the credit coming from units at either level.

² *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08/3726), section 1.19.*



To set out these requirements, the first step is to set up an overall mandatory group (Group A), and one group for the optional units (Group B). Inside Group A, four sub-groups should be set up. Each of these groups will contain two units in the same subject area that are at different levels (Entry 3 and level 1).

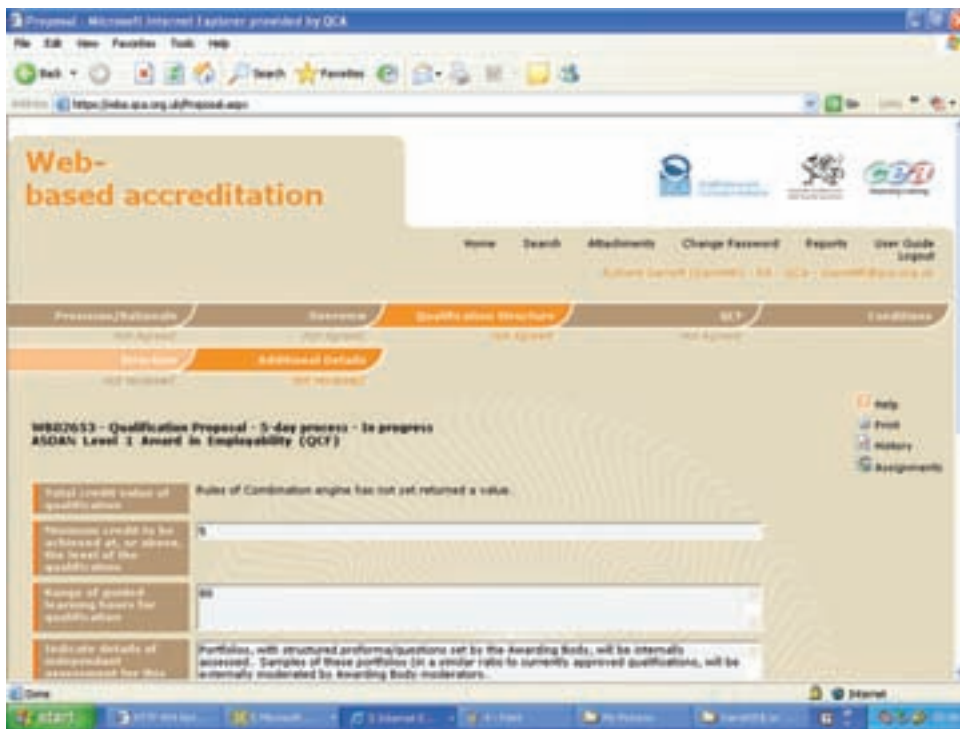
The four mandatory groups inside Group A are labelled M1, M2, M3 and M4 in the screenshot above. Each should be set with a rule that states that the learner can only take one sub-component from the group. In this case, 'sub-components' refers to units, as each pair of units covering the same content area at different levels has been added to each of the four groups. This bars the learner from counting units at different levels in the same subject area towards the qualification. In this example, units have been barred by using groups (in contrast with the method used in Example 4), as it is the clearest way to present the requirements of the qualification to learners.



To ensure the learner gains credit from one mandatory unit from each of the four mandatory sub-groups, a rule should be set for Group A. This rule is that a minimum of seven credits must be achieved from four sub-components. In this example, 'sub-components' refers to the sub-groups. This is because there are only groups, rather than individual credits/units, directly inside the overall mandatory group (Group A).

The rule makes sure that the learner achieves credit from each sub-group. At this stage, no requirement is made about which level these credits must be.

The rules for Group B, which contains the optional units, should also be set (in much the same way as was illustrated in Example 2) to require a learner to gain a minimum of one credit from the optional units.



For this qualification at level 1, by following the rules that have been set so far, it is possible to gain less than the majority of the credit from the level of the qualification. To set a rule that requires a learner to gain more than 50 per cent of the credit from the level of the qualification or above, access the 'Additional details', and note the amount of credit that must be achieved at the level of the qualification or above.

In this example, the credit value that must be achieved at level 1 must total at least five credits. If learners do not achieve five or more credits at level 1, they will not achieve the qualification. However, in this case there is an Entry level qualification available so if they achieve the other requirements of the rules of combination, but do not gain five credits at level 1, they will be awarded a qualification at Entry 3.

For qualifications to meet QCF requirements, the credit value must be more than 50 per cent of the overall credit value of the qualification, although it could be set as high as appropriate. For most qualifications, this information is not needed. It is only required if the design of the rules of combination could allow the learner to get less than the majority of the credit from below the level of the qualification without this being set.

Example 4: Qualifications requiring credit to be achieved from specific combinations of optional units

This example illustrates how rules of combination can be used to ensure credit is achieved from optional units or particular groups of optional units. It is also a good example of the use of tree structures and barred combinations.

The structure of the qualification requires the learner to achieve nine credits in total. Three of these credits must come from the mandatory units, and six credits

must come from the optional units, with at least four of those credits coming from optional units at level 3. The remaining optional credit can come from level 2 units or from further credit from level 3 units in addition to the four already specified.

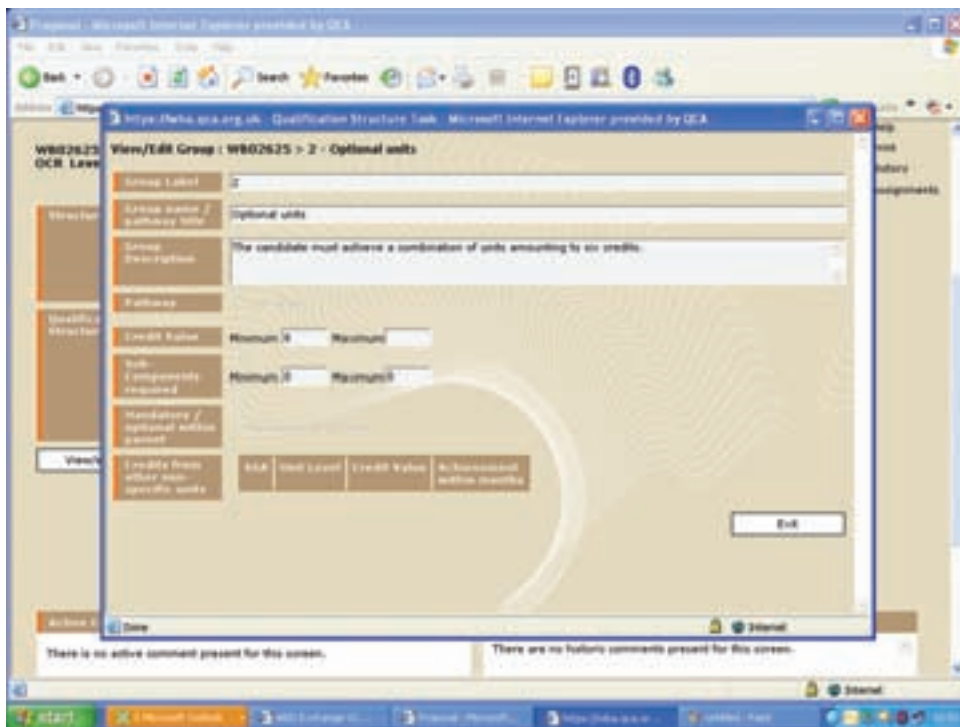
The example below illustrates how the rules of combination are specified to make sure the learner meets the requirements.



The first step is to create a group that sets out how much credit must be achieved through mandatory units (Group 1). Then to create a group that sets out how much credit must be achieved through optional units (Group 2).

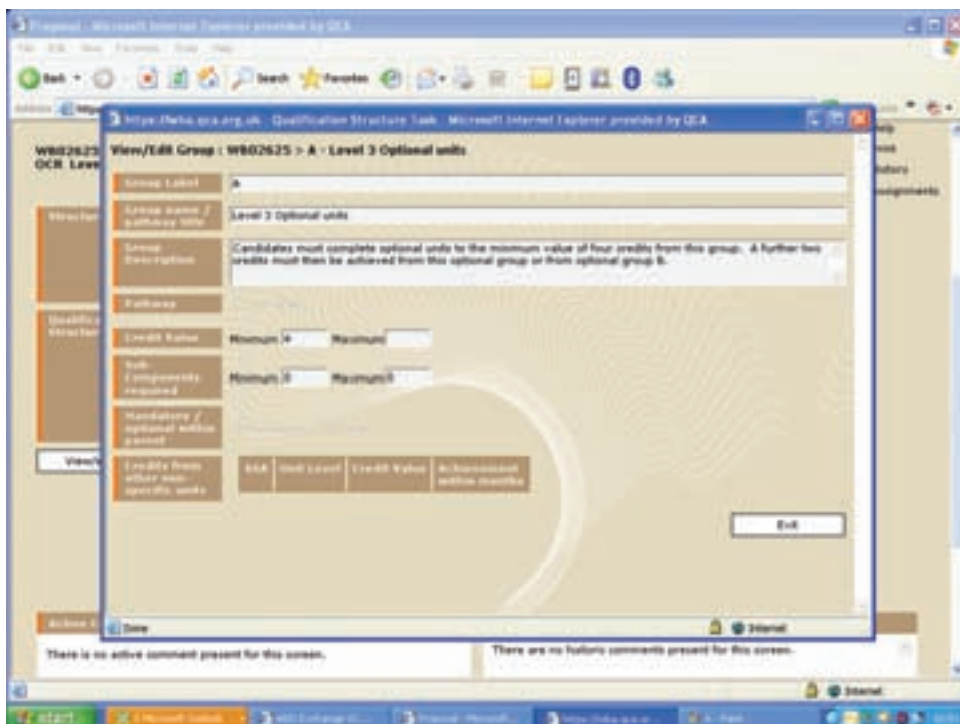
Inside the group for optional units, create the number of groups you need to separate your optional units. For example in this case there is one group for optional units at level 3 (Group A) and one for optional units at level 2 (Group B).

Once you have created the relevant groups, insert the relevant units.



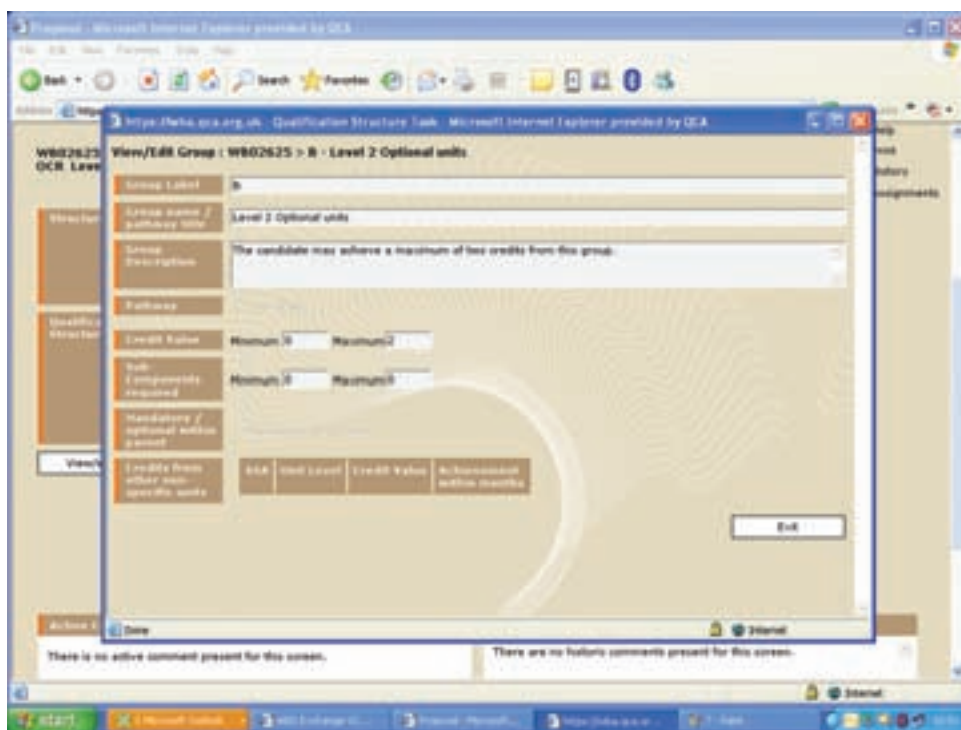
When creating the overall optional group, you set the rule to specify how many credits from optional units can count towards the qualification. In this case, the rule is set so a learner must achieve a minimum of six credits through the optional units.

In this example, there is no need to use any of the other functions such as 'Sub-components required'. This group is simply used for stating the amount of credit to be achieved through optional units. This group is mandatory, as learners are required to gain some credit through optional units.

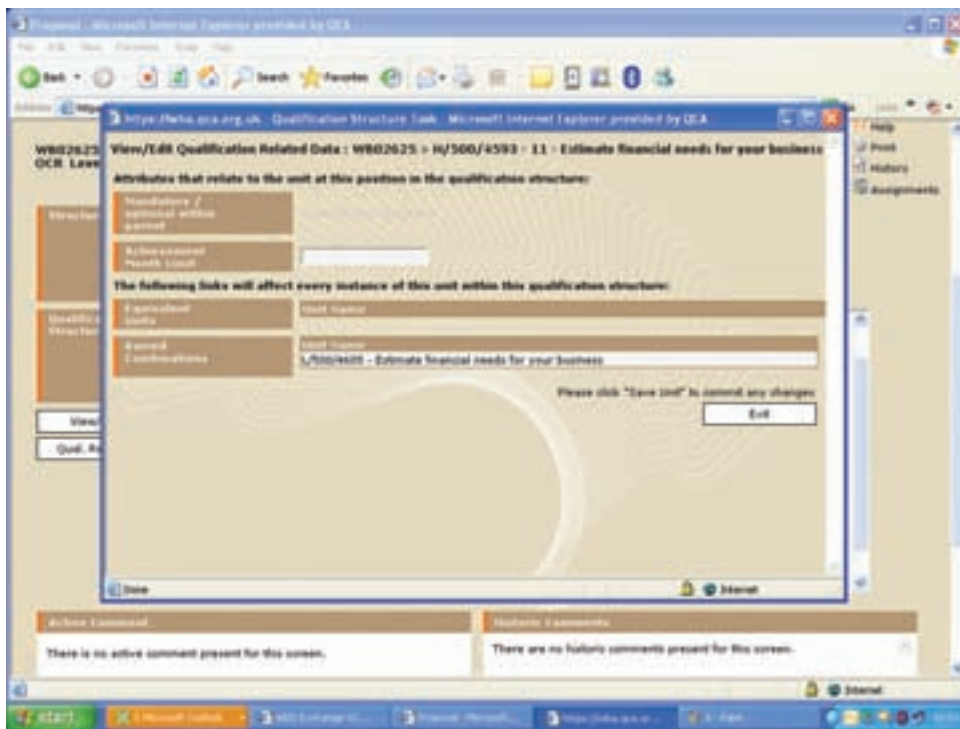


Once the rule has been set for the overall group of optional units (Group 2), rules must be set for each of the sub-groups. The purpose of doing this is to prevent or require certain combinations of optional units.

The previous screenshot shows the rule that has been set for the sub-group holding the level 3 optional units (Group A). It states that the learner must achieve at least four credits from this group. As this is a minimum value, it follows that a further two credits can be achieved from this sub-group or from the level 2 sub-group (Group B), as both groups are inside a group that require six credits to be achieved in total.



The screenshot above shows the rule that has been set for the sub-group holding the level 2 optional units (Group B). It states that learners can achieve a maximum of two credits from this group, although they do not have to achieve any, as no minimum has been set. This means that if they do not get any credit from the level 2 group, they must get it from the level 3 group instead to meet the requirements of the qualification.



Because the rules of this qualification allow learners to achieve credits through the optional units at levels 2 and 3, it is important to prevent them from gaining credits from units that are too similar to be counted in the same qualification, even though they are at different levels. In this example, the units at levels 2 and 3 have the same titles.

The function to bar the learner from taking certain combinations of units can be found in the 'Qual. related data' section. Select the unit in your qualification, then click on the 'Qual. related data' button, and search for the unit you want to bar with the selected unit. A barred combination has been entered in this way for the unit shown above.

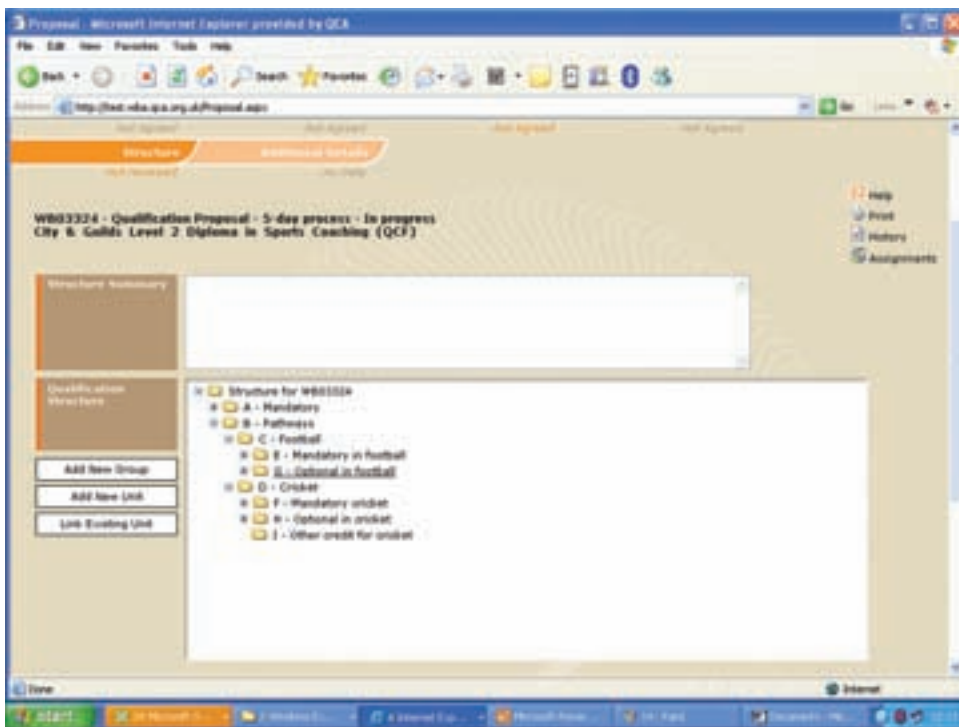
Barred combinations are defined for each qualification. If a unit is barred in one qualification, this barring will not feature automatically in other qualifications where the unit is used. If this barring is required, it must be entered again.

Barred combinations are two-way. Once you have barred one unit with another, the barring process is complete – the fact that A is barred with B automatically means B is barred with A.

Example 5: Qualifications with pathways

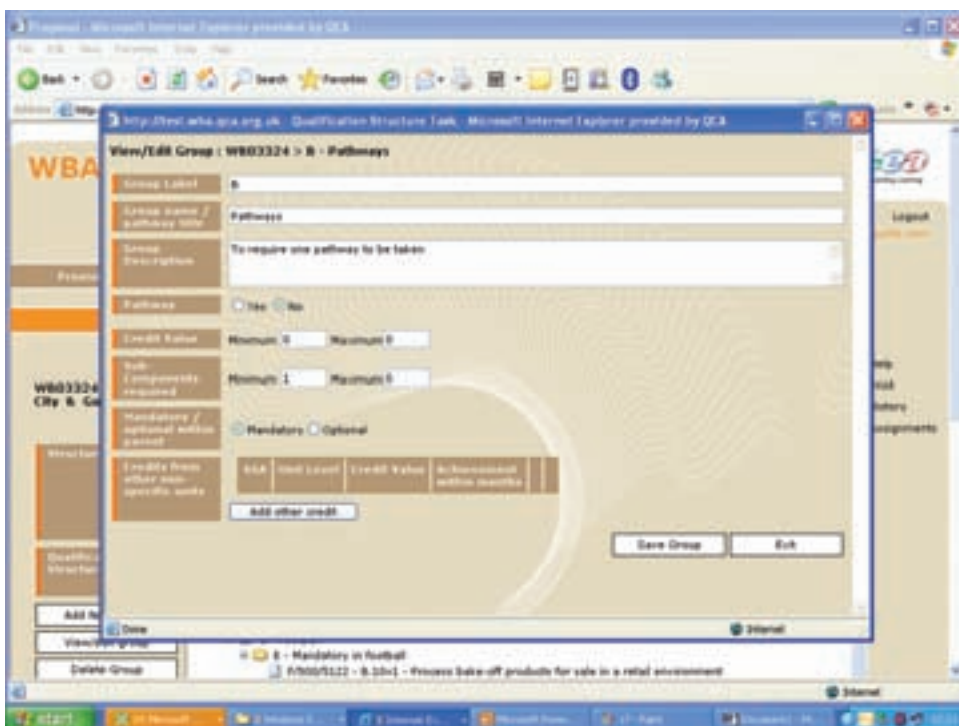
This example illustrates how pathways can be constructed within rules of combination. The rules of combination for this qualification have been designed to ensure that the learner takes some mandatory units common to all pathways and specialises by opting for one of the pathways.

The qualification in this example is a Diploma in sports coaching. It has two mandatory units common to both routes in the qualification and two pathways – one in football and the other in cricket.



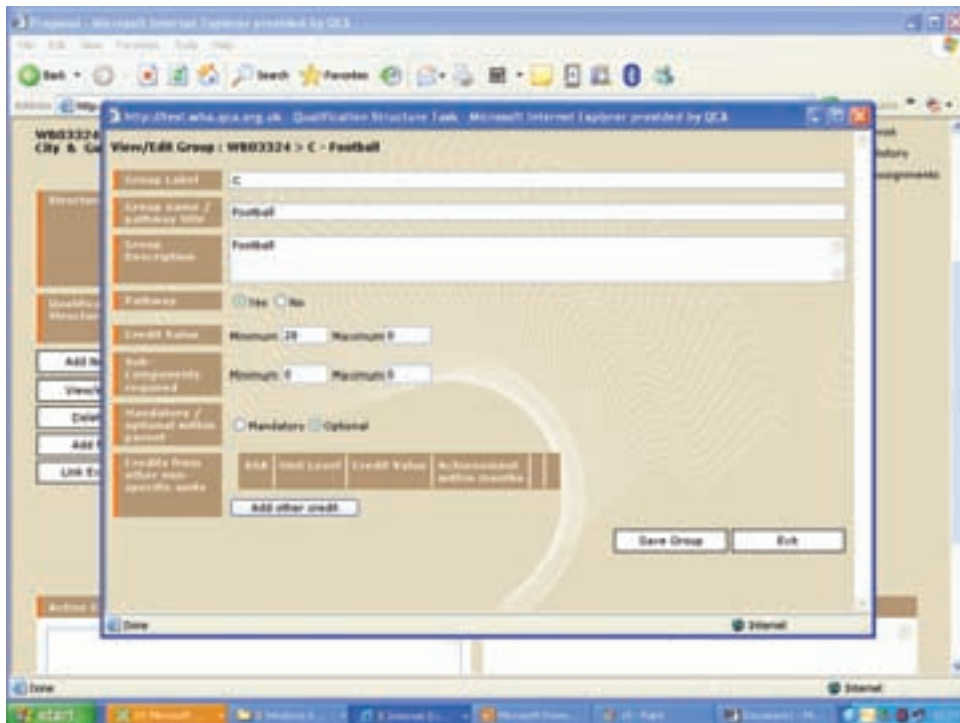
The first step in developing this rule of combination is to create the groups that set out the structure of the qualification. In this case, there is one group (Group A) for the mandatory units applying to all pathways and then a separate group to house the pathways (Group B). Group B contains two sub-groups (Groups C and D), which contain the relevant groups and units for each optional pathway.

Groups C and D contain sub-groups to indicate the optional and mandatory units within each pathway. It may be that there are no mandatory units common to the qualification’s pathways – in this case the first group that needs to be created is the group that contains the optional pathways.



The sole purpose of Group B is to establish that a learner must take one of the pathways within the qualification. The rule for Group B should be set so that a learner is required to take one of its sub-components – Group C or Group D. In this case, ‘sub-components’ refers to the pathways. Because a learner must take one of the pathways, Group B is set as a mandatory group. This group is not a pathway, so the pathway flag should be selected as ‘No’. This group is used to require a learner to take a pathway, but it is not in itself a pathway. The pathway ‘Yes’ flag is entered for groups C and D as described below.

The credit value of a qualification with pathways is calculated as the credit value of the pathway with the fewest credits.

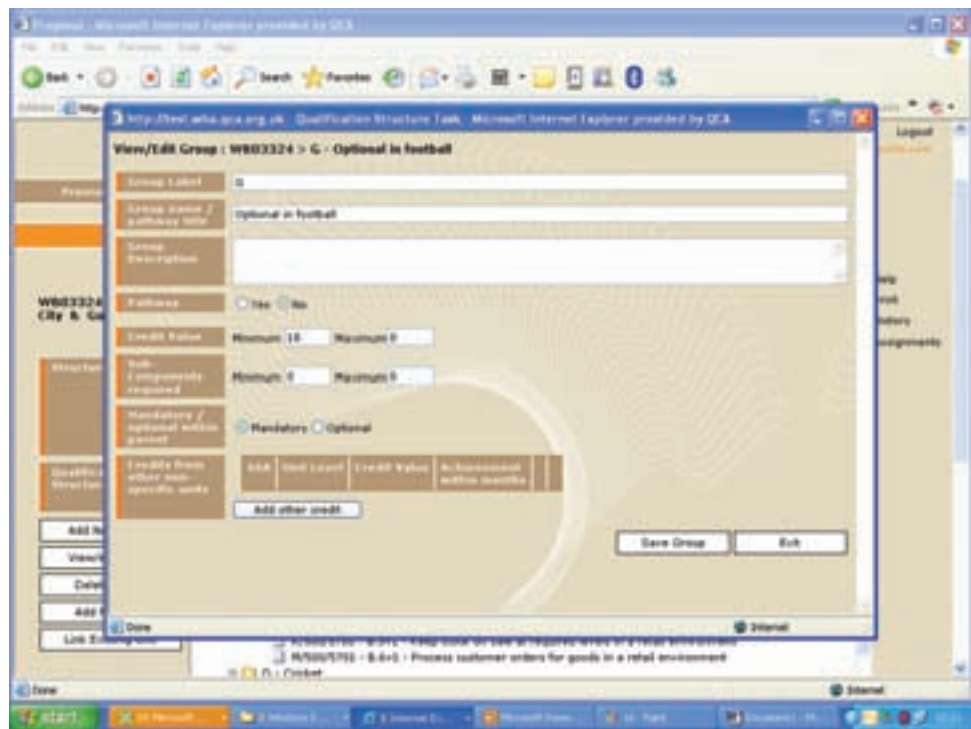


Now that rules have been set for Group B (the group housing both pathways), the rules must be set for each individual pathway.

The screenshot above shows the rule for Group C (the football pathway). The rule states that the learner must achieve a minimum of 28 credits. As this is the group for a pathway, it must be marked as pathway by clicking ‘Yes’. This is the only point at which the pathway flag is selected. It should not be used for any sub-groups of the pathway. It should also be marked as optional, as the learner can choose between pathway C or D.

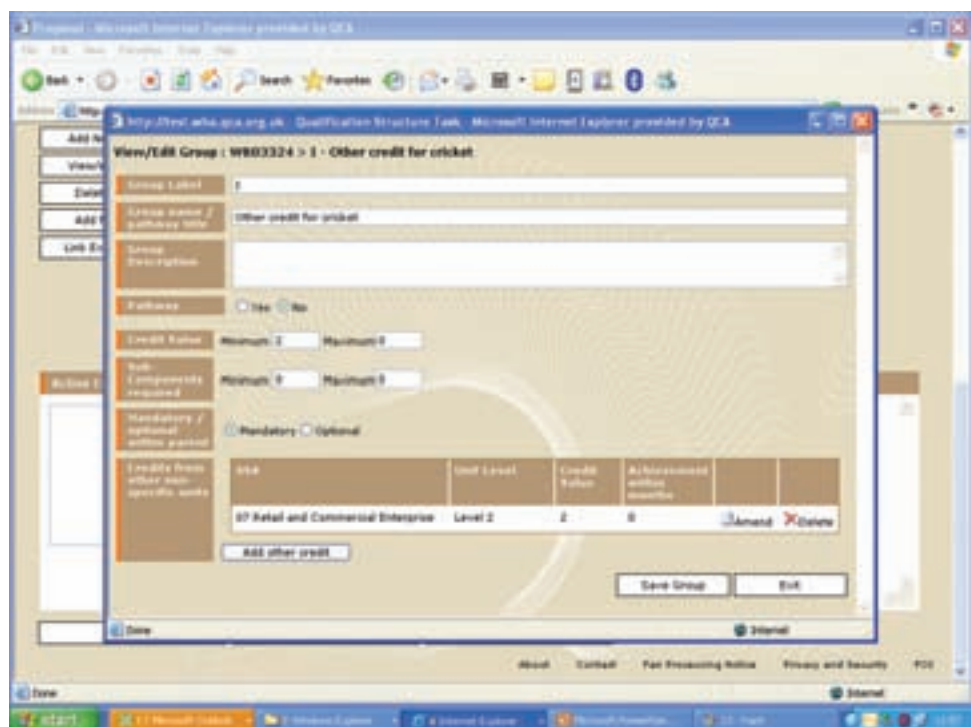
If a group is marked as a pathway, then it must always be marked as optional, as there will always be more than one pathway, and a learner does not have to take a particular one.

The name of the endorsement for the main title of the qualification, for example ‘Sports coaching (football)’, is taken from the text entered in the ‘Group name / pathway title’ section of the ‘Group’ screen. Because of this, it is important that the text given is accurate.



As stated for Group C, the football pathway has two sub-groups – one for the mandatory units and one for the optional ones. The screenshot above shows the rules that have been set for the group of optional units within this pathway – Group G.

The rules state that the learner must achieve a minimum of 18 credits from the optional units. This group is not marked as a pathway, as it is a sub-group of the pathway. It is marked as mandatory because the learner must complete some of units within it to complete the pathway.



In this example, for the cricket pathway, the learner is required to gain two further credits from 'Other credit' to complete the requirements for the pathway. Other credit requirements are set by using groups. To set other credit requirements, minimum and/or maximum credit values are set as normal.

In this example, two credits are required. Both credits must come from 'Other credit' as the other credit requirement is set at two credits. However, it is possible to set a higher credit value required for this group, of which a proportion can be achieved via other credit. For example you can specify the minimum credit value for the group as five and the 'Other credit' value as two, with the rest of the credit being made up of units placed in that group.

Acknowledgements

Some of the examples in the screenshots have come from rules of combination developed by ASDAN and OCR. As these were in development they do not always reflect the final rules of combination agreed across the projects, but are accurate examples to illustrate the mechanisms set out in the guidance. The regulators would like to thank both OCR and ASDAN for their cooperation.

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The Qualifications and Credit Framework will form part of the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales (CQFW).

The CQFW embraces all post-16 and higher education in Wales. Further details can be found at www.cqfw.net.

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