



Ofqual  
■■■■■■■■■■



# Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title

---

August 2008

Ofqual/08/3160

# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Background and purpose .....	3
Use of the operating rules .....	3
Relationship to NVQs in the NQF .....	5
Relationship to SVQs .....	5
Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in qualification titles in the QCF .....	6

# Introduction

## Background and purpose

The *Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title* are presented by the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual), the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills of the Welsh Assembly Government (DCELLS) and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). These are the organisations with statutory responsibility for regulating external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The operating rules were jointly developed and will be implemented by all three organisations across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The rules rely on and must be read in conjunction with *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework* (QCA/08/3726). In particular, many terms set out in this document are defined and explored in greater depth in the regulatory arrangements. Only where a term is not used in that document is it defined within this one.

The regulatory arrangements set out the requirements that will apply to the organisations that operate within, and the qualifications that are accredited into, the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). They specify that the term 'NVQ' may be used as a bracketed addition to a qualification title for certain occupational qualifications (see paragraph 1.22 in the regulatory arrangements) and note that the requirements for this are published separately. These requirements are set out below. Any qualifications in the QCF that use the term 'NVQ' in their title must meet them in order to be accredited.

The purpose of this document is to ensure that qualifications using the term 'NVQ' are titled consistently and appropriately. Qualifications titled in this way will not be considered a separate 'type' in the QCF. This means that they will not be subject to a separate regulatory regime from other qualifications in the QCF. These operating rules are designed to enable the use of the term 'NVQ' in QCF qualification titles, for example because of the value that this term may have in a particular market or sector. To protect the interests of learners and other users of qualifications, it is important that this happens in a consistent manner and in a way that reflects the existing purpose and focus of NVQ qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

## Use of the operating rules

Organisations that wish to use the term 'NVQ' within a QCF qualification title should note the following:

- Inclusion of the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title is optional and its usage is determined by awarding organisations in consultation with an appropriate sector skills council (SSC)/standard-setting body (SSB). Qualifications that have been accredited in the NQF as NVQs can be re-written and submitted for accreditation into the QCF without the term 'NVQ' in their title (and therefore without meeting these operating rules).
- As set out in the regulatory arrangements, the term 'NVQ' may only be added to a QCF qualification as a 'bracketed addition to the qualification title'.
- Awarding organisations (in line with any agreements made with SSCs/SSBs) may wish to implement requirements set out in the *NVQ code of practice* (QCA/06/2888) for certain qualifications within the QCF. If they choose to do this, any requirements should be set out in full rather than referencing the *NVQ code of practice*.
- Those developing units for the QCF may take the opportunity to include requirements about the way in which assessment must be conducted at unit level (see paragraph 1.8 (d) of the regulatory arrangements). These requirements should be appropriate to the units and qualifications in question. They may be needed for a variety of reasons, for example to ensure a consistent approach across a number of awarding organisations, or to record an assessment requirement that is essential to assess competence in a particular job role. Unit developers can, therefore, specify assessment requirements similar to, or the same as, those used in the assessment strategy for current NVQs in the NQF. When such requirements are applied for particular qualifications (see paragraph 1.31 of the regulatory arrangements), awarding organisations must adhere to the requirements in the assessment and award of the qualification. As noted above, the organisation submitting the unit must not simply refer to the *NVQ code of practice*, in making these requirements, but must set them out in full for the units in question. These requirements may be set out in a separate document, as long as all requirements are clear and available to all users. There could, for example, be a link in the relevant section of the unit format to the document setting out the requirements.
- Any awarding organisation that intends to include the term 'NVQ' in qualification titles within the QCF will be required to demonstrate, at the point at which they seek recognition to operate in the QCF, that they can apply these operating rules consistently and accurately. The qualifications regulators may check if they are being applied correctly at any point during the qualification accreditation process or certification period.

## **Relationship to NVQs in the NQF**

The *NVQ code of practice* will continue to apply to all NVQs in the NQF until their last certification end date. These NVQs will continue to be part of the NQF and therefore must meet the requirements that applied when they were accredited – *The statutory regulation of external qualifications 2004 (QCA/04/1293)* and the *NVQ code of practice*. This means that there will be a transition period during which awarding organisations and their centres, operating in both the QCF and the NQF, are required to work with two sets of regulatory requirements – one for QCF qualifications that include 'NVQ' in their title and one for NVQs in the NQF.

## **Relationship to SVQs**

Awarding organisations that choose to apply these operating rules should take measures to ensure that qualifications with the term 'NVQ' in the title are broadly aligned with SVQs in terms of their respective purposes.

## Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in qualification titles in the QCF

The qualification must:

1. be based entirely and only on national occupational standards (NOS)
2. attest to competence<sup>1</sup> in an occupational role
3. apply any requirements specified by a relevant SSC or SSB about the way in which units are assessed and apply any rules of combination they specify
4. be made up entirely of shared units
5. specify 'Confirm occupational competence and/or licence to practise' as its main qualification purpose<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Competence is defined as the ability to carry out activities to the standards required.

<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 6.2 (c) of the regulatory arrangements.

The regulatory authorities wish to make their publications widely accessible. Please contact us if you have any specific accessibility requirements.

First published in 2008.

© Crown copyright 2008

© Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment 2008

© Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2008

Reproduction, storage or translation, in any form or by any means, of this publication is prohibited without prior written permission of the publisher, unless within the terms of the Copyright Licensing Agency. Excerpts may be reproduced for the purpose of research, private study, criticism or review, or by educational institutions solely for education purposes, without permission, provided full acknowledgement is given.

Printed in Great Britain.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is an exempt charity under Schedule 2 of the Charities Act 1993.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

83 Piccadilly

London

W1J 8QA

[www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)