

Workforce Skills Support – NVQ / SVQ
Delivery

Learner Handbook



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Section 1: Welcome and Introduction to Workforce Skills Support

Workforce Skills Support (WSS) is a nationwide commercial training and NVQ provider to the construction and supporting industries. We work throughout the UK and are rapidly becoming the Commercial Training / NVQ provider of choice.

Workforce Skills Support Ltd

Mansfield Business Centre, Ashfield Avenue, Mansfield, Nottingham, NG18 2AE

Workforce Skills Support is a delivery partner for CITB, NPORS, ProQual, IATP and SQA.

Workforce Skills Support will advise you of your Assessor/Tutor and will be responsible for the delivery of your programme, supported by you or your employer.

Prior to enrolling onto your NVQ you will be assessed to ensure you are on the appropriate programme and level. This Initial Assessment is to measure your existing skills to determine the level and type of qualification you could work towards. Identify any personal needs that you might have and to record these outcomes on the Learning plan. As a part of this process we normally carry out a simple skills check. This will indicate your skill level for both literacy and numeracy.

Following the initial assessment Workforce Skills Support will consider anything that was discussed at the initial assessment and agree a plan with you to achieve the qualification(s). This plan is known as an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and it will show the agreed learning targets and objectives and identify learning and assessment activities. It identifies who is involved, the resources needed and the dates and timescales agreed for achievement. When you sign this plan you and Workforce Skills Support agree to follow this plan.

Your progress will be monitored through regular reviews and you will be set target completion dates to meet your needs.

You can access this Student Handbook and other information on the Workforce Skills Support Induction dongle (on request). You will also receive a full induction to your programme from your Trainer/Assessor.

The aim of the learning plan is to ensure you understand your learning schedule to assist you to achieve. Your health, safety and well-being are of paramount importance to us and we ask that you advise us of any issues and concerns you may have during your programme. We aim to fully support you in achieving your qualifications to further your career development and personal goals.

What is a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)?



NVQs / SVQ's are nationally recognised qualifications which are gained in the workplace. When you achieve your NVQs / SVQ's it will show that you are competent in your job, able to do something skilfully and to know why it is done that way

Structure of NVQs / SVQ's:

The national occupational standards in your qualification will be grouped and put into your main activities which make up a job. These groups of activities are called units. There are three types of unit. The standards for your own NVQs / SVQ's will inform you which types of unit you will need to complete and also how many units there are to choose from.

There are three types of unit:

Mandatory units

You will have to achieve all of these units to get your NVQ. You may also have to achieve and complete some optional units depending on the type of NVQ that you have chosen.

Optional

You may be able to choose from a range of different optional units depending on the area of work you do and the NVQ that you are doing. You will be advised by your assessor on the best optional unit to match the area of work you are in.

Additional

You do not have to achieve these in order to gain your NVQ but they do allow you to show that you have fully achieved competence in other areas of work. You will also be helped when deciding if you should undertake any additional units.

The units or elements will include the following information:

The **standards of performance** that you must show

The **knowledge and understanding** that you will need

The **types of evidence** that you will need to produce

The **depth and breadth** of the evidence that you will be producing

To gain your NVQ certificate you will be expected to show your competence in the mandatory units and any optional units. When you have completed these units successfully, you will be entitled to claim your NVQ. The certificate will be awarded by ProQual or SQA. Even if you only complete some of the units of the NVQ you will still be able to claim for the units that you have completed. These are shown on a certificate of unit credit.

Section 2: Delivery of Learning and Training

Once assigned a trainer/assessor, the delivery model for each programme will be determined in conjunction with your employer. Delivery may consist of online learning, self-study, work related upskilling and assessment and more traditional methods such as classroom based delivery to meet the needs of the organisation and the specifications within the qualification (During COVID-19

epidemic assessment can be carried out remotely, under conditions defined by awarding bodies). An Individual Learning Plan will be developed for you which will record the results of information, advice and guidance and identify the training requirements and learning aim, together with delivery methods and target dates for starts and completion. The assigned trainer/assessor will be responsible for delivering and/or coordination, training and supporting you to achieve your targets in a timely manner.

Your employer has a responsibility to:

Provide the location for training and assessment
Allow you time during your working hours to complete the NVQ
Support you during the NVQ process

Your responsibilities as a learner are to:

Give WSS all the personal details they will need to register you with SQA / ProQual

Participate in an induction and also an initial assessment

Agree with your personal assessment plan which will show:

- How and when you will attend your training and assessment at work
- The evidence you will need to provide and the training that will be required
- The names of other colleagues at your place of work who will ask you to provide evidence

Collect all the evidence which will show that you carry out your job effectively and efficiently

Organise a training and evidence file and show how the evidence covers the national occupational standards that are in your NVQ

Discuss changes to your assessment plan with your assessor/trainer

Discuss the evidence that you have collected with other people from the centre and SQA / ProQual

WSS will give you help and guidance and will explain in detail your personal responsibilities.

WSS responsibilities as a centre:

Make sure that all the administration of your NVQ is taken care of. The centre's staff will make sure that you are registered with SQA / ProQual for the qualification that you have chosen and that the certificate is applied for at the right time.

Your centre will take you through an induction and an initial assessment so that you understand and are fully clear on how the NVQ assessment process will work.

The induction will explain to you:

Who will be your assessor/trainer / IQA – See Appendix 12

What they will be doing and how

What you will have to do, to ensure that you are successful as a learner

Your assessor/trainer will:

Provide help and guidance to identify any training you think you may need

Agree an assessment plan with you to help identify how you can start gathering evidence to prove and show that you are competent at your job

Make decisions about your evidence and provide feedback advice and guidance in the form of progress reviews



Assist you to complete the NVQ in a timely manner

As part of the programme you will have access to individualised personal support from an Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) point of contact. You will be advised of your dedicated Individual IAG officer at induction and provided with contact details.

Your IAG officer will discuss with you your initial assessments and the development of your knowledge and skill relating to your current employment and your progression in your chosen career pathway.

Section 3: Progress Review

Your progress towards completion of your accredited programme will be monitored and supported by both your employer and your trainer/assessor. This will give you an opportunity to formally discuss the benefits of your training, new skills you have acquired and actions to be taken to help you further develop and achieve your learning outcomes.

The WSS Internal Quality Advisor will make sure that the NVQ assessor/trainers are making correct judgement and that evidence collected meets the standards.

They may visit your place of work to observe you as part of your training and assessment and may wish to speak to you regarding your NVQ, check the assessment of your portfolio of evidence that has been collated.

Once you have successfully completed your learning and assessment for the qualification Workforce Skills Support will request a certificate from the awarding body. The certificate often takes a couple of weeks to arrive but will be forwarded to you as soon as possible. You should place great value on the certificate as it shows the level of skills and knowledge you have reached.

Section 4: Progression

There are several progression routes available to employees once they have achieved the units outlined within your feedback on completion of your initial qualification. Progression routes may include delivery of a full qualification at a higher level, an apprenticeship or development into higher skills as appropriate with each individual. Each employee, together with their employer, will be given the opportunity to discuss progress and further learning to enhance their career prospects and support the organisation in which they are employed.

NB: All progression's onto further qualifications are subject to eligibility within the card Schemes

Section 5: Feedback and complaints

Workforce Skills Support has a formal process in place to collate, respond and act on feedback from both you as the employer and the learners. This is completed through a variety of methods that include surveys, telephone interviews, feedback questionnaires, and ongoing progress reviews that are built into the review as part of the Individual Learning Plan.



Please take the time to complete our feedback at each stage we do seek and use these opinions to enhance the quality of our work.

Complaints Procedure

Workforce Skills Support has a full complaints procedure which can be viewed upon request to head office.

If you feel you need to make a complaint it is important that you contact us and tell us: What the complaint is, when it happened, what have you done about it, whom you have reported it to and who was involved, how would you like it resolved

You can make a complaint in writing, by e-mail, by telephone or by person. We would encourage you to let us know your complaint as soon as possible, but do ask that you complain as soon as practically possible.

Tel: 01623 287830 and ask to speak to a Director

E-mail: natalie@workforceskillssupport.co.uk

Address: Workforce Skills Support, Mansfield Business Centre, Ashfield Avenue, Mansfield, Nottingham, NG18 2AE

Timescale; We understand that it is important for you to have your complaint resolved as quickly as possible. As soon as a complaint is made we will reply within 48 hrs.

Section 6: Health and Safety

In the event of an accident involving any employee / learner WSS will need to follow your company procedures. In the event of an accident falling within the scope of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 please notify the trainer/assessor immediately. For more detailed guidance, please refer to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication HSG 245 – Investigating accidents and incidents, which is free to download from their website www.hse.gov.uk. The WSS Health and Safety policy can be found on your WSS induction dongle (on request).

During COVID-19 epidemic All assessment visits will be carried out in line with Government guidance, assessors will be issued with a Risk Assessment within learners portfolios of evidence.

Copies are also available to be viewed on WSS website –

<https://www.workforceskillssupport.co.uk/our-response-to-covid-19/nvq-delivery/>

Section 7: Safeguarding and Prevent

WSS promote a safe, non-threatening, inclusive environment in which all users can operate and learn, where they are treated with respect and dignity, feel safe, are listened to and where positive well-being is promoted; producing students and staff who are confident, healthy, safe, emotionally resilient and personally fulfilled. The prime focus is on minimising the risk of harm to young people and vulnerable adults. If you have any safeguarding or PREVENT concerns, please contact the



Workforce Skills Support Safeguarding/Prevent Officer Natalie Williams on 01623 287830. The full Safeguarding and Prevent policy can be found on your WSS induction dongle.

Section 8: Equality and Diversity

Workforce Skills Support is committed to the active promotion of equality and diversity for all and opposes unlawful or unfair discrimination of any kind. We believe in treating all staff and students fairly, creating an inclusive culture for all staff and students to develop their full potential. The Workforce Skills Support Equality and Diversity policy can be found on the WSS induction dongle.

Section 9: Sustainability

WSS Promotes awareness and an understanding of sustainability including social, economic and environmental issues.

WSS aim to:

Deliver projects that preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment (environmental)
Provide skills that businesses' demand and require-now and in the future (economy/labour market)

Our full Environmental and Sustainability Policy can be found on your learner dongle.

Discussions have been held with your employer in how we can support this area within your programme which will be covered at induction.

Section 10: Useful WSS contacts:

General Enquiries – Naomi Heseltine 01623 287830
Safeguarding & Prevent – Mark Branson 07950 591570
Information, Advice and Guidance – Natalie Williams 01623 287830
Health and Safety – Sean McCloskey – 07970 959 375

(Available between the hours of 8.30 am – 5 pm Monday to Fridays).

Section 12: Data Protection:

The information supplied for registration will be used by the Learner Record Service, managed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. They are an Executive Agency of the Department for Business', Innovation and Skills. They will issue you with a Unique Learner Number (ULN) and create your Personal Learning Record. For more information about how your information is processed and shared refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lrs-organisation-portal> . This is a statement intended to provide you with information as to how The Learning Records Service will collect and use your personal information and data, and how you can exercise choice in respect of the use of your personal data. Information supplied will also be shared with the Awarding Body, for more information please contact WSS head office to acquire a copy of the relevant Data Protection Policy.

The Data Protection Act relates to the handling of all data including employee information as well as client or learner related data. Data under the Act breaks down into two categories - ordinary



personal data and sensitive personal data. The Act requires Workforce Skills Support to take additional steps to protect sensitive personal data.

WSS are also a member of ICO: **Information Commissioner's Office** - The UK's independent authority set up to uphold **information** rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and **data** privacy for individuals.

The WSS Data Protection policy can be found within your Portfolio.

Appendix 11:

Useful contacts:

Citizens Advice

To provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination

National Phone Service: 03444 111 444

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association

The BDA is the voice of dyslexic people. We aim to influence government and other institutions to promote a dyslexia friendly society, that enables dyslexic people of all ages to reach their full potential.

The BDA promotes early identification of specific learning difficulties (SpLD) and support in schools to ensure opportunity to learn for dyslexic learners. In November 2007 at the BDA AGM Members agreed the policy on Early Identification of Specific Learning Difficulties. This forms the basis of BDA lobbying in this regard.

Helpline: 0333 405 4567

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexic> - Dyslexic information

Mind

Our mental health information has been certified as trustworthy and reliable by the Information Standard. Provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. We campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

T: 020 8519 2122

Health and Safety Executive

Help reduce deaths and serious injury



<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/index.htm>

CSCS

CSCS is the leading skills certification scheme within the UK construction industry. CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the required training and qualifications for the type of work they carry out.

CSCS helpline: 0344 994 4777

CSCS online card finder:

<https://www.cscs.uk.com/card-finder/>

CSCS online card checker:

<https://www.citb.co.uk/cards-testing/how-do-i-check-card-details/online-card-checker/>

video on how to apply for the CSCS card:

<https://www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/>

Health Safety & Environment Test Bookings: 0344 994 4488

CPCS / NPORS

CPCS / NPORS provides a registration card scheme acknowledged by industry for those involved in plant operations by recognising skills, knowledge and understanding, competence and qualifications.

CPCS helpline: **0844 815 7274**

NPORS helpline: **0161 351 240**

CITB Levy and Grant advice general enquiries: 0344 994 4455, Levy return advice 0344 994 4455

Working tax Credits

Information on eligibility for Working tax credits:

<https://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit/overview>

Universal Credit

Information on eligibility for Universal credits:

<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

Acas

Employment advice Bureau

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461>

Change4Life

Be Food smart and make healthy changes

<http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/why-change-for-life.aspx>

Appendix 12:

The Role and Responsibilities of the Assessor

1. The Role of the Assessor

The primary role of the assessor is to assess candidates' performance and/or related knowledge in a range of tasks and to ensure that the competence and/or knowledge demonstrated meets the requirements of the ILM standards and learning objectives. Assessors therefore need to have occupational expertise in the areas to be assessed. They will be required to update their expertise by being involved in continuous professional development activities.

2. The Responsibilities of the Assessor

Assessors are responsible for:

- Making initial contact with the candidate and maintaining regular contact throughout the programme
- Carrying out an Induction which includes an initial assessment with the candidate before commencing the programme and establishing the correct award and level to be undertaken [?] Ensuring that the candidate is aware of current legislation relating to them and all concerned with their assessment especially equal opportunities and health and safety
- Ensuring that the candidate is aware of their own responsibility with regards to the collection of evidence and taking into account any accreditation of prior learning or achievement. Explaining the assessment process fully to the candidate and others involved
- Following the guidance issued by both the Centre and the ILM with regards to assessment practice and completion of all assessment documentation and records.
- Conducting various forms of assessment to meet the learning objectives and ILM standards

- Ensuring that all evidence towards meeting the learning objectives and standards of the particular ILM qualification is recorded and maintained in line with requirements
- Assessing evidence of candidates competence against the ILM standards and learning objectives within the qualification
- Making sure that assessment decisions are matched against the appropriate level
- Providing candidates with prompt, accurate and constructive written and oral feedback
- Managing the assessment procedure from planning through to making and recording assessment decisions
- Ensuring validity, authenticity, currency and sufficiency of evidence produced by candidates
- Maintaining accurate candidate assessment and achievement records which can then be subjected to internal verification
- Keeping the Internal Verifier and Programme Manager up to date with regards to candidate progress
- Confirming with the candidate when they have demonstrated competence and completing the required documentation
- Agreeing new assessment plans when evidence is insufficient to meet competence
- Making themselves available for discussion with those involved in the assessment process, including the internal and external verifiers and the Programme Manager

Role Description for Internal Verifier

1. Evaluating Assessors

The role of the Internal Verifier is to monitor and evaluate how assessors carry out their work in practice in order to highlight problems with individual assessment and the system in general.

Essentially you should be reviewing and considering whether:

- the activities selected by the assessor match the ILM Standards and learning objectives for the particular qualification for which he/she is gaining evidence of competence
- The environment and context in which the assessment is taking place is appropriate for assessment and allows for suitable evidence to be gained.
- the assessor accurately interprets the standards and learning objectives and does not add or subtract any of his/her own to make the judgments.
- The assessor is as unobtrusive as is practicable when they make the assessments and the assessment encourages the candidate to perform to the maximum of their ability (without providing undue help or assistance which means that the performance is not in fact that of the candidate).
- The assessor completes accurately, legibly and completely all the necessary assessment documentation as close as possible to the time of the assessment to ensure that all necessary aspects are covered.

2. Monitoring and Verifying Assessment Decisions

As well as evaluating how assessors are performing their role overall, it will be necessary for you to countersign and verify that in your opinion the assessments made of an individual are consistent with the standards and learning objectives detailed in the particular qualification for each unit. The purpose of this countersigning is to act as a guarantor to the system as a whole.

In effect you will be signing to testify that you, as the internal verifier, are confident that:

- the assessment has taken place in the manner laid down in the guidance
- evidence collected for each unit matches and meets the required standards and learning objectives of the qualification
- sufficient evidence has been collected by that individual to safely infer competence

The Internal Verifier, once satisfied that there is sufficient valid and reliable evidence for each learning objective and the standard for each unit of the particular qualification, hence countersigns the documentation and passes it onto the next stage in the process.

CSCS Card Information

On completion of the NVQ candidates can apply for various CSCS Cards. These cards are valid for 5 years. The cost of this card is currently £36 direct with the CITB.



Specific to the operative cards, on registration of the NVQ with a valid (passed within the last 24 months) operative Health Safety and Environment test candidates can apply for the red experienced worker card. This card is valid for 1 year and cannot be renewed. The cost of the card is currently £36 direct with the CITB

It is issued on a temporary basis, while a Construction Related QCF qualification is being achieved. It is expected to be replaced by a skilled five year card on achievement of a Construction Related NVQ.



For more information on cards available please refer to our website.

[NVQ's & CSCS Cards - What is a CSCS Card? \(workforceskillssupport.co.uk\)](http://workforceskillssupport.co.uk)

CPCS / NPORS Card Information

On completion of the NVQ candidates who hold a valid CPCS or NPORS red trained operator card can upgrade to a blue CPCS or NPORS Competence card for the relevant category.

Candidate must hold a valid operative Health Safety and Environment test in order to be able to upgrade the card.



Appendix 14: Retention of learner data

All learner data will be retained for a period of 6 years within a secured environment and in accordance GDPR and Awarding Bodies regulated qualifications.

Appendix 14: Acknowledging Artificial Intelligence (AI) use

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications. AI chatbots are AI tools which generate text in response to user prompts and questions. Users can ask follow-up questions or ask the chatbot to revise the responses already provided. AI chatbots respond to prompts based upon patterns in the data sets upon which they have been trained. They generate responses which are statistically likely to be relevant and appropriate. Candidates are reminded that, as with any source, poor referencing, paraphrasing and copying sections of text may constitute malpractice, which can attract severe sanctions including disqualification – in the context of AI use, candidates must be clear what is and what is not acceptable in respect of acknowledging AI content and the use of AI sources. For example, it would be unacceptable to simply reference 'AI' or 'ChatGPT', just as it would be unacceptable to state 'Google' rather than the specific website and webpages which have been consulted.

While there may be benefits to using AI in some situations, there is the potential for it to be misused by candidates, either accidentally or intentionally. AI misuse, in that it involves a candidate submitting work for qualification assessments which is not their own, can be considered a form of plagiarism.



If AI misuse is suspected by WSS or if it has been reported to them, full details of the allegation will usually be relayed to the AO. The AO will liaise with the Head of Centre regarding the next steps of the investigation. The Centre will consider the case and, if necessary, take appropriate action, with guidance from the AO. Sanctions applied to a candidate committing plagiarism and making a false declaration of authenticity range from a warning regarding future conduct to disqualification and the candidate being barred from entering further qualifications for a set period of time or in the most extreme cases, permanently, through the centre.