

Major changes for Progression Qualifications from September

From 1 September 2009 there will be three major changes to NOCN's highly successful Progression Qualifications.

- There will be **additional units** to choose from – on top of over 500 already available.
- The NQF version of Progression Qualifications will no longer be available. (In 2008-9 the NQF Progression Qualification and **replacement QCF Qualifications in Progression** have run in parallel.)

- **Learners will be able to 'spike up'**. That is, learners will be able to have credits at a higher level than the main qualification.

This means that learners can now have permitted combinations of units at the main qualification level, at the level below, **and** at a level above.

Up to now, the old NQF Progression Qualifications required all the units to be at the same level, and the replacement Qualifications in Progression have only allowed units at the main qualification level and the level below.

What do the changes mean for you?

Additional units

QCA has not been able to add units to its qualifications database until recently.

This meant that NOCN, even though it could add whole new qualifications to the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ), has not been able to add units to existing qualifications.

Now, following QCA's technology upgrade, teams of NOCN staff around the country are working hard to get additional units into the Qualifications in Progression for September.

Still some gaps

Unfortunately, not all the units NOCN want added will be in place by September: Sector Skill Council approval is needed for adding units in some areas, and this can sometimes take a long time to achieve.

NOCN is continuing to work with SSCs with the aim of adding further units for September 2010.

Watch the RoCs!

The NQF Progression Qualifications have always required some core credits in a qualification – a Rule of Combination (RoC).

The added flexibility of the QCF Qualifications in Progression means care has to be taken not only that the core credit requirements are met, but also that the number of credits at each level is correct.

Key points on RoCs

Getting a combination of units and credits wrong for a class or learner could mean a qualification is not achieved.

The major points to watch are:

- Make sure you have the right information! RoCs are given in the Qualification Guides. The latest versions of the Qualification Guides are on the NOCN website, www.nocn.org.uk.
- If you've used NQF Progression Qualifications, don't forget the total credits is different in the QCF Qualifications in Progression.
- Check learners have the minimum number of core

credits (also called mandatory credits).

- Check that learners have enough credits at the level of their qualification or above
- Make sure you use the correct national unit code.

The same unit can have different national codes in NQF and QCF Progression Qualifications, and in Step-UP, for instance.

- Check the units available for a qualification by looking at the up-to-date unit list on the NOCN website for the specific qualification.
- Check the unit content. Clicking on a link in the unit list will bring up the unit content – make sure you are using the latest version of the unit.

If you have any doubts

If you have any doubts about the RoCs, contact your Development Manager – see box below.

And Step-UP ...

Step-UP, NOCN's Foundation Learning Tier suite of qualifications, is also having units added for September 2009, and also allowing 'spiky upwards' - so take care with Step-UP RoCs too!

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