

Qualification and Assessment Specification

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership

Qualification No: 600/8874/6

Operational Start Date: 01 May 2013

Version 2 – July 2017



NOCN

NOCN is a leading credit-based Awarding Organisation in the UK, offering high quality, flexible, credit-based qualifications and is recognised by the Qualifications Regulators in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. We also have partnerships with OCNs in Scandinavia.

NOCN had the second highest number of achievements in the QCF in 2009-2010, within the UK (Regulators' Annual Qualifications Market Report Version 2 – August 2011 Ofqual/11/4854).

We are a not for profit organisation and invest our resources into the development of existing products and services and new qualifications. We are proud to be a registered charity and will continue to promote our charitable objectives.

There are more than 2,500 centres nationally offering NOCN qualifications. We currently have nearly 300 qualifications on both the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). They are made up of more than 1,000 units from a wide range of areas including modern languages, trade unions, creative arts and design, foundations for learning and life, preparation for work including employability, security, credit control and offender learning.

We offer different types of qualifications from Entry Level to Level 4 and skills for life such as Functional Skills. NOCN qualifications are delivered through schools, further education and sixth form colleges, higher education institutions, trade unions, employers, local education authorities and training organisations, adult and community education centres, and voluntary and community organisations.

Contents

1. About the qualification	4
2. Who the qualification is for	7
3. Achieving the qualification	10
4. The qualification units.....	11
5. How the qualification is assessed.....	16
6. Offering the qualification.....	20
7. Quality assurance and national standardisation	22
Appendix 1 Sample Learner Evidence Record	23
Appendix 2 Feedback Sheet.....	24

1. About the qualification

The **NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership** is designed for learners who wish to gain the knowledge and skills required to lead groups in a Forest School setting.

Learners will gain an understanding of the principles of Forest School and the skills required for facilitating outdoor activities. This qualification prepares learners for employment as a Forest School Leader.

The **NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership** has been developed with the Forest School Association and is supported by LANTRA.

This qualification meets objectives outlined in the *Learning Outside the Classroom* Manifesto of 2006.¹ The Manifesto sets out a vision to enable every young person to experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of their learning and personal development.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance.

1.1 Guided Learning Hours

Guided Learning Hours are defined as the number of hours of teacher-supervised or directed study time required to teach a qualification or unit of a qualification.

Some learners will be able to achieve these units in a shorter time, other learners, particularly those with additional support requirements will take much longer.

The total recommended Guided Learning Hours for this qualification is **126**.

1.2 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Through consultation with users, TQT has been agreed by considering the total number of learning hours required for the average learner to achieve this qualification.

TQT is split into two areas:

- Guided Learning Hours (GLH):
 - learning activity under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training

¹ *Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto* (DFES-04232-2006), DfES, 2006;
<http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/G1.-LOtC-Manifesto.pdf>

- includes the activity of being assessed if the assessment takes place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.
- Other Learning Hours (OLH):
 - an estimate of the number of hours a learner will spend, as directed by (but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of) a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including:
 - preparatory work
 - self-study
 - or any other form of education or training, including assessment.

Examples of GLH activities include:

- Classroom-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Work-based learning supervised by a teacher
- Live webinar or telephone tutorial with a teacher in real time
- E-learning supervised by a teacher in real time
- All forms of assessment which take place under the immediate guidance or supervision of an appropriate provider of training
- Exam time

Examples of OLH activities include:

- Independent and unsupervised research/learning
- Unsupervised compilation of a portfolio of work experience
- Unsupervised e-learning
- Unsupervised e-assessment
- Unsupervised coursework
- Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar
- Unsupervised work-based learning

The agreed Total Qualification Time has been used to identify the qualification's Credit Value.

The Total Qualification Time for this qualification is **180**.

1.3 Relationship with National Occupational Standards / (or other relevant standards)

The NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership is related to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) in Tree Work developed by LANTRA. It provides a significant amount of knowledge, understanding and skills development that will underpin occupational competence in the Forestry sector.

It is also related to National Occupational Standards in Playwork that provide skills development in working with children and young people.

1.4 Language Requirements

If you wish to offer this qualification in Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge) then please contact NOCN who will review demand and provide as appropriate.

1.5 Northern Ireland Entitlement Framework

The NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership is not included on the Northern Ireland Entitlement Framework.

For more information on the Entitlement Framework, centres in Northern Ireland should contact OCN NI www.ocnni.org.uk.

2. Who the qualification is for

The **NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership** is designed for learners who will be planning and leading groups in a Forest School programme. The qualification is aimed at teachers, teaching assistants and youth workers who require the knowledge and skills to be a Forest School Leader.

The minimum age for access to the qualification is **19**.

Achievement of this qualification will give the skills and development required to plan and deliver Forest School, including organising activities and working with children and young people.

2.1 Restrictions on Learner Entry

There are no restrictions on entry to these qualifications.

2.2 Entry Requirements

There are no specific entry requirements.

2.3 Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is an assessment method leading to the award of credit. The process involves considering if a learner can meet the specified assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills that they possess already as a consequence of which they do not need to undertake a course of learning.

Centres are encouraged to recognise the previous achievements and experiences, both formal, for example through accredited units or qualifications and informal, for example through continuous learning. This involves the recognition of achievement from a range of activities that will have been assessed through any valid method of assessment. When using the process of the recognition of prior learning, it is essential that the assessment requirements of a specific unit or, more exceptionally, a qualification have been met. The evidence of learning provided must be sufficient, reliable, authentic and valid. Evidence is not time-limited.

2.4 QCF Level Descriptors

Level	Summary	Knowledge and understanding	Application and action	Autonomy and accountability
Level 3	Achievement at Level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity. It includes taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising autonomy and judgment within limited parameters. It also reflects awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.	<p>Use factual, procedural and theoretical understanding to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Be aware of the nature of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Have awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Identify, select and use appropriate skills, methods and procedures.</p> <p>Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.</p> <p>Review how effective methods and actions have been.</p>	<p>Take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures, including, where relevant, responsibility for supervising or guiding others.</p> <p>Exercise autonomy and judgment within limited parameters.</p>

Extracted from QCF level descriptor's document on QCDA's website October 2008

2.5 Progression Opportunities

The NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership enables progression to employment, further learning opportunities within employment, or further study.

Progression routes to further study include:

- Foundation Degree in Environmental Conservation Management
- BSC Rural Land Management
- Forestry and Arboriculture Courses.

This qualification offers knowledge and skills needed to work as a Forest School Leader.

2.6 Learners with Particular Requirements

If you are an NOCN Recognised Centre and have learners with particular requirements, please see the 'NOCN Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure' in the NOCN Centre Handbook, by logging on to www.nocn.org.uk Centres/Processes and Documents.

This policy gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the assessment criteria.

The NOCN Centre Recognition process requires policy statements on Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Disability Discrimination. These policy statements are then checked and confirmed through the Quality Review and Risk Assessment process. Please contact compliance@nocn.org.uk for further details.

3. Achieving the qualification

3.1 Rules of Combination

In order to achieve the qualification, the learner must achieve 18 credits at Level 3.

3.2 Mandatory Group

The learner must achieve 18 credits at Level 3.

Unit Title	Level	Credit Value	Mandatory or Optional	Ofqual Unit Reference Number
Delivery of a Forest School Programme	L3	3	M	Y/504/7764
Forest School Programmes and the Woodland Environment	L3	3	M	K/504/7767
Learning and Development at a Forest School Programme	L3	6	M	M/504/7768
Planning a Forest School Programme	L3	3	M	R/504/7777
Practical Skills for a Forest School Programme	L3	3	M	H/504/7766

Achievement Methodology

This qualification is awarded to learners who achieve assessment activities appropriate for the units. Assessment tasks are set and marked by the centre.

4. The qualification units

Unit Title	Delivery of a Forest School Programme
Ofqual unit reference number	Y/504/7764
Organisation Reference	DFSP3
Unit Level	Three
Unit Credit Value	3
GLH	21
Sector Subject Areas	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	N/A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Be able to deliver a Forest School programme.	1.1. Lead initial six planned sessions demonstrating flexibility in response to individuals' needs.
2. Be able to assess the impact of Forest School on participants.	2.1. Observe three individuals and assess the impact of Forest School on their behaviour and learning. 2.2. Make recommendations for further sessions aimed at progressing three individuals' learning and development.
3. Be able to evaluate a Forest School programme.	3.1. Evaluate each Forest School session and make amendments to next session plan as appropriate. 3.2. Carry out a summative evaluation at the end of the initial six Forest School sessions and explain how this will inform future sessions.

Unit Title	Forest School Programmes and the Woodland Environment
Ofqual unit reference number	K/504/7767
Organisation Reference	FSPWE3
Unit Level	Three
Unit Credit Value	3
GLH	21
Sector Subject Areas	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	N/A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand the structures of woodlands.	1.1. Explain the vertical and horizontal ecological structures of British woodland. 1.2. Differentiate between broad leaved and coniferous woodland ecosystems.
2. Know how to identify a range of flora and fauna.	2.1. Identify a range of woodland flora and fauna for own site, detailing identifying traits for each item.
3. Understand the importance of flora and fauna identification for the Forest School Programme leader.	3.1. Explain the importance of flora and fauna identification for the Forest School leader.
4. Understand the management of woodlands as a sustainable learning environment.	4.1. Explain the sustainability of current and historic woodland management techniques in own location. 4.2. Explain ways to involve learners in sustainable woodland management.

Unit Title	Learning and Development at a Forest School Programme
Ofqual unit reference number	M/504/7768
Organisation Reference	LDFSP3
Unit Level	Three
Unit Credit Value	6
GLH	42
Sector Subject Areas	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	N/A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand relevant theories of learning and development and their application to a Forest School programme.	1.1. Summarise two recognised learning theories and explain their relevance to a Forest School programme. 1.2. Explain how learning theory has been applied to own Forest School programme.
2. Understand how a Forest School programme can support holistic development and learning.	2.1. Summarise the Forest School approach to learning. 2.2. Outline the concept of holistic development. 2.3. Explain how holistic development is facilitated through Forest School. 2.4. Explain how Forest School promotes self-esteem and emotional intelligence. 2.5. Explain ways in which Forest School fosters resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. 2.6. Explain how Forest School promotes appropriate risk taking and how this impacts on learning and development. 2.7. Evaluate the key principles of play and their relevance to Forest School. 2.8. Explain how learning and development through play has been implemented during own Forest School sessions.
3. Understand the impact of behaviour on learning and development at a Forest School programme.	3.1. Summarise factors affecting the behaviour of Forest School learners. 3.2. Explain how a learner's behaviour could impact on own and other's learning and development. 3.3. Evaluate methods of encouraging behaviour that is appropriate at Forest School.
4. Be able to reflect on own Forest School training.	4.1. Explain the role of the Forest School programme leader in promoting learning and development. 4.2. Summarise own personal development and learning during the Forest School training process and explain how this may inform own wider practice.

Unit Title	Planning a Forest School Programme
Ofqual unit reference number	R/504/7777
Organisation Reference	PFSP3
Unit Level	Three
Unit Credit Value	3
GLH	21
Sector Subject Areas	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	N/A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand the development of the Forest School ethos.	1.1. Summarise the history of Forest School (a) locally (b) in the UK. 1.2. Evaluate two pieces of research on Forest School practice.
2. Understand the ecological impact of a Forest School programme.	2.1. Assess the ecological impact of running a Forest School Programme on own site. 2.2. Develop a three year management plan for the sustainable use of own Forest School area based on the ecological impact assessment.
3. Know the relevant policies and procedures required for a Forest School programme.	3.1. Create a Forest School handbook containing relevant policies and procedures in line with statutory requirements and good practice specific to own client group and Forest School site. 3.2. Explain the process of managing risk and how it applies to Forest School. 3.3. Produce relevant risk assessment and risk - benefit assessments for own Forest School sessions.
4. Be able to plan a Forest School programme.	4.1. Plan initial six Forest School programme sessions, showing links to own client group's learning and development objectives and needs. 4.2. Develop a communication strategy to exchange information with: (a) those assisting a Forest School programme (b) other interested parties.

Unit Title	Practical Skills for a Forest School Programme
Ofqual unit reference number	H/504/7766
Organisation Reference	PSFSP3
Unit Level	Three
Unit Credit Value	3
GLH	21
Sector Subject Areas	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	N/A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Be able to facilitate a range of woodland skills appropriate to a Forest School programme.	1.1. Select and use personal protective equipment (PPE) for working in a range of situations at Forest School. 1.2. Demonstrate how to safely use a range of hand tools and explain their use to client group at Forest School. 1.3. Demonstrate the safe checking, cleaning, maintenance and storage of tools at Forest School. 1.4. Train learners in the tying and use of a range of knots at Forest School and explain how this can be taught to client group. 1.5. Demonstrate how to make a range of different items using natural woodland materials and explain how this can be taught to client group. 1.6. Erect a temporary shelter, using a tarpaulin and ropes. 1.7. Explain how to erect a temporary shelter, making use of woodland materials.
2. Be able to facilitate campfire management appropriate to a Forest School programme.	2.1. Demonstrate safe siting, lighting and management of a campfire and the surrounding area and explain how this can be taught to client group. 2.2. Demonstrate simple methods of cooking over a campfire with due regard to basic food hygiene and explain how this can be taught to client group. 2.3. Demonstrate how to safely extinguish a campfire, and explain how this can be taught to client group. 2.4. Demonstrate how to leave a permanent fire site safe. 2.5. Demonstrate how to remove evidence of a temporary fire.

5. How the qualification is assessed

The qualification requires achievement of the specified units with no further requirements for additional/summative assessment. Achievement is therefore determined by successful completion of unit assessment. The assessment process is as follows:

- Assessment tasks are internally set at the Centre by assessors, against the requirements detailed in the assessment criteria of the unit. These tasks are approved by the Centre through internal verification.
- The learners are assessed internally at the Centre, using the assessments set.
- The resulting portfolios of assessed evidence are internally verified by an internal verifier at the Centre.
- The portfolios of assessed evidence are externally verified by an external verifier appointed by the NOCN.

5.1 Unit Assessment

Achievement of units is through internally set, internally marked, internally verified and externally verified tasks, as detailed above. Centres devise assessment activities to meet the specified assessment criteria detailed in each unit. The activity or activities set must enable the learners to meet the standards detailed in the assessment criteria. Centre devised assessments should be scrutinised by the Internal Verifier before use to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Centre devised assessments will be scrutinised by the external verifier to ensure reliability and validity of assessment.

5.2 Marking Tasks

Each task must be marked against the identified assessment criteria in the unit and judged to be either achieved or not achieved. Where a series of tasks is set, learners must demonstrate the achievement of the required standard identified in the assessment criteria in all tasks in order to achieve the unit credit. All of the assessment criteria in a unit must be met before the unit is deemed achieved. The unit achievement is not banded or graded; units are either achieved or not achieved.

5.3 Recording Achievement

You must record each learner's performance in each unit on an appropriate form or forms. The form/s should record the learner's performance against the unit assessment criteria evidenced by the task.

5.4 National Standardisation

Centres will be required to provide samples of assessment tasks for NOCN and national standardisation activity.

6. Offering the qualification

6.1 Recognised Centres

If you are already recognised to offer NOCN qualifications and would like more information about offering the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership, please contact: business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk.

If you are ready to add the qualification to your curriculum offer, please log in to the NOCN website, under Centres/Processes and Documents, and complete the 'Additional Qualification Approval Request Form,' which can then be returned to business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk for the attention of your Account and Sector Manager.

6.2 New Centres

If you are interested in offering the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership but do not currently offer any other NOCN qualifications, you will need to be recognised as an NOCN approved centre. This process includes:

- Confirmation that the organisation has an adequate infrastructure in place to support the effective delivery of NOCN qualifications.
- An agreement signed by the principal authority in the organisation confirming adherence to the specified terms and conditions. This safeguards the quality assurance standards, in relation to the delivery and assessment process.

If you would like more information about becoming an NOCN centre and offering this qualification please see 'New centres' under the 'Centres' section on our website www.nocn.org.uk or contact compliance@nocn.org.uk.

6.3 Required Resources for Delivering the Qualification

As part of the requirement to deliver this qualification there is an expectation that staff undertaking roles as part of the delivery and assessment of the qualification have a demonstrable level of expertise.

Tutor/Assessor

To offer this qualification, Centres must ensure that tutors/assessors delivering the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership:

- have a teaching or training qualification such as a Level 3, 4 or 5 Education and Training Qualification, PTLLS (or equivalent);
- have Level 3 Forest School Leader accreditation;

- have a minimum of 2 years, post qualification, experience leading Forest School with at least one long term (i.e. through the seasons) programme;
- have a First Aid qualification of at least 16 hours in duration and which includes an outdoor element.

In addition, the Head of Centre, Centre Contact or Curriculum contact must:

- inform NOCN of any changes in staffing associated with the delivery of these qualifications;
- ensure evidence to meet the above requirements is available upon request by NOCN;
- authorise delivery of the NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership.

Internal Verifier

Each centre must have internal verification policies and procedures in place to ensure that decisions made by assessors are appropriate, consistent, fair and transparent, and that they do not discriminate against any learner. The policies and procedures must be sufficient to secure the quality of the award, ensuring validity, reliability, and consistency.

NOCN supports and recognises Centres' internal quality assurance systems which support the above; any system should encourage standardisation and sharing of good practice.

6.4 Support for Centres

1. NOCN will provide ongoing support and advice on the use of NOCN credit and qualifications including the requirements for assessment.
2. Approval should always take place through the normal NOCN processes and will be explicitly recorded.
3. All Centres approved to offer NOCN credit and qualifications will be allocated a unique NOCN Centre Number.
4. If Centres approved to offer NOCN credit and qualifications have obtained a UKPRN (UK Provider Reference Number) from the UKRLP (UK Register of Learning Providers) this will be used as the Centre Reference number. If a Centre has not obtained a UKPRN they will be issued with a unique NOCN Centre Number. Information about obtaining a UKPRN can be found within the [Centre Handbook](#).
5. Information about obtaining a Unique Learner Number (ULN) on behalf of the Centre's learners can be found on the NOCN website at [ULN page](#).
6. Each Centre should identify a Centre Contact who will be responsible for NOCN credit and qualifications within the Centre.
7. The Centre Contact must ensure all procedures relating to the delivery of the qualification operate effectively in the Centre.
8. The Centre Contact is the person responsible for confirming and ensuring that the Centre meets all the NOCN requirements for Centre Recognition.

9. The Centre Contact is responsible for ensuring all relevant NOCN documentation is distributed as required within the Centre and that the security requirements for External Assessment are adhered to, where applicable.

Full details of all NOCN requirements are provided on the NOCN website at www.nocn.org.uk.

7. Quality Assurance and National Standardisation

7.1 General Information

All Centres wishing to deliver the qualification, or units from the qualification, will need to demonstrate the ability to manage and deliver the units and/or the qualification, including adherence to quality assurance and assessment regulations.

NOCN will provide guidance and give support in enabling you to use the qualification.

The NOCN standard quality assurance arrangements and requirements include:

- Internal verification
- External verification
- Standardisation.

Details and guidance are provided by your NOCN.

7.2 National Standardisation

National standardisation is a process that promotes consistency in the understanding and application of standards, it:

- establishes statements on the standard of evidence required to meet the assessment criteria for the units in NOCN qualifications
- makes recommendations on assessment practice
- produces advice and guidance for the assessment of units
- identifies good practice in assessment.

It is a requirement of the Centre Recognition Process that each Centre offering the units from the qualification must contribute assessment materials and learners' evidence for National Standardisation if requested.

NOCN will notify Centres of the required sample for National Standardisation purposes. Assessment materials, learners' evidence and tutor feedback will be collected by External Verifiers.

Outcomes from National Standardisation will be available to Centres through their NOCN.

Appendix 1 – Sample Assessment Documentation

Sample Learner Evidence Record

NOCN Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership

Unit Title: <insert full unit title>

Assessment Criteria	Evidence	Portfolio Ref	Completed By	Signed Off By
<Insert assessment criteria individually as required>				
1.1.				
1.2.				

Learner Signature: _____

Tutor Signature: _____

Confirmation of Achievement of Unit – Date: _____

Appendix 2 – Feedback Sheet

Feedback Sheet

Tutor/Assessor Comments:

Learner comments:

Tutor/assessor sign:	Date:
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Learner sign:	Date:
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Operational Start Date: 01/05/2013
Review Date: 31/07/2019

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