Qualification Specification for:

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Worker -Theory and Practice

➤ **Qualification No: 601/6255/7**

Qualification Regulation Information

Qualification Number: 601/6255/7

Operational start date: 01 June 2015
Operational end date: 31 May 2026
Certification end date: 31 May 2029

Qualification operational start and end dates indicate the lifecycle of a regulated qualification. The operational end date is the last date by which learners can be registered on a qualification and the certification end date is the last date by which learners can claim their certificate.

All OCN NI regulated qualifications are published to the Register of Regulated Qualifications (**http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/**). This site shows the qualifications and awarding organisations regulated by CCEA Regulation and Ofqual.

OCN NI Contact Details

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Foreword

This document explains OCN NI's requirements for the delivery and assessment of the following regulated qualification:

→ **OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Worker – Theory and Practice**

This specification sets out:

- Qualification features
- Centre requirements for delivering and assessing the qualification
- The structure and content of the qualification
- Unit details
- Assessment requirements for the qualification
- OCN NI's quality assurance arrangements for the qualification
- Administration

OCN NI will notify centres in writing of any major changes to this specification. We will also publish changes on our website at **www.ocnni.org.uk**

This specification is provided online, so the version available on our website is the most up to date publication. It is important to note that copies of the specification that have been downloaded and printed may be different from this authoritative online version.

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About Regulation

OCN NI

Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) is a regulated Awarding Organisation based in Northern Ireland. OCN NI is regulated by CCEA Regulation to develop and award professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level up to and including Level 5 across all sector areas. In addition, OCN NI is regulated by Ofqual to award similar qualification types in England.

All OCN NI regulated qualifications are published to the Register of Regulated Qualifications (**http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/**). This site shows the qualifications and awarding organisations regulated by CCEA Regulation and Ofqual.

The Regulated Qualifications Framework: an overview

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) was introduced on 1st October 2015: the RQF provides a single framework for all regulated qualifications.

Qualification Level

The level indicates the difficulty and complexity of the knowledge and skills associated with any qualification. There are eight levels (Levels 1-8) supported by three 'entry' levels (Entry 1-3).

Qualification Size

Size refers to the estimated total amount of time it could typically take to study and be assessed for a qualification. Size is expressed in terms of Total Qualification Time (TQT), and the part of that time typically spent being taught or supervised, rather than studying alone, is known as Guided Learning Hours (GLH).

For further information about the RQF see:
https://www.ocnni.org.uk/blog/regulated-qualifications-framework-rqf/

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Qualification Features

Sector Subject Area
1.3   Health and social care

Qualification Aim
The OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Worker - Theory and Practice qualification has been designed to provide the skills and knowledge for adult practitioners working in peer support roles. It will also support volunteers working in this sector.

Qualification Objectives
This qualification will provide an opportunity for learners to gain both the skills and knowledge in the following areas of peer support:

- mental health services
- the application of peer support in recovery
- peer support models
- the role of a peer support worker
- multidisciplinary team practice and the peer support relationship
- communication and peer support supervision

Qualification Target Group
The OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Worker - Theory and Practice qualification has been designed for adult practitioners working in peer support roles. It will also support volunteers working in this sector.

Progression Opportunities
The qualification has been designed for adult practitioners working in peer support roles. The qualification will allow for progression to other qualifications and roles particularly in the health and social care sectors.

Entry Requirements
The minimum age for access to the qualification is 19 years.

Grading
Grading for this qualification is pass/fail.

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Qualification Support

A Qualification Support pack is available for OCN NI centres within the login area of the OCN NI website (https://www.ocnni.org.uk/my-account/), which includes additional support for teachers, eg planning and assessment templates, guides to best practice, etc.

Delivery Languages

This qualification is available in English only at this time. If you wish to offer this qualification in Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge) then please contact OCN NI who will review demand and provide as appropriate.

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Centre Requirements for Delivering the Qualification

Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval

New and existing OCN NI recognised centres must apply for and be granted approval to deliver the qualification prior to the commencement of delivery.

Centre Staffing

Centres are required to have the following roles in place as a minimum, although a member of staff may hold more than one role*:

- Centre contact
- Programme Co-ordinator
- Tutor
- Assessor
- Internal Verifier

*Note: A person cannot be an internal verifier for their own assessments.

Tutors

Tutors must:
- have direct experience of accessing secondary mental health services
- have minimum of three years working as a peer within mental health services
- have a third level qualification in the area of mental health
- have direct experience of advocacy case work, including acting on behalf of those who lack capacity

Assessors

The qualifications are assessed within the centre and are subject to OCN NI's quality assurance processes. Units are achieved through internally set, internally assessed, and internally verified evidence.

Assessors must:
- have direct experience of accessing secondary mental health services
- have minimum of three years working as a peer within mental health services
- have a third level qualification in the area of mental health
- have direct experience of advocacy case work, including acting on behalf of those who lack capacity
- have direct or related relevant experience and/or training in assessment
- assess all assessment tasks and activities

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Internal Verification

OCN NI qualifications must be scrutinised through the centre's internal quality assurance processes as part of the recognised centre agreement with OCN NI. The centre must appoint an experienced and trained centre internal verifier whose responsibility is to act as the internal quality monitor for the verification of the delivery and assessment of the qualifications.

The centre must agree a working model for internal verification with OCN NI prior to delivery of the qualifications.

Internal Verifiers must:
- have direct experience of accessing secondary mental health services
- have minimum of three years working as a peer within mental health services
- have a third level qualification in the area of mental health
- have direct experience of advocacy case work, including acting on behalf of those who lack capacity
- have direct or related relevant experience in assessment and verification
- attend OCN NI's internal verifier training in order to be approved by OCN NI

Internal verifiers are required to:
- support tutors and assessors
- sample assessments according to the centre's sampling strategy
- ensure tasks are appropriate to the level being assessed
- maintain up-to-date records supporting the verification of assessment and learner achievement

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Structure and Content

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support – Theory and Practice

The table below summarises the structure of this qualification. In order to gain the qualification, the learner must successfully achieve both mandatory units for a total of 14 credits.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 140 hours
Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 80 hours

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	TQT	Credit Value	Level
Mandatory Units					
R/507/2517	CBA990	Peer Support Worker: Theory	70	7	Three
Y/507/2518	CBA991	Peer Support Worker: Practice	70	7	Three

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Unit Details

Title	Peer Support Worker: Theory
Level	Three
Credit Value	7
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	40
OCN NI Unit Code	CBA990
Unit Reference No	R/507/2517

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the theory underpinning the role of a peer support worker.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand mental health services.	1.1. Explain the term mental health. 1.2. Summarise local statutory and voluntary mental health services and providers. 1.3. Summarise mental health care pathways.
2. Understand the application of peer support.	2.1. Explain the development and purpose of peer support. 2.2. Explain the value of personal experience in regard to peer support. 2.3. Apply principles of peer support.
3. Understand peer support in recovery.	3.1. Evaluate the strengths based approach to recovery. 3.2. Explain and demonstrate promotion of self-directed recovery planning. 3.3. Evaluate the impact of peer support in the recovery process. 3.4. Analyse the use of role modelling in peer support.
4. Understand peer support models.	4.1. Compare and contrast the different models of peer support. 4.2. Summarise local services with respect to potential benefit from peer support.
5. Understand the role of a peer support worker.	5.1. Evaluate the role of a peer support worker. 5.2. Critically compare delivery of peer support in a range of settings. 5.3. Evaluate how to maintain independence and integrity in peer support.

Assessment Guidance

The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.

Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner's progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log

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	learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
Professional discussion	A structured review of practice conducted between an assessor or a verifier and a learner, offering the learner an additional method in the way they present their evidence Assessors are then able to make judgements of competence and ask for supplementary evidence	Audio/video tape Record of discussion Written summary Question checklist Learner notes / record Tutor notes / record

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Title	Peer Support Worker: Practice
Level	Three
Credit Value	7
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	40
OCN NI Unit Code	CBA991
Unit Reference No	Y/507/2518

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the role and practice of a peer support worker.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand multidisciplinary team practice.	1.1 Explain the purpose of a multidisciplinary team 1.2 Explain the various roles within the multidisciplinary team 1.3 Analyse and compare the strengths and challenges associated with a multidisciplinary team. 1.4 Evaluate the impact a peer support worker will have on the multidisciplinary team.
2. Understand the peer support relationship.	2.1. Explain the steps in establishing a peer support relationship. 2.2. Explain how to maintain a peer support relationship. 2.3. Analyse the boundaries of the peer support relationship. 2.4. Evaluate safe practice and self-care in the peer support relationship.
3. Understand communication skills.	3.1. Explain and demonstrate a range of communication skills. 3.2. Critically compare assertive and non-assertive behaviour. 3.3. Critically compare assertive communication techniques. 3.4. Evaluate the impact of jargon and recovery language. 3.5. Evaluate peer support promotion strategies.
4. Understand peer support supervision.	4.1. Explain peer support supervision. 4.2. Explain how to avoid conflicts of interest in peer support. 4.3. Analyse the impact of personal values on the peer support relationship. 4.4. Evaluate the benefits of reflective practice. 4.5. Analyse future peer support development opportunities.

Assessment Guidance

The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.

Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion

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		learner's progression through the course
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
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Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

External Verification

All OCN NI recognised centres are subject to External Verification. External verification visits and monitoring activities will be conducted annually to confirm continued compliance with the conditions of recognition, review the centre's risk rating for the qualifications and to assure OCN NI of the maintenance of the integrity of the qualifications.

The External Verifier will review the delivery and assessment of the qualifications. This will include the review of a sample of assessment evidence and evidence of the internal verification of assessment and assessment decisions. This will form the basis of the EV report and will inform OCN NI's annual assessment of centre compliance and risk. The External Verifier is appointed by OCN NI.

Standardisation

As a process, standardisation is designed to ensure consistency and promote good practice in understanding and application of standards. Standardisation events:

- make qualified statements about the level of consistency in assessment across centres delivering a qualification
- make statements on the standard of evidence that is required to meet the assessment criteria for units in a qualification
- make recommendations on assessment practice
- produce advice and guidance for the assessment of units
- identify good practice in assessment and internal verification

Centres offering units of an OCN NI qualification must attend and contribute assessment materials and learner evidence for standardisation events if requested.

OCN NI will notify centres of the nature of sample evidence required for standardisation events (this will include assessment materials, learner evidence and relevant assessor and internal verifier documentation). OCN NI will make standardisation summary reports available and correspond directly with centres regarding event outcomes.

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Administration

Registration
A centre must register learners within 20 working days of commencement of a qualification.

Certification
Certificates will be issued to centres within 20 working days of receipt of correctly completed results marksheets. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that certificates received from OCN NI are held securely and distributed to learners promptly and securely.

Charges
OCN NI publishes all up to date qualification fees in its Fees and Invoicing Policy document. Further information can be found on the centre login area of the OCN NI website.

Equality, Fairness and Inclusion
OCN NI has considered the requirements of equalities legislation in developing the specification for these qualifications. For further information and guidance relating to access to fair assessment and the OCN NI Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policies, centres should refer to the OCN NI website.

Retention of Evidence
OCN NI has published guidance for centres on the retention of evidence. Details are provided in the OCN NI Centre Handbook and can be accessed via the OCN NI website.

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