Qualification Specification for:

OCN NI Level 3 Award in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
➢ **Qualification No: 610/1499/0**

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
➢ **Qualification No: 610/1498/9**

Qualification Regulation Information

OCN NI Level 3 Award in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Qualification Number:　　　　610/1499/0

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Qualification Number:　　　　610/1498/9

Operational start date:	15 September 2022
Operational end date:	31 August 2027
Certification end date:	31 August 2030

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 Award in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services**
→ **OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services**

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.

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).

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Qualification Features

Sector Subject Area

1.3   Health and social care

This qualification relates to the following National Occupational Standards:

https://tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk/

Qualification Aim

The OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services will provide the learner with specialist knowledge and skills to enable them to work in peer support roles within mental health services.

Qualification Objectives

The objectives of the OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services qualifications will enable learners to gain knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- understanding the historical, current and local contexts of mental health services
- understanding the nature and principles of peer support work in mental health services
- demonstrating multidisciplinary team work, partnerships and record keeping
- understanding effective communication, relationship building and boundaries
- understanding professional development and well-being

Grading

Grading for these qualifications is pass/fail.

Qualification Target Group

These qualifications are targeted at learners who are at least 19 years old and currently employed as a peer support worker or working in a voluntary role in peer support.

Progression Opportunities

The OCN NI Level 3 Award in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services will allow learners to progress to the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services and from there to higher level qualifications in this area.

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Entry Requirements

There are no specific entry requirements for these qualifications however learners must be at least 19 years old.

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

These qualifications are available in English only at this time. If you wish to offer these qualifications 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 delivering the qualifications should have a minimum of two years' experience of working within health and social care and be familiar with peer support work within mental health services. They should be qualified to at least one level higher than the qualifications.

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

Assessors must:
- be occupationally competent to at least one level higher than the qualifications
- have a minimum of two years' experience of working within health and social care and be familiar with peer support work within mental health services
- be a qualified assessor or have attended OCN NI assessor training
- have direct or related relevant experience 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 at least two years' occupational experience of working within health and social care and be familiar with peer support work within mental health services
- attend OCN NI's internal verifier training if not already completed

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 Award in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
In order to achieve the qualification learners must complete all 3 units from Group A, for a total of 10 credits.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 100 hours
Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 76 hours

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
Group A units					
D/650/4110	CBF981	Understand the Legislative, Policy and Organisational Framework for Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	4	30	Three
F/650/4111	CBF982	Understand the Principles of Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	3	23	Three
H/650/4112	CBF983	Communication, Team Work and Partnerships in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	3	23	Three

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OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
In order to achieve the qualification learners must complete all units from both Group A and Group B – total 17 credits.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 170 hours
Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 129 hours

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
Group A units					
D/650/4110	CBF981	Understand the Legislative, Policy and Organisational Framework for Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	4	30	Three
F/650/4111	CBF982	Understand the Principles of Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	3	23	Three
H/650/4112	CBF983	Communication, Team Work and Partnerships in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	3	23	Three
Group B units					
R/650/4108	CBF984	Communication Skills and Relationship Building in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services	4	30	Three
T/650/4109	CBF985	Continuous Professional Development for the Peer Support Worker in Mental Health Services	3	23	Three

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Unit details

Title	Communication Skills and Relationship Building in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Level	Three
Credit Value	4
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	30
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF984
Unit Reference No	R/650/4108

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the use of effective communication skills in relationships in peer support work.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand the impact of and barriers to effective communication in the peer support relationship.	1.1. Explain how effective communication impacts the peer support relationships. 1.2. Explain how the following barriers to communication in the peer support relationship may be addressed: a) cognitive b) cultural c) environmental d) interpersonal
2. Understand the use of communication methods, styles and skills in the peer support relationship.	2.1. Compare and contrast different communication methods and styles that may be used to meet an individual's needs within the peer support relationship. 2.2. Explain the use of the following communication skills within the peer support relationship: a) active listening b) problem solving c) positive reframing d) goal setting
3. Understand boundaries in the peer support relationship.	3.1. Explain how a peer support relationship is different to a personal relationship. 3.2. Analyse the sharing of lived experience within appropriate boundaries in the peer support relationship. 3.3. Analyse how an individual's experience of conflict and the use of power in mental health services, may impact on the peer support relationship. 3.4. Explain standards and agreed ways of working in own work setting that support the maintenance of appropriate boundaries in the peer support relationship.

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	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion

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	A collection of documents containing work that shows the 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
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

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Title	Communication, Team Work and Partnerships in Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	23
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF983
Unit Reference No	H/650/4112

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand effective communication, team work and partnerships in peer support work in mental health services.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand appropriate communication and information handling in peer support work.	1.1. Explain key aspects of organisational policies and procedures regarding data protection and confidentiality relevant to own role. 1.2. Critically compare and contrast the use of recovery and non-recovery focused language and the potential impact on service users.
2. Understand team working in peer support work.	2.1. Explain models of team working relevant to peer support work and the process of team development. 2.2. Explain the role of the peer support worker in contributing to the assessment, planning, implementation and review of care / support within a multi-disciplinary team. 2.3. Summarise skills and approaches that may be employed to resolve team conflicts.
3. Understand the importance of partnerships in peer support work.	3.1. Explain why it is important to work in partnership with others including: a) carers b) families c) other professionals d) wider community 3.2. Explain what is meant by co-production and its application in peer support work. 3.3. Evaluate different ways of working that may improve partnership approaches in peer support work.

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

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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
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

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Title	Continuous Professional Development for the Peer Support Worker in Mental Health Services
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	23
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF985
Unit Reference No	T/650/4109

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand continuous professional development for peer support workers in mental health services.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand reflective practice and own development in peer support work.	1.1. Explain what is meant by the term reflective practice and why it is important in peer support work. 1.2. Evaluate own development as a peer support worker over a given period of time.
2. Understand how to maintain own health and wellbeing and how to promote self-care	2.1. Explain potential barriers to own self-care and how they may be addressed. 2.2. Explain own feelings and challenges that arise over time, as a result of own work and role as a peer support worker. 2.3. Explain methods used to maintain own health and wellbeing and how the use of positive self-care strategies may be applied.
3. Understand the role of effective supervision in peer support work.	3.1. Explain the purpose and scope of supervision within own job role and context as a peer support worker. 3.2. Explain how to prepare for and participate effectively in own supervision. 3.3. Analyse the use of feedback to support development of own knowledge, skills and confidence as a peer support worker.

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 learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log

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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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Title	Understand the Legislative, Policy and Organisational Framework for Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Level	Three
Credit Value	4
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	30
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF981
Unit Reference No	D/650/4110

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the legislative, policy and organisational framework for peer support work in adult mental health services.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Be aware of legal and policy frameworks underpinning support of adults with mental ill health.	1.1. Summarise key aspects of legislation that apply to adult mental health services in relation to capacity and human rights. 1.2. Summarise key aspects of government policy or strategy in relation to adult mental health service provision.
2. Understand the provision of adult mental health services and pathways for individuals in own region.	2.1. Summarise adult mental health care pathways available to individuals in own region. 2.2. Summarise statutory and voluntary sector mental health services and providers in own region.
3. Understand the provision of peer support in mental health services within own organisation.	3.1. Summarise the following in relation to own role as a peer support worker: a) key duties and responsibilities b) standards which apply to own organisation c) organisational policies and procedures relating to health and safety and safeguarding 3.2. Explain factors that may contribute to and increase the risk of self-harm, self-neglect and harm to individuals who use mental health services within own organisation. 3.3. Explain using at least two examples how and when to access support and guidance regarding own role.
4. Understand the main types of mental ill health.	4.1. Classify the main types of mental ill health according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manuel of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Classification for Diseases (ICD) classification systems. 4.2. Explain the key strengths and limitations of the classification systems identified in AC 4.1.

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	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion

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	A collection of documents containing work that shows the 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
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Title	Understand the Principles of Peer Support Work in Mental Health Services
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	23
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF982
Unit Reference No	F/650/4111

Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the nature and core principles of peer support in mental health services

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand peer support in mental health services.	1.1. Define what is meant by the term peer support in mental health services. 1.2. Differentiate between peer support, self-help and advocacy. 1.3. Explain the importance of lived experience in relation to peer support.
2. Understand the recovery approach in relation to peer support.	2.1. Explain what is meant by the recovery approach in a mental health context. 2.2. Explain the differences between clinical and personal recovery. 2.3. Analyse the potential impact and benefits of peer support in promoting an individual's recovery.
3. Understand the core principles of peer support.	3.1. Summarise how the following core principles underpin support in mental health services: a) mutual b) reciprocal c) non-directive d) progressive e) safe 3.2. Analyse the importance of respecting diversity, inclusivity and how these may be promoted through peer support work.

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 learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log

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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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