Qualification Specification:

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies

- **Qualification No: 601/2776/4**

Version: 2.0

1. Specification Updates

Key changes have been listed below:

Section	Detail of change	Version and date of Issue
Qualification	Extended to 31 December 2032	V2.0 – July 2026
Qualification	On new spec format	V2.0 – July 2026

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3. Introduction to Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI)

The Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) is a UK recognised awarding organisation based in Northern Ireland. We are regulated by CCEA Regulation to develop and award regulated professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level up to and including Level 5 across all sector areas. In addition, OCN NI is also regulated by Ofqual to award qualifications in England.

OCN NI is also an educational charity that advances education by developing nationally recognised qualifications and recognising the achievements of learners. We work with centres such as Further Education Colleges, Private Training Organisations, Voluntary & Community Organisations, Schools, SME's and Public Sector bodies to provide learners with opportunities to progress into further learning and/or employment. OCN NI's Strategic Plan can be found on the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk.

For further information on OCN NI qualifications or to contact us, you can visit our website at www.ocnni.org.uk. The website should provide you with details about our qualifications, courses, contact information, and any other relevant information you may need.

OCN NI Contact Details

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4. About this Specification

This specification details OCN NI's specific requirements for the delivery and assessment of the **OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies.**

This specification will provide guidelines for centres to ensure the effective and correct delivery of this qualification. OCN NI qualification specifications are based on research and engagement with the practitioner community to ensure they provide appropriate skills and knowledge for learners.

The qualification specification will detail the following aspects of the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies.

- **Qualification Features**: this includes the key characteristics and features of this qualification, such as its intended audience, purpose, and credit value.

- **Centre Requirements:** this details the prerequisites and obligations that centres must fulfil to be eligible to deliver and assess this qualification. These include guidelines on staff qualifications, resources, and required procedures.

- **Structure and Content:** this details the structure and content of the qualification including units, and any specific content that learners will be required to study.

- **Assessment Requirements:** this details assessment criteria and assessment methods for this qualification, ensuring that summative assessment approaches are clear.

- **Quality Assurance:** the quality and consistency of delivery and assessment of this qualification are of paramount importance to OCN NI. The mandatory quality assurance arrangements including processes for internal and external quality assurance that all centres offering this qualification must adhere to are detailed.

- **Administration:** guidance on the administrative aspects of delivering this qualification, including registration, certification and record-keeping.

- Reference to other handbooks and policies as appropriate to the qualifications.

It is important to note that OCN NI will communicate any significant updates or changes to this specification in writing to our centres. Additionally, we will make these changes available on our official website at www.ocnni.org.uk.

To stay current, please refer to the online version of this specification as it is the most authoritative and up-to-date publication. Be aware that downloaded and printed copies may not reflect the latest revisions.

4.1 Additional Support

OCN NI offers a comprehensive range of support services designed to assist centres in meeting the delivery and quality assurance requirements of OCN NI qualifications. These services include:

- **Specimen Assessment Materials**: These booklets are created to assist learners in demonstrating the fulfilment of assessment criteria and organising the quality assurance prerequisites for each individual unit.

- **Qualification Support Pack**: A support pack has been developed to support centres in the delivery of this qualification. The pack includes planning and assessment templates, guides to best practice, etc.

- **Professional Development for Educators**: OCN NI provides opportunities for professional development tailored to meet the various needs of practitioners and quality assurance staff. Centres can join our training sessions, available in both face-to-face and online formats, or explore a wealth of training materials by visiting www.ocnni.org.uk

- **OCN NI Subject Advisors**: Our team of subject advisors offers vital information and support to centres. They provide guidance on specification details, non-exam assessment advice, updates on resource developments, and various training opportunities. They actively engage with subject communities through an array of networks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and expertise, to support practitioners to provide quality education programs to learners.

All centres can access information, support and guidance to support the delivery and quality assurance of this qualification by contacting their designated Business Development Advisor or by contacting us on Contact Us | OCN NI

5. About this Qualification

5.1 Qualification Regulation Information

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies
Qualification Number: 601/2776/4

Operational start date: 01 March 2014
Review date: 31 December 2032

The qualification's operational start and end dates define the regulated qualification's lifecycle. The operational end date is the final date for learner registration, while learners have until the certificate end date to complete the qualification and receive their certificates.

It is important to note that all OCN NI regulated qualifications are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RQF), which can be found at Ofqual Register. This register is maintained by Ofqual in England and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland. It contains information about qualifications that are regulated and accredited. It is a key resource for learners, employers, and educational institutions to verify the status and recognition of qualifications.

Centres must adhere to administrative guidelines diligently, with special attention to the fact that fees, registration, and certification end dates for the qualification may be subject to changes. It is a centre's responsibility to make itself aware of updates on any modifications to ensure compliance with the latest requirements. OCN NI provides centres with timely updates through various channels including website, newsletters and through this specification. Information on qualification fees can be found on the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk .

5.2 Sector Subject Area

A subject sector area is a specific category used to classify academic and vocational qualifications. Subject sector areas are part of the educational and qualifications framework to organise and categorise qualifications. The sector subject for this qualification is:

Subject Area: 1.3 Health and social care

NOS: **Holistic Health**

5.3 Grading

Grading for this qualification is pass/fail.

5.4 Qualification's Aim and Objectives

Qualification's Aim

The aim of the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies is to provide individuals with an understanding of the importance of one's own health/well-being and the theory and practice associated with holistic health and well-being. Learners will develop an understanding of the impact of nutrition, stress and emotions on health/well-being and how this can be alleviated using complementary therapies.

Qualification's Objectives

The objectives of the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies are to enable learners to understand how the following impact on health and well-being:

- nutrition, emotions and stress
- spirituality
- self-awareness and self-reflection
- different approaches and the range of holistic health and complementary therapies available
- the Chakra anatomy and energy system
- the application of aromatherapy for the treatment of common physical conditions
- best practice protocols for holistic health and complementary therapists

5.5 Target Learners

This qualification is targeted at individuals who wish to develop and/or practise their skills in the area of complementary therapies and/or who wish to follow a career in this area

5.6 Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements though it is expected that learners will receive appropriate advice and guidance regarding the level and suitability of the qualification and have a sound knowledge of holistic health and complementary therapies. Learners must be at least 16 years old.

5.7 Progression

The OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies allows for progression into further learning in this area or into employment.

5.8 Delivery Language

This qualification is exclusively available in English. If there is a desire to offer this qualification in Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge), we encourage you to get in touch with OCN NI. They will assess the demand for such provisions and, if feasible, provide the qualification in the requested language as appropriate.

6. Centre Requirements for Delivering this Qualification

6.1 Centre Recognition

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

6.2 Qualification Approval

Once a centre has successfully undergone the Centre Recognition process, it becomes eligible to apply for qualification approval. The centre's capability to meet and sustain the qualification criteria will be assessed. Throughout the qualification approval process, OCN NI will aim to ensure that:

- centres possess suitable physical resources (e.g., equipment, IT, learning materials, teaching rooms) to support qualification delivery and assessment
- centre staff involved in the assessment process have relevant expertise and/or occupational experience
- robust systems are in place for ensuring ongoing professional development for staff delivering the qualification
- centres have appropriate health and safety policies concerning learner equipment use
- qualification delivery by centres complies with current equality and diversity legislation and regulations
- as a part of the assessment process for this qualification it may be useful for learners to have access to a practical work setting

6.3 Centre Staffing

To offer this qualification centres are mandated to establish the following roles as a minimum, although a single staff member may serve in more than one capacity*:

- Centre contact
- Programme Co-ordinator
- Assessor
- Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

*Note: An individual cannot serve as an IQA for their own assessments.

6.4 Tutor Requirements

Tutors responsible for delivering this qualification are expected to possess a high degree of occupational competency. They should meet the following criteria:

- **Occupational Competency:** Tutors should demonstrate a clear understanding of the subject matter, including up-to-date knowledge. They should also have a minimum of one year's relevant experience in this area. This competence should enable them to effectively impart knowledge and practical skills to learners.

- **Qualifications:** Tutors should hold qualifications at a level that is at least one level higher than the qualification they are teaching. This ensures that they have the necessary academic foundation to provide in-depth guidance and support to learners.

These requirements collectively ensure that learners receive instruction from highly qualified and experienced instructors, thereby enhancing the quality and effectiveness of their educational experience.

6.5 Assessor Requirements

The assessment of this qualification takes place within the centre and is subjected to OCN NI's rigorous quality assurance procedures. The achievement of individual units is based on the criteria defined in each unit.

Assessors play a pivotal role in ensuring the validity and fairness of assessments. They are required to meet the following criteria:

- **Occupational Competency:** Assessors should possess a high degree of occupational competency in the relevant subject matter. This expertise enables them to accurately evaluate and measure a learner's knowledge and skills. Additionally, they should hold qualifications at a level that is at least one level higher than the qualification and a minimum of one year's experience in the area they are assessing, ensuring their in-depth understanding of the subject matter.

- **Assessment Expertise:** Assessors should have direct or related experience in the field of assessment. This includes knowledge of best practices in designing, conducting, and grading assessments. Their expertise ensures that assessments are both fair and valid.

- **Assessors Qualification:** Assessors should hold or be currently undertaking a recognised assessor's qualification; or must have attended the OCN NI Assessment Training.

- **Comprehensive Assessment Oversight:** Assessors are responsible for evaluating all assessment tasks and activities comprehensively. They must thoroughly review and assess each element to ensure a fair and accurate representation of a learner's skills and knowledge.

These rigorous requirements uphold the quality and integrity of the qualification's assessment process, ensuring that learners receive a fair and reliable evaluation of their competencies.

6.6 Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

The Internal Quality Assurer plays a crucial role in the centre's internal quality assurance processes. The centre must designate a skilled and trained IQA who assumes the role of an internal quality monitor responsible for verifying the delivery and assessment of the qualification.

The Internal Quality Assurer for this qualification must meet the following criteria:

- **IQA Expertise:** IQA should have direct or related experience in the field of internal assurance and have at least one year's occupational experience in the areas they are internally quality assuring. This includes knowledge of best practices in designing, conducting, and grading assessments. Their expertise ensures that assessments are both fair and valid.
- **IQA Qualification:** IQA should hold or be currently undertaking a recognised IQA qualification or must have attended the OCN NI IQA Training.
- **Thorough Evaluation of Assessment Tasks and Activities:** IQAs are tasked with conducting in-depth reviews and assessments of all assessment tasks and activities. Their responsibility is to ensure a comprehensive and meticulous oversight of each element to guarantee a just and precise reflection of a learner's abilities and knowledge and to ensure that all assessment and quality assurance requirements are fulfilled.

7. Qualification Structure

7.1 Qualification Purpose

The OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies is a unitised qualification designed to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding required to explore holistic approaches to health, well-being, and complementary therapy practices. Assessed on a pass or fail basis, learners are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and the ability to apply key concepts within relevant contexts. The qualification aims to develop awareness of the principles underpinning holistic health, the role of complementary therapies in supporting well-being, and the importance of safe, ethical, and professional practice. Through achievement of this qualification, learners will enhance their understanding of holistic approaches to health and develop skills that support progression to further learning, employment, or professional development within the health, well-being, and complementary therapy sectors.

7.2 Qualification Level

In the context of the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies it is essential to understand the significance of qualification levels, as they play a pivotal role in assessing the depth and complexity of knowledge and skills required for successful attainment. This qualification aligns with Level 3, which signifies a higher level of difficulty and intricacy. It's important to note that qualification levels in the educational framework range from Level 1 to Level 8, complemented by three 'entry' levels, namely Entry 1 to Entry 3.

7.3 Qualification Size

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

This represents the total amount of time a learner is expected to spend to complete the qualification successfully. It includes both guided learning hours (GLH) and independent study or additional learning time.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

These are the hours of guided instruction and teaching provided to learners. This may include classroom instruction, tutorials, or other forms of structured learning.

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies	
Total Qualification Time (TQT):	150 hours
Total Credits Required:	15 credits
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	120 hours

7.4 How to Achieve the Qualification

To achieve the **OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies** learners must complete both mandatory units for a total of 15 credits.

8. Assessment Structure

This qualification is assessed through internal assessment and each unit is accompanied by specific assessment criteria that define the requirements for achievement.

8.1 Assessment Guidance: Portfolio

The portfolio for this qualification is designed to provide a comprehensive view of a learner's skills and knowledge. It is a holistic collection of evidence that may include a single piece of evidence that satisfies multiple assessment criteria. There is no requirement for learners to maintain separate evidence for each assessment criterion.

It is essential that the evidence in the portfolio reflects the application of skills in real-world situations. Learners should ensure that they provide multiple examples or references whenever the assessment criteria require it.

8.2 Understanding the Units

The units outlined in this specification establish clear assessment expectations. They serve as a valuable guide for conducting assessments and ensuring quality assurance efficiently. Each unit within this specification follows a consistent structure. This section explains the operational framework of these units. It is imperative that all educators, assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, and other personnel overseeing the qualification review and familiarise themselves with this section to ensure a comprehensive understanding of how these units function.

- **Title:** The title will reflect the content of the unit and should be clear and concise.
- **Level:** A unit can have one of six RQF levels: Entry, One, Two, Three, Four or Five. All units within this qualification are Level 3.
- **Credit Value:** This describes the number of credits ascribed to a unit. It identifies the number of credits a learner is awarded upon successful achievement of the unit. One credit is awarded for the learning outcomes which a learner, on average, might reasonably be expected to achieve in a notional 10 hours of learning.
- **Learning Outcome:** A coherent set of measurable achievements.
- **Assessment Criteria:** These enable a judgement to be made about whether or not, and how well, the students have achieved the learning outcomes.
- **Assessment Guidance and Methods:** These detail the different assessment methods within the unit that may be used.
- **Unit Content:** This provides indicative content to assist in teaching and learning.

9. Qualification Summary by Unit

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies
In order to achieve the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies the learner must successfully complete both mandatory units for a total of 15 credits.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 150 hours
Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 120 hours

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
R/505/9041	CAY798	Personal Growth for Holistic Health & Well Being	7	60	Three
L/505/9040	CAY799	Theory and Practice of Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies	8	60	Three

10. Unit Content

Title:	Personal Growth for Holistic Health & Well Being
Level:	Three
Credit Value:	7
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	60
OCN NI Unit Code:	CAY798
Unit Reference No:	R/505/9041
Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand personal growth for holistic health and well being.	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand own health and well being.	1.1. Analyse own state of health and signs of imbalance with reference to: a) physical health b) emotional health c) mental health d) spiritual health 1.2. Demonstrate how to construct own body map and perform a self-assessment. 1.3. Develop own health and learning goals.
2. Understand the impact of nutrition on health and well being.	2.1. Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of current nutritional trends. 2.2. Explain how poor diet impacts on the digestive process and other physical systems. 2.3. Analyse own diet. 2.4. Explain the concept of food as medicine. 2.5. Develop own nutritional plan to assist with achieving a balanced diet and promoting health and well being.
3. Understand the positive and negative impact of stress on health and well being.	3.1. Explain what is meant by stress and associated signs and symptoms. 3.2. Explain the effects of stress on health and well being. 3.3. Evaluate the role of physical activity in stress management. 3.4. Explain and demonstrate two stress reduction techniques. 3.5. Evaluate impact of stress reduction techniques on own health and well being.
4. Understand the impact of emotions on health and well being.	4.1. Explain the impact of emotions on health and well being. 4.2. Summarise common triggers for emotional distress. 4.3. Select two therapies that may be used to address emotional trauma and analyse their benefits. 4.4. Develop own action plan for health and well being.
5. Understand the impact of mental health on health and well being.	5.1. Evaluate the impact of mental health issues on health and well being. 5.2. Analyse how chronic negative programming and hidden and core beliefs can impact on health and well being.

	5.3. Explain what is meant by Neuro Linguistic Programming and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. 5.4. Explain with examples how affirmations can be used to improve health and well being.
6. Understand the role that spirituality plays in holistic health and well being.	6.1 Explain what is meant by spirituality and its impact on overall health and well being. 6.2 Analyse the benefits of two commonly used spiritual practices. 6.3 Explain how meditation impacts on holistic health and well being.
7. Understand the application of self - awareness and self–reflection on holistic health and well being.	7.1 Explain the importance of self- awareness and self-reflection. 7.2 Perform a self evaluation to include: a) teaching session b) pre-and post teaching analysis c) personal growth 7.3 Analyse own body map and develop health and learning goals.

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 Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion Audio/video/photographic record Charts/graphs
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	Tutor record of observation Learner notes Tutor lesson plan Tutorial notes Audio/video/photographic record 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	Tutor record of observation Learner notes Tutor lesson plan Tutorial notes Audio/video/photographic record Learner log/diary

Title:	Theory and Practice of Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies
Level:	Three
Credit Value:	8
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	60
OCN NI Unit Code:	CAY799
Unit Reference No:	L/505/9040
Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to understand the theory and practice of Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies.	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand different approaches to holistic health and well being.	1.1. Analyse and critically compare the following approaches to holistic health and well being: a) complementary therapies b) integrative health c) holistic health d) allopathic medicine e) traditional medicine f) naturopathy
2. Understand a range of holistic health and complementary therapies.	2.1. Develop a directory of holistic practices and complementary therapies 2.2. Analyse and critically compare a range of practices / therapies and evaluate their benefits in relation to, at least two, of the following body systems: • cardio-vascular • digestive • immune • lymphatic • musculo-skeletal • nervous
3. Understand the Chakra anatomy and energy system.	3.1. Explain the seven major Chakras and their connection to health and well being 3.2. Explain the energy system of the Chakras 3.3. Explain Chakra anatomy.
4. Understand the application of aromatherapy for the treatment of common physical conditions.	4.1. Explain the use of essential oils in aromatherapy treatment 4.2. Select four essential oils and evaluate their benefits in relation to the treatment of common physical conditions 4.3. Summarise six contra-indicators to be considered when applying essential oils 4.4. Explain the safe storage of essential oils.
5. Understand best practice protocols for holistic health and complementary therapists.	5.1. Analyse best practice including legislative requirements when conducting client consultations 5.2. Develop a protocol for practice to include process and documentation 5.3. Perform a client consultation.
6. Be able to conduct research and present findings in relation to holistic health and complimentary therapies.	6.1. Explain the benefits of research and how to conduct it. 6.2. Research a subject related to holistic health and complementary therapy and present findings.
7. Understand the benefits of self-evaluation and personal goal setting.	7.1. Explain the importance of self- awareness and reflection.

	7.2. Perform a self-evaluation to include reference to the following: a) teaching session b) pre-and post-teaching analysis c) personal growth 7.3. Analyse own body map and self-assessment 7.4. Summarise personal goals and develop an action plan.

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 Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion Audio/video/photographic record Charts/graphs
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	Tutor record of observation Learner notes Tutor lesson plan Tutorial notes Audio/video/photographic record 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	Tutor record of observation Learner notes Tutor lesson plan Tutorial notes Audio/video/photographic record Learner log/diary

11. Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

11.1 Internal Assessment

When delivering and assessing this qualification, centres must align with stakeholders' expectations and address learners' needs by implementing a practical and applied programme. Centres have the flexibility to customise programmes to meet local requirements and establish connections with local employers and the broader vocational sector.

The Assessor should work with the Internal Quality Assurer to ensure that the assessment is planned in line with OCN NI requirements. Assessment Plans must be developed and approved by the Internal Quality Assurer prior to the delivery of the qualification.

All units within this qualification must undergo internal assessment. Learners must provide evidence that they have appropriately met all assessment criteria required for that grade.

The assessment format for all units involves a task conducted after the delivery of the unit's content, or part of it, if multiple tasks are used. Tasks may exhibit in various forms, encompassing practical and written types. Please refer to 'OCN NI's Assessment Definitions Guide' for additional details.

A task constitutes a distinct activity completed independently by learners, separated from teaching, practice, exploration, and other activities guided by tutors. Tasks are assigned to learners with a specified start date, completion date, and explicit requirements for the evidence to be produced. Some tasks may include observed practical components and require diverse forms of evidence.

A valid assignment will enable a clear and formal assessment outcome which meets the requirements of the assessment criteria. Assessment decisions are based on the specific assessment criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The way in which individual units are written provides a balance of assessment of understanding, practical skills and vocational attributes appropriate to the purpose of qualification.

It is the Assessor's role to ensure that learners are appropriately prepared for assessment, this begins from induction onwards. Assessors should ensure that learners understand how assessment tasks are used to determine the award of credit, the importance of meeting assessment timelines, and that all learners work must be independently created, where source documents are used this should be appropriately referenced, learners should be aware of what would constitute plagiarism and the possible consequences.

When conducting the assessment, Assessors must ensure they do not provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback which may compromise the authenticity of the work submitted.

Once the Assessor has authenticated the learners work, they must transparently demonstrate the rationale behind their assessment decisions. Once a learner completes all assigned tasks for a unit, the Assessor will allocate a grade for the unit. Refer to the 'Unit Grading Matrix' for additional information on the grading process.

Once the Assessor has completed the assessment process for the task, the assessment decision is recorded formally, and feedback is provided to the learner. The feedback should show the learner the outcome of the assessment decision, how it was determined or where the criteria has been met, it may indicate to the learner why achievement of the assessment criteria has not been met. It must be clear to the learner that this Assessment outcome is subject to verification.

For further information on assessment practice, please see the 'OCN NI Centre Handbook'. Assessment Training is also available and can be booked through the OCN NI Website.

11.2 Internal Quality Assurance

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer is to ensure appropriate internal quality assurance processes are carried out. The Internal Quality Assurer must oversee that assessments are conducted in accordance with relevant OCN NI policies, regulations, and this specification.

The Internal Quality Assurer must ensure assessments are fair, reliable, and uniform, thereby providing a consistent standard for all learners.

Internal Quality Assurers are required to provide constructive feedback to Assessors, identifying areas of strength and those that may require improvement. This feedback contributes to the ongoing professional development of Assessors.

Contributing to the standardisation of assessment practices within the centre is an important function of this role. This entails aligning assessment methods, grading criteria, and decision-making processes to maintain fairness and equity.

Internal Quality Assurers will actively engage in the sampling and monitoring of assessments to ensure the consistency and accuracy of assessment decisions. This process helps identify trends, areas for improvement, and ensures the robustness of the overall assessment system.

For further information on Internal Quality Assurance practice, please see the 'OCN NI Centre Handbook'. Internal Quality Assurance Training is also available and can be booked through the OCN NI Website.

11.3 Documentation

For internal quality assurance processes to be effective, the internal assessment and Internal Quality Assurance team needs to keep effective records.

- The programme must have an assessment and Internal Quality Assurance plan. When producing a plan, they should consider:
    - the time required for training and standardisation activities
    - the time available to undertake teaching and carry out assessment,
    - consider when learners may complete assessments and when quality assurance will take place
    - the completion dates for different assessment tasks
    - the date by which the assignment needs to be internally verified
    - sampling strategies
    - how to manage the assessment and verification of learners' work so that they can be given formal decisions promptly
    - how resubmission opportunities can be scheduled.

The following documents are available from OCN NI and document templates can be found in the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk:

- A1 – Learner Assessment Record per Learner
- Learner Authentication Declarations
- Records of any reasonable adjustments applied for and the outcome – please see 'OCN NI's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy' for further information
- M1 Internal Quality Assurance Sample Record
- M2 Feedback to Assessor
- Records of any complaints or appeals

11.4 External Quality Assurance

All OCN NI recognised centres are subject to External Quality Assurance. External quality assurance activities will be conducted to confirm continued compliance with the CCEA Regulation General Conditions of Recognition, OCN NI terms and conditions and the requirements outlined within this qualification specification.

The External Quality Assurer is assigned by OCN NI. The External Quality Assurer will review the delivery and assessment of this qualification. This will include, but is not limited to, the review of a sample of assessment evidence and evidence of the internal quality assurance of assessment and assessment decisions. This will form the basis of the External Quality Assurance report and will help OCN NI determine the centre's risk.

The role of the External Quality Assurer serves as an external overseer of assessment quality, working to uphold consistency, compliance, and continuous improvement within the assessment process. Their role is crucial in ensuring that assessments are valid, reliable, fair, and aligned with the required standards and regulations.

For further information on OCN NI Centre Assessments Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy, please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook.

11.5 Standardisation

As a process, standardisation is designed to ensure consistency and promote good practice in understanding and the 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 Quality Assurance

Centres offering this qualification must carry out internal standardisation activities prior to the claim for certification.

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 Quality Assurer documentation). OCN NI will make standardisation summary reports available and correspond directly with centres regarding event outcomes.

12. Administration

12.1 Registration

A centre must register learners for this qualification within 20 days of commencement of the delivery of the programme.

For further information on learner registration please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook and the QuartzWeb Manual, available through the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website. Administration training is also available and can be booked through www.ocnni.org.uk.

12.2 Certification

Once all internal quality assurance activities have been successfully completed, the centre can claim certification for the learner(s).

Certificates will be issued to centres within 20 working days from completion of a satisfactory external quality assurance activity, if appropriate, alternatively from the submission of an accurate and complete marksheet.

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.

For further information on the uploading of results please see the QuartzWeb Manual for guidance, administration training is also available and can be booked through OCN NI

12.3 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.

12.4 Equality, Fairness and Inclusion

OCN NI's are committed to ensuring all learners have an equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessment, and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every learner.

OCN NI is committed to making sure that:

- learners with a protected characteristic are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic
- all learners achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers

For information on reasonable adjustments and special considerations please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook and Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy held in the back office of the OCN NI website.

12.5 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.

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Holistic Health and Complementary Therapies
Qualification Number: 601/2776/4

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