



Qualification Specification:

OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism

- **Qualification No: 610/1511/8**

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism

- **Qualification No: 610/1510/6**

Version: 2.1



1. Specification Updates

Key changes have been listed below:

Section	Detail of change	Version and date of Issue
Qualification	Extended to 31 st August 2032	V2.0 – May 2026
Specification	On new format	V2.0 – May 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 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism**.

This specification will provide guidelines for centres to ensure the effective and correct delivery of these qualifications. 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 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism.

- **Qualification Features:** this includes the key characteristics and features of these qualifications, such as their 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 these qualifications. These include guidelines on staff qualifications, resources, and required procedures.
- **Structure and Content:** this details the structure and content of the qualifications including units, and any specific content that learners will be required to study.
- **Assessment Requirements:** this details assessment criteria and assessment methods for these qualifications, ensuring that summative assessment approaches are clear.
- **Quality Assurance:** the quality and consistency of delivery and assessment of these qualifications are of paramount importance to OCN NI. The mandatory quality assurance arrangements including processes for internal and external quality assurance that all centres offering these qualifications must adhere to are detailed.
- **Administration:** guidance on the administrative aspects of delivering these qualifications, 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 these qualifications. 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 these qualifications by contacting their designated Business Development Advisor or by contacting us on [Contact Us | OCN NI](#)

5. About these Qualifications

5.1 Qualification Regulation Information

OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism

Qualification Number: 610/1511/8

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism

Qualification Number: 610/1510/6

Operational start date: 15 September 2022

Review date: 31 August 2032

The qualifications' operational start and end dates define the regulated qualifications' lifecycle. The operational end date is the final date for learner registration, while learners have until the certificate end date to complete the qualifications 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 these qualifications is:

Subject Area: 1.3 Health and social care

NOS: [National Occupational Standards - Skills for Care - Autism](#)

5.3 Grading

Grading for these qualifications is pass/fail.

5.4 Qualifications' Aim and Objectives

Qualifications' Aim

The aim of the OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism is to provide learners with skills and knowledge related to the support of adults with autism.

Qualifications' Objectives

The objective of the OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism is to introduce learners to working with adults with autism.

The objectives of the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism are to provide learners with the skills and knowledge relating to the following areas of working with adults with autism:

- individual support
- person-centred approaches to safeguarding
- mental well-being and physical health
- employment support
- communication skills

5.5 Target Learners

The OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism qualifications are aimed at learners who are currently working or who wish to work in the area of supporting adults with autism.

5.6 Entry Requirements

Learners must be at least 18 years of age. Learners will be required to have sufficient literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to successfully complete the qualification.

5.7 Progression

The OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism will enable learners to progress to the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism and from there into higher level qualifications within this area or into employment.

5.8 Delivery Language

These qualifications are exclusively available in English. If there is a desire to offer these qualifications 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 these Qualifications

6.1 Centre Recognition

New and existing OCN NI recognised centres must apply for and be granted approval to deliver these qualifications 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 qualifications
- 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 these qualifications it may be useful for learners to have access to a practical work setting

6.3 Centre Staffing

To offer these qualifications 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 these qualifications 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 these qualifications 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. They should have a minimum of one year's experience in the area. Additionally, they should hold qualifications at a level that is at least one level higher than the qualification 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 qualifications.

The Internal Quality Assurer for these qualifications must meet the following criteria:

- **IQA Expertise:** IQA should have direct or related experience in the field of verification 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:** IQA 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 purpose of the **OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism** is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills required to support autistic adults effectively within a range of health, social care, community, and educational settings. As unitised qualifications assessed on a pass/fail basis, learners are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of autism, including key characteristics, communication differences, sensory processing, person-centred approaches, and relevant legislation and safeguarding requirements. The qualifications enable learners to develop the competence needed to promote independence, wellbeing, and inclusion while working within professional boundaries and organisational frameworks. They support progression into roles involving direct support for autistic adults, as well as further training or study in autism practice, health and social care, or related disciplines.

7.2 Qualification Level

In the context of the OCN NI Level 3 Award and Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism 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. These qualifications align with Level 3, which signify 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 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism	
Total Qualification Time (TQT):	30 hours
Total Credits Required:	3 credits
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	21 hours
OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism	
Total Qualification Time (TQT):	150 hours
Total Credits Required:	15 credits
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	105 hours

7.4 How to Achieve the Qualifications

To achieve the **OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism** learners must complete 3 credits from any of the units.

To achieve the **OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism** learners must complete all four units from the mandatory group – 12 credits, plus one unit from the optional group – 3 credits, for a total of 15 credits.

8. Assessment Structure

These qualifications are 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 these qualifications 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.

When learners are creating their portfolio, they should refer to the assessment criteria to understand the evidence required.

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 these qualifications 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 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 30 hours

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 21 hours

To achieve the OCN NI Level 3 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism learners must successfully complete 3 credits from any of the units.

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
A/650/4147	CBG010	Supporting Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
D/650/4148	CBG011	Mental Well-being and Physical Health for Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
F/650/4149	CBG012	Employment for Adults with Autism	3	21	Three

OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 150 hours

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 105 hours

In order to achieve the OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism , the learner must successfully complete all four units from the mandatory group – 12 credits, plus one unit from the optional group – 3 credits, for a total of 15 credits.

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
Mandatory units					
A/650/4147	CBG010	Supporting Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
K/650/4150	CBG013	Person-Centred Approach to the Safeguarding of Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
D/650/4148	CBG011	Mental Well-being and Physical Health for Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
F/650/4149	CBG012	Employment for Adults with Autism	3	21	Three
Optional units					
L/650/4151	CBG014	Supporting Communication and	3	21	Three

		Social Interaction for Adults with Autism			
M/650/4152	CBG015	Effective Communication within Health and Social Care Settings	3	21	Three

10. Unit Content

10.1 Supporting Adults with Autism

Title	Supporting Adults with Autism
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG010
Unit Reference No	A/650/4147
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand autism and how adults with autism and their families can be supported.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand autism.	1.1. Explain what is meant by the term autism. 1.2. Summarise how the core characteristics included on the autistic spectrum may vary in their expression and severity. 1.3. Summarise the scope of possible diagnoses and autism profiles. 1.4. Explain how the following may impact on the autism diagnosis of an individual: a) age b) gender c) culture d) language e) intellectual ability 1.5. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of a diagnosis of autism for an individual and their family.
2. Understand the historical context of autism.	2.1. Summarise historic and changing attitudes to the causes of autism. 2.2. Critically compare different theories developed during the last century that have affected the treatment, education and support of individuals with autism. 2.3. Summarise the key changes over the last century in the following areas of the lives of individuals with autism: a) education and leisure activities b) employment c) relationships d) provision and access to healthcare 2.4. Evaluate the impact of myths and stereotypes portrayed through arts, media and culture on the public perception of individuals with autism.
3. Understand the legislation and policies that support and impact on the human rights and inclusion of individuals with autism.	3.1. Summarise legislation and policies that promote the human rights, care and support, education, equality, diversity, inclusion and interventions of individuals with autism. 3.2. Explain how legislation and policies impact on the day-to-day experiences of individuals with autism and their families.

4. Understand empowerment and active participation in relation to supporting individuals with autism and their families.

4.1. Explain what is meant by the terms social inclusion and advocacy in relation to individuals with autism and their families.
 4.2. Explain at least three ways to promote empowerment and active participation in everyday support for individuals with autism and their families.

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
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

10.2 Person-Centred Approach to the Safeguarding of Adults with Autism

Title	Person-Centred Approach to the Safeguarding of Adults with Autism
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG013
Unit Reference No	K/650/4150
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand how to apply a person-centred approach when working with adults with autism as well as understanding legislation and procedures relating to the safeguarding of adults with autism.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand a person-centred approach when working with adults with autism.	1.1. Explain what is meant by the term person-centred approach. 1.2. Explain using examples how a person-centred approach can be used when working with adults with autism.
2. Understand how legislative frameworks safeguard and protect adults with autism.	2.1. Summarise key aspects of current legislation that underpins the safeguarding of young people and adults with autism. 2.2. Critically compare the key features of at least three pieces of legislation or policies which promote the human rights of adults with autism.
3. Know how to raise concerns about possible safeguarding issues.	3.1. Summarise different safeguarding issues that are specific to individuals with autism. 3.2. Summarise factors that make adults with autism more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation or harm. 3.3. Summarise indicators that an adult with autism has been or is in danger of being harmed or exploited. 3.4. Explain the procedures and actions to be taken if a concern, disclosure or allegation arises.
4. Understand how and when restrictive practices may be used within legal guidelines.	4.1. Explain what is meant by restrictive practice in relation to adults with autism. 4.2. Explain ways of working to minimise the need for deployment of restrictive practices. 4.3. Summarise the key aspects of legal guidelines where restrictive interventions may be used. 4.4. Explain the effect of restrictive interventions on an adult with autism and the wider impact on their family and community.

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
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

10.3 Mental Well-being and Physical Health for Adults with Autism

Title	Mental Well-being and Physical Health for Adults with Autism
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG011
Unit Reference No	D/650/4148
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand co-occurring conditions associated with autism and understand strategies to support adults with autism in managing these.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand mental well-being and physical health and factors that may impact these for an adult with autism.	1.1. Research current statistics related to adults with autism and their experiences with mental well-being and physical health problems. 1.2. Critically compare two different perspectives on mental well-being for adults with autism. 1.3. Explain factors that may impact mental well-being and physical health over the lifetime of an individual with autism including: a) biological b) social c) psychological 1.4. Explain how the following impact the level of resilience in adults with autism in relation to mental well-being and physical health including: a) socially valued roles b) social support and contact
2. Understand co-occurring conditions in adults with autism and related treatments.	2.1. Summarise conditions that commonly occur with autism and difficulties with diagnosing and identifying co-occurring conditions 2.2. Describe treatment regimes and methods of administering medication that may be prescribed for co-occurring conditions in adults with autism.
3. Understand strategies for promoting mental well-being with adults with autism.	3.1. Explain the benefits of early intervention in promoting an individual's mental well-being. 3.2. Illustrate the steps that an adult with autism may take to promote their mental well-being. 3.3. Summarise the key aspects of either a local, national or international strategy to promote mental well-being for adults with autism. 3.4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy identified in AC 3.3 to promote mental well-being.
4. Understand strategies for promoting physical health with adults with autism.	4.1. Explain the benefits of promoting physical health with adults with autism. 4.2. Explain how to support an adult with autism in promoting physical health. 4.3. Explain the need for a multi-agency approach to provision for physical health promotion for adults with autism.

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
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

10.4 Supporting Communication and Social Interaction for Adults with Autism

Title	Supporting Communication and Social Interaction for Adults with Autism
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG014
Unit Reference No	L/650/4151
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand potential difficulties adults with autism may have in communicating with others while also understanding appropriate methods and strategies of communication which may be useful for those with autism.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand how to assess the communication abilities and related development needs of adults with autism.	1.1. Explain how the potential effects of autism can impact on an autistic adult's ability to communicate and interact with others. 1.2. Summarise communication and social interaction difficulties experienced by adults with autism. 1.3. Explain how to evaluate an individual with autism's ability to communicate against the stages of the standard communication and social interaction development pattern. 1.4. Explain how evaluation outcomes can be used to support the development of communication skills for adults with autism.
2. Understand how adapting methods of communication can impact positively on communication and interaction for adults with autism.	2.1. Explain different communication strategies that can be adapted to meet the communication needs and preferences of an adult with autism. 2.2. Summarise factors that should be taken into account when communicating with an adult with autism. 2.3. Explain how to use a person-centred approach to support positive interaction and communication with adults with autism. 2.4. Explain the importance of the physical and emotional environment in providing an autism-friendly environment for adults.
3. Understand strategies and aids to support the development of communication and social interaction with adults with autism.	3.1. Explain how different strategies and aids may be applied to support the development of social skills for an adult with autism. 3.2. Explain the principles of augmentative and alternative communication. 3.3. Evaluate different forms of augmentative and alternative communication and how they may be used to promote communication and social interaction for adults with autism. 3.4. Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and aids used to develop the social skills of an adult with autism. 3.5. Explain the role of specialists in promoting communication and social interaction for adults with autism.

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
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

10.5 Effective Communication within Health and Social Care Settings

Title	Effective Communication within Health and Social Care Settings
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG015
Unit Reference No	M/650/4152
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand the importance of effective communication within health and social care, how to improve the effectiveness of communication and legislation relating to communication within a health and social care environment.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand why effective communication is important within health and social care settings and its impact on relationships.	1.1. Summarise why effective communication is important within health and social care settings including: a) verbal communication b) non-verbal communication 1.2. Explain how communication can affect relationships within health and social care settings.
2. Understand how to address the communication and language needs, wishes and preferences of adults with autism.	2.1. Explain how to evaluate an autistic adult's communication and language needs, wishes and preferences. 2.2. Critically compare at least four communication approaches that address an autistic adult's communication needs, wishes and preferences. 2.3. Explain how and when you would seek advice to improve the effectiveness of own communication with others.
3. Be able to reduce barriers to effective communication with autistic adults.	3.1. Summarise at least four barriers to effective communication. 3.2. Critically compare different approaches that may reduce barriers to effective communication. 3.3. Explain at least three ways to confirm communications with autistic adults have been understood. 3.4. Summarise at least three sources of information, support or services that may increase the effectiveness of communication with autistic adults.
4. Understand how to apply legislation, principles and practices relating to confidentiality.	4.1. Explain what is meant by the term confidentiality. 4.2. Summarise at least two pieces of legislation that relates to confidentiality and the sharing of information. 4.3. Summarise at least four ways to maintain confidentiality in everyday communications. 4.4. Explain situations where information normally considered to be confidential might be shared with others and how this may impact on autistic adults.

4.5. Explain how and when to seek advice regarding confidentiality.

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
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

10.6 Employment for Adults with Autism

Title	Employment for Adults with Autism
Level	Three
Credit Value	3
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	21
OCN NI Unit Code	CBG012
Unit Reference No	F/650/4149
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand employment opportunities, challenges and best practice for adults with autism.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand employment opportunities for adults with autism and how they benefit employers.	1.1. Research different employment opportunities available for adults with autism and the challenges they may face in accessing employment. 1.2. Explain the benefits to employers of employing adults with autism.
2. Understand the recruitment process and appropriate modifications for adults with autism.	2.1. Explain how employers can promote inclusivity and accessibility to autistic applicants throughout the recruitment process. 2.2. Evaluate the suitability of different interview processes for adults with autism including online and psychometric tests. 2.3. Summarise with examples reasonable adjustments which may be made during the recruitment process.
3. Understand the employment onboarding process and appropriate modifications for adults with autism.	3.1. Summarise possible challenges faced by adults with autism during the onboarding stage of employment. 3.2. Analyse inclusive measures that may be made within a given workplace to support adults with autism during the onboarding stage of employment. 3.3. Evaluate the following strategies to support adults with autism during the onboarding stage of employment including: a) mentoring b) workplace routine c) managing workplace cultures d) managing own and employer expectations e) productivity
4. Understand good practice in the retention of staff with autism.	4.1. Summarise the benefits of continuous professional development and an effective appraisal process in the retention of staff with autism. 4.2. Analyse how inherent strengths associated with autism may be beneficial to a variety of companies and sectors.
5. Understanding how to support adults with autism through transitions within and beyond employment.	5.1. Explain how to support adults with autism through transitions within and beyond employment.

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
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

11. Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

11.1 Internal Assessment

When delivering and assessing these qualifications, 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 these qualifications 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 qualifications.

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 these qualifications. 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 these qualifications 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 these qualifications 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 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.

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 Award in Supporting Adults with Autism**Qualification Number: 610/1511/8****OCN NI Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Adults with Autism****Qualification Number: 610/1510/6**

Operational start date: 15 September 2022

Review date: 31 August 2032

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