Qualification Specification:

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills -Digital ICT

- **Qualification No: 610/4979/7**

Version 2.0

Contents

Qualification Regulation Information 3
Foreword 4
Introduction 5
Essential Skills Qualifications at a Glance 5
Qualification Summary 6
OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT 6
Qualification Aim 6
Qualification Objectives 6
Grading 6
Progression Opportunities 6
Qualification Target Group 6
Entry Requirements 7
Delivery Languages 7
Centre Requirements for Delivering the Qualification 8
Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval 8
Centre Staffing 8
Qualifications Requirements for Teaching Essential Skills 8
Structure and Content 9
Skills Standard Details 12
CORE SKILLS STANDARD B – Mandatory 16
Further Assessment Guidance 22
Information on Essential Skills | CCEA 22
Optional Skills Standards – Further Assessment Guidance 23
Assessment 27
Retention of Evidence 27
Certification 27
Charges 27
Quality Assurance of Centre Performance 28
Certification and Reporting 28
Internal Quality Assurance 28
External Quality Assurance 28
Standardisation 29
OCN NI Support for Essential Skills 30
Equality, Fairness and Inclusion 30
APPENDIX 1 32

Qualification Regulation Information

Qualification Number: **610/4979/7**

Operational start date: 01 September 2025
Operational end date: 31 August 2030
Certification end date: 31 August 2032

All OCN NI Qualifications are published to Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications (**http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/**). This database contains details ofthe available regulated qualifications, skills standard and structures.

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Foreword

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

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT

This specification sets out:

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

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

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

Introduction

Background

The Department of Economy currently funds the delivery and assessment of the suite of Essential Skills qualifications developed in response to the Essential Skills for Living Strategy 2002. This suite of qualifications consists of Essential Skills Entry Levels 1-3 in Literacy and Numeracy and Level 1 and Level 2 in Communication, Application of Number and ICT.

Essential Skills Level 1 and Level 2 in Communication and Application of Number were refreshed and assessments updated in 2016.

The OCN NI suite of Essential Skills – Digital ICT qualifications are based upon the refreshed Essential Skills Core Curriculum and Standards for ICT in Northern Ireland 2023. A copy of these standards are provided in Appendix 1.

Essential Skills Qualifications at a Glance

Title and Level	Qualification Number
Entry Level Certificate in Essential Skills – Adult Literacy (Entry 1-3)	601/8226/X
Entry Level Certificate in Essential Skills – Adult Numeracy (Entry 1-3)	601/8225/8
Entry Level 3 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT	610/4240/7
Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number	601/8943/5
Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication	601/8941/1
Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT	610/4241/9
Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number	601/8944/7
Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication	601/8942/3
Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT	610/4979/7

Qualification Summary

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT

Qualification Aim

The aim of the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT qualification is to provide learners with an opportunity to:

- create evidence relevant to real life and the workplace
- assess skills, knowledge, and application in relation to various contexts
- progress to further education, learning and development of skills or for progression to employment

Qualification Objectives

The objective of the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT qualification includes the following five skills areas:

- advanced communicating
- advanced document creating and editing
- advanced number handling
- digital marketing and social media
- advanced graphics

Grading

The qualification is pass/fail and is made up of both a portfolio of evidence and an underpinning knowledge assessment task. Combined pass mark is 70%.

Progression Opportunities

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT enables progression to employment or further education.

Qualification Target Group

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT builds upon the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital Skills and has been designed for learners with competence in using digital devices, services and the internet who wish to advance their skills for further progression to employment or further education.

Entry Requirements

Learners should be at least 14 years of age and have achieved a Level 1 ICT qualification.

Delivery Languages

This qualification is available in English only.

Centre Requirements for Delivering the Qualification

Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval

Existing OCN NI Recognised centres must apply for and be granted approval to deliver. the qualification prior to the commencement of delivery. New centres must apply and be granted OCN NI Recognised Centre status and qualification approval prior to delivery of the qualification.

Centre Staffing

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

- Centre contact
- Essential Skills Co-ordinator
- Tutor
- Assessor
- Internal quality assurer

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

Qualification Requirements for Teaching Essential Skills

Centres must ensure that staff delivering and assessing the qualification are both qualified and experienced to teach Essential Skills ICT in Northern Ireland and meet the current criteria outlined in the Department for the Economy circular ES01/12.

Structure and Content

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT

At this level learners should:

- be able to build on competence required at level 1
- be confident in applying digital skills independently to develop solutions
- be able to use advanced digital skills efficiently to meet needs
- exchange information and solve problems

How the qualification is achieved:

In order to achieve the Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT learners **MUST** achieve **both core skills standards A and B,** plus any other two optional skills standards. Please note learners who have successfully achieved the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT are exempt from completing core skills standard A.

Learners will be required to provide a portfolio of evidence for both core skills standard A and B and the selected two optional skills standards. Learners must also successfully pass an underpinning knowledge assessment task which will be externally set by OCN NI and internally marked.

This qualification is assessed holistically. Assessment is compensatory so a weakness in one area can be compensated by strong performance in other areas.

The overall combined pass mark has been set by CCEA Regulation at 70%.

- **Core Skills Standard A**: Underpinning Skills – Please note the following:
  - ➢ if a learner has achieved the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT they will be exempt from this skills standard.
  - ➢ If a learner has not achieved the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT they will be required to complete the following skills standards within **core skills standard A** listed below:

Skills Standard	OCN NI Code	Skills Standard	Level
L/651/1711	CBG610	Using Devices and Handling Information	One
R/651/1713	CBG612	Communicating	One
T/651/1714	CBG613	Transacting	One
Y/651/1715	CBG614	Being Safe and Responsible Online	One

- **Core Skills Standard B**: Advanced Communicating
- **Two skills standards from the following optional skills standards**:
  - Advanced document creating and editing Information
  - Advanced number handling
  - Understanding digital marketing and social media
  - Advanced graphics

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: **60 Hours**
Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for the qualification: **45 Hours**

Reference Number	OCN NI Code	Skills Standard	Level
		Core Skills Standards	
		Skills Standard A: Underpinning Skills *Only required if learner has not completed a Level 1 ICT qualification*	One
R/651/3884	CBG670	Skills Standard B: Advanced Communicating	Two
		Optional Skills Standards Select two	
T/651/3885	CBG671	Advanced Document Creating and Editing	Two
Y/651/3886	CBG672	Advanced Number Handling	Two
A/651/3887	CBG673	Understanding Digital Marketing and Social Media	Two
D/651/3888	CBG674	Advanced Graphics	Two

Core Skills Standard A - Underpinning Skills (Level 1)

Only required if learner has not completed the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills - Digital ICT (610/4241/9)

Core Skills Standard A will be assessed only through Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and will cover knowledge from the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills Digital ICT – see detail below.

Please note that learners must already have achieved the OCN NI Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills - Digital ICT qualification (610/4241/9) if not learners must successfully complete the following in order achieve the full OCN NI Level 2 Essential Skills Digital ICT:

- **Core Skills Standard A – achieved by MCQs (over 70% pass mark)**
- **Core Skills Standard B**
- **Two Optional Skills Standards**

Skills Standard Details

Title	Using Devices and Handling Information
Level	One
OCN NI Code	CBG610
Reference No	L/651/1711
Skills Standard 1 *- purpose and aim(s):* This skills standard will enable the learner to be able to use devices and handle information appropriately.	
Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Criteria**
1. Be able to use devices and handle information.	1.1. Carry out searches on the internet. 1.2. Take account of currency, reliability and copyright when selecting information from the internet. 1.3. Understand that search results may include sponsored results or advertisements and be able to recognise these. 1.4. Carry out searches for files. 1.5. Create and use a hierarchical folder structure to organise files and use an appropriate file naming convention. 1.6. Save a file on cloud storage using one device and open it on another device. 1.7. Know and be able to appropriately use terminology describing data storage requirements. 1.8. Know and understand limitations on file sizes when using some online services, and the benefits of using file compression to make effective use of storage capacity and to reduce data transfer times. 1.9. Use online resources to identify solutions to common technical problems and understand how they may be applied.

Title	Communicating
Level	One
OCN NI Code	CBG612
Reference No	R/651/1713
Skills Standard 1 *- purpose and aim(s):* This skills standard will enable the learner to communicate effectively online with different audiences and contexts.	
Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Criteria**
1. Be able to communicate online.	1.1. Use email for a range of contexts and audiences. 1.2. Use online messages for a range of contexts and audiences. 1.3. Know what steps can be taken to limit a digital footprint.

Title	Transacting
Level	One
OCN NI Code	CBG613
Reference No	T/651/1714
Skills Standard 1 *- purpose and aim(s):* This skills standard will enable the learner to complete and submit online transactions.	
Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Criteria**
1. Be able to complete online transactions.	1.1. Manage account settings for an online service. 1.2. Complete online forms and upload documents or images. 1.3. Carry out checks to reduce the risks involved in transactions online.

Title	Being Safe and Responsible Online
Level	One
OCN NI Code	CBG614
Reference No	Y/651/1715
Skills Standard 1 *- purpose and aim(s):* This skills standard will enable the learner to understand how to be safe and responsible online.	
Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Criteria**
1. Know how to be safe and responsible online.	1.1. Understand key rights under data protection laws and the circumstances where an individual can request that personal data be rectified or deleted. 1.2. Understand the importance of protecting personal information and privacy online and methods to do so. 1.3. Know how to backup files to the cloud. 1.4. Know how to avoid exposure to malware. 1.5. Know of and know how to minimise the effects of health risks that may result from using devices and the internet.

CORE SKILLS STANDARD B – Mandatory

Title	Advanced Communicating
Level	Two
OCN NI Code	CBG670
Reference No	R/651/3884
Purpose and aim(s): This skills standard will enable the learner to communicate effectively online with different audiences and contexts.	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Be able to communicate online.	1.1. Use email for a range of contexts and audiences. 1.2. Know how to block a sender, manage spam and junk emails, send large attachments.

Assessment Guidance and Mapping Criteria

Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the Essential Skills subject criteria.

The table below provides guidance on the coverage of knowledge and practical tasks related to assessment criteria coverage and indicates whether an assessment criteria has been covered in the portfolio of evidence or in the underpinning knowledge assessment task (multiple choice questions):

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT TASK (MCQs)
1.1.	√ (practical task)	
1.2.		√

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
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests
Multiple choice questions	An assessment where there are a number of questions and the learner is asked to select the best possible answer (or answers) to each question from a list of choices	Electronic based tests

OPTIONAL SKILLS STANDARDS – Learners must select two skill standards from the following optional skill standards:

Title	Advanced Document Creating and Editing
Level	Two
OCN NI Code	CBG671
Reference No	T/651/3885
Purpose and aim(s): This skills standard will enable the learner to enter, edit and format information using word-processing and presentation software skills.	
Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Criteria**
1. Be able to create and edit information.	1.1. Use advanced word-processing software skills. 1.2. Use advanced presentation software. 1.3. Use appropriate layout conventions for information including formal communication and audiences.

Assessment Guidance and Mapping Criteria

Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the Essential Skills subject criteria.

The table below provides guidance on the coverage of knowledge and practical tasks related to assessment criteria coverage and indicates whether an assessment criteria has been covered in the portfolio of evidence or in the underpinning knowledge assessment task (multiple choice questions):

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT TASK (MCQs)
1.1.	√ (practical task)	
1.2.	√ (practical task)	
1.3.	√ (practical task)	

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

Title	Advanced Number Handling
Level	Two
OCN NI Code	CBG672
Reference No	Y/651/3886
Purpose and aim(s): This skills standard will enable the learner to be able to use spreadsheet and chart software.	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Be able to use spreadsheet and chart software skills to handle numerical data.	1.1. Use advanced spreadsheet skills. 1.2. Know how to solve errors in a spreadsheet. 1.3. Use advanced charting skills.

Assessment Guidance and Mapping Criteria

Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the Essential Skills subject criteria.

The table below provides guidance on the coverage of knowledge and practical tasks related to assessment criteria coverage and indicates whether an assessment criteria has been covered in the portfolio of evidence or in the underpinning knowledge assessment task (multiple choice questions):

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT TASK (MCQs)
1.1.	√ (practical task)	
1.2.		√
1.3.	√ (practical task)	

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
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests
Multiple choice questions	An assessment where there are a number of questions and the learner is asked to select the best possible answer (or answers) to each question from a list of choices	Electronic based tests

Title	Understanding Digital Marketing and Social Media
Level	Two
OCN NI Code	CBG673
Reference No	A/651/3887
Purpose and aim(s): This skills standard will enable the learner to gain an understanding of digital marketing and social media.	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand digital marketing and social media.	1.1. Understand digital marketing as a business tool. 1.2. Know tools for digital marketing. 1.3. Understand data and analysis data relating to digital marketing and social media. 1.1. Understand legislation relating to digital marketing and social media.

Assessment Guidance and Mapping Criteria

Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the Essential Skills subject criteria.

The table below provides guidance on the coverage of knowledge and practical tasks related to assessment criteria coverage and indicates whether an assessment criteria has been covered in the portfolio of evidence or in the underpinning knowledge assessment task (multiple choice questions):

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT TASK (MCQs)
1.1.		√
1.2.		√
1.3.	√	
1.4.		√

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

Multiple choice questions	An assessment where there are a number of questions and the learner is asked to select the best possible answer (or answers) to each question from a list of choices	Electronic based tests

Title	Advanced Graphics
Level	Two
OCN NI Code	CBG674
Reference No	D/651/3888

Purpose and aim(s): This skills standard will enable the learner to be able to use graphic software.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Be able to use graphic software.	1.1. Use advanced graphics. 1.2. Know when to use different file formats. 1.3. Know methods of compression.

Assessment Guidance and Mapping Criteria

Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the Essential Skills subject criteria.

The table below provides guidance on the coverage of knowledge and practical tasks related to assessment criteria coverage and indicates whether an assessment criteria has been covered in the portfolio of evidence or in the underpinning knowledge assessment task (multiple choice questions):

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT TASK (MCQs)
1.1.	√ (practical task)	
1.2.		√
1.3.		√

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
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests
Multiple choice questions	An assessment where there are a number of questions and the learner is asked to select the best possible answer (or answers) to each question from a list of choices	Electronic based tests

Further Assessment Guidance

[Information on Essential Skills | CCEA]

Core Skills Standard B – Advanced Communicating	
Assessment Criteria	**Areas to be Covered**
1.1. Use email for a range of contexts and audiences.	Context and audiences for the use of email messages: • Work scenarios (colleagues, customers, external contacts, the general public) • Real-life scenarios (friends and family, day-to-day/personal tasks) Using email: • Email signature • Out of office • Reply • Flag an email • Reminder • Read/delivery receipt • Archive an email • Delay delivery • Email rules • Email folders • Spellcheck • Grammar check
1.2. Know how to block a sender, manage spam and junk emails, send large attachments.	• Block sender list • Filter options • Report junk email Sending large attachments via email using: • OneDrive • Dropbox • Zip folder

Optional Skills Standards – Further Assessment Guidance

Skills Standard: Advanced Document Creating and Editing	
Assessment Criteria	**Areas to be Covered**
1.1. Use advanced word-processing software skills.	Create, edit, format using different styles and templates to include: • Table of contents • References • Bibliography • Mail-merge • Document watermarks • Cover page
1.2. Use advanced presentation software skills.	Create and edit using different styles and templates to include: • Slide layout • Slide master • Editing master slide • Slide design • Format slides • Transitions • Animations • Timings • Embedded video • Insert charts • Insert tables • Diagrams • Hyperlinks • Action buttons • Re-order slides • Hide slides • spellcheck
1.3. Use appropriate layout conventions for information including formal communication and audiences.	Layout conventions for formal communication appropriate use of: • Margins • Font • Spacing • Alignment • Headings • Page numbering Familiar and unfamiliar audience: • Everyday life • Work

Skills Standard: Advanced Number Handling	
Assessment Criteria	**Areas to be Covered**
1.1. Use advanced spreadsheet skills.	• Linking multiple worksheets • Switchboard/menu • Data bars/sparklines (data trends) • Conditional formatting • Pivot tables • Lookup functions • Sub-totals • Data validation • Hide rows and columns • Hide worksheets • Link data from another file • Import and export data • Forecasting tools • Freeze panes • Adjust row height • Horizontal and vertical alignment
1.2. Know how to solve errors in a spreadsheet.	Formulae errors and circular referencing: • Identify error • Trace error back to source • Identify cause • Correct error
1.3. Use advanced charting skills.	• Change a charts appearance using formatting tools • Edit chart data series • Customise titles / labels and axes • Automatic updating of charts when values change

Skills Standard: Understanding Digital Marketing and Social Media	
Assessment Criteria	**Areas to be Covered**
1.1. Understand digital marketing as a business tool.	Digital Marketing techniques: • Social media • Email marketing • Content marketing • Search engine optimization • pay-per-click • Websites Understand impact on: • Establishment of business • Business growth • Business continuity
1.2. Know tools for digital marketing.	Current digital marketing tools including: • Search engine optimisation (SEO) • Blogs and wikis • Paid search results • Digital marketing channels : Facebook/ X /Instagram/TikTok/ Snapchat/ LinkedIn
1.3. Understand data and analyse data relating to digital marketing and social media.	Measure, collect and analyse data from various sources, including google analytics to inform future business opportunities and trends.
1.4. Understand legislation relating to digital marketing and social media.	Importance and purpose of laws and regulations: • Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988 • Data Protection Act 2018 • GDPR • Online Safety Act 2023 • Computer Misuse Act 1990 • Communications Act 2003

Skills Standard: Advanced Graphics	
Assessment Criteria	**Areas to be Covered**
1.1. Use advanced graphics.	• Combining images • Layers • Fill • Canvas size • Combine elements • Align • Rotate • Flip • Group order • Filters • Test wrap • Use bleeds • Export to other file formats
1.2. Know when to use different file formats.	• Jpg • Png • Svg • Bitmap • Raw
1.3. Know methods of compression.	• Lossy • Non-lossy

Assessment

OCN NI will provide the centre with:

- a portfolio template and mark scheme
- an underpinning knowledge assessment task

The tasks are intended to be taken by a learner in a normal learning environment and there is no time limit.

The following points should be noted:

- it is the assessor's responsibility to ensure the qualification is at the appropriate level for the learner
- the assessment task is undertaken within the learner's normal learning environment, which must be supervised
- the task is taken unseen by the learner - these assessments are confidential materials
- if a task is taken across more than one session the tutor must ensure that all materials associated with the assessment task are brought in at the end of each session and stored in a secure place until required again
- the learner completes the work unaided except for any assistance allowed for in the tutor guide
- the portfolio task is marked by the assessor according to the mark scheme
- both tasks must be completed and the overall combined pass mark met to achieve the qualification
- all work submitted will be subject to centre internal qualify assurance to external quality assurance by OCN NI

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.

Certification

Certificates will ONLY be issued when learners have successfully met pass criteria.

Certificates will be sent to centres within 20 working days after verification of results. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that certificates received from OCN NI are held securely and distributed to learners promptly and securely.

Charges

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

Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

Certification and Reporting

Where a learner's performance is sufficient to meet the level requirements, an Essential Skills qualification pass certificate is awarded. No grades are issued for these qualifications.

Internal Quality Assurance

The delivery and assessment of the qualification must be scrutinised through the centre's internal quality assurance processes as part of the Recognised Centre agreement with OCN NI. The centre must appoint an experienced and trained centre internal quality assurer whose responsibility is to act as the internal quality monitor for the verification of the delivery and assessment of the qualification. The Centre must have a working model for internal quality assurance with OCN NI prior to delivery of any programme.

Internal Quality Assurers must:

- have direct or related relevant experience in assessment and verification
- attend OCN NI's internal quality assurance training or have a recognised IQA qualification in order to be approved by OCN NI
- support tutors and assessors through Centre standardisation meetings held within the Centre at appropriate points in the year and maintain records for the external quality assurer
- sample assessments according to the centre's sampling strategy
- maintain up-to-date records supporting the verification of assessment and learner achievement

External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance visits and monitoring activities will be conducted regularly to confirm continued compliance with the CCEA Regulation General Conditions of Recognition, review the centre's risk rating for the qualification and to assure OCN NI of the maintenance of the integrity of the qualification.

The External Quality Assurer will review the delivery and assessment of the qualification. This will include 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 EQA report and will inform OCN NI's annual assessment of centre compliance and risk. The External quality assurer is appointed by OCN NI.

Standardisation

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

- making qualified statements about the level of consistency in assessment across centres delivering a qualification
- making statements on the standard of evidence that is required to meet the assessment criteria for skills standard in a qualification
- making recommendations on assessment practice
- producing advice and guidance for the assessment of skills standard
- identifying good practice in assessment and internal quality assurance

Centres offering Essential Skills qualifications are required to attend standardisation events if requested. Centres will be requested to contribute assessment materials and learner evidence for the standardisation activity.

Awarding Bodies offering Essential Skills in Northern Ireland work closely with CCEA Regulation to ensure the consistency of standards and practice.

OCN NI Support for Essential Skills

OCN NI provides the following support for Essential Skills:

- sample assessment and support materials
- a section on the OCN NI website dedicated to Essential Skills
- advice on the conduct and administration of Essential Skills
- professional development events for assessors and internal quality assurers
- centre briefings/visits
- support on becoming an accredited centre for Essential Skills
- standardisation activities

For further information about Essential Skills support contact OCN NI on 028 9046 3990.

Equality, Fairness and Inclusion

OCN NI has considered the requirements of equalities legislation in developing the specification for this qualification.

For further information and guidance relating to access to fair assessment and the OCN NI Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policies, centres should refer to the OCN NI website.

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Digital ICT
Qualification number: 610/4979/7

Operational start date: 01 September 2025
Operational end date: 31 August 2030
Certification end date: 31 August 2032

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APPENDIX 1

Essential Skills Core Curriculum and Standards for ICT in Northern Ireland 2023

Level 2
Core module A: Underpinning skills
This is made up Level 1 Skills Standards 1, 3, 4 and 5 If a learner has achieved Level 1, they will be exempt from this module.
Core module B: Advanced Communicating
B.1 Use email for a range of contexts and audiences including email signature, out of office reply, flag an email, reminder, read/delivery receipt, archive an email, delay delivery, email rules, email folders, spellcheck, grammar check. B.2 Know how to block a sender, manage spam and junk emails, send large attachments
1. Advanced document creating and editing
1.1. Advanced word-processing software skills, including such as table of contents, references and bibliography, mail-merge, document watermarks, cover page 1.2. Advanced presentation software skills, including slide layout, slide master, editing master slide, slide design, format slides, transitions, animations, timings, embedded video, insert charts, insert tables, diagrams, hyperlinks, action buttons, re-order slides, hide slides, spellcheck 1.3. Use appropriate layout conventions for information including formal communication and audiences (including familiar, unfamiliar audience).
2. Advanced number handling
2.1. Advanced spreadsheet skills, including linking multiple worksheets, switchboard/menu, data bars /sparklines (data trends), conditional formatting, pivot tables, lookup functions, sub-totals, data validation, hide rows and columns, hide worksheets, link data from another file, import and export data, forecasting tools, freeze panes, adjust row height, horizontal and vertical alignment 2.2. Know how to solve errors in a spreadsheet, including formula errors and circular referencing 2.3. Advanced charting skills, including automatic updating of charts when values change
3. Understanding digital marketing and social media
3.1. Understand digital marketing as a business tool e.g. establishment, growth, continuity 3.2. Know tools for digital marketing e.g. search engine optimisation (SEO), blogs and wikis, paid search results and know channels for digital marketing e.g. Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat 3.3. Understand data and analyse data relating so digital marketing and social media e.g. sources of data, collection of data 3.4. Understand legislation relating to digital marketing and social media e.g copyright, data protection
4. Advanced graphics
4.1. Advanced graphics, including combining images, layers, fill, canvas size, combine elements, align, rotate, flip, group, order, filters, test wrap, use bleeds, export to other file formats 4.2. Know when to use different file formats e.g. jpg, png, svg, bitmap, raw 4.3. Know methods of compression (lossy, non-lossy)