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# Qualification specification

**NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding  
Business Improvement Techniques  
QN: 603/4306/0**

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## Summary of changes

This section summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version (Version 1 June 2019).

Version	Publication Date	Summary of amendments
v1.0	June 2019	First publication
v1.1	January 2020	Information regarding the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners added to Learning resources (page 5)
v1.2	June 2022	Updated to include new information about English language assessment requirements, entry requirements and support handbook provision.
v1.3	December 2022	Small wording amendment to <a href="#">unit 3, assessment criteria 1.3.</a>

# Section 1

## About this qualification

## About this qualification

This Qualification Specification contains details of all the units and assessments required to complete this qualification.

To ensure that you are using the most up-to-date version of this Qualification Specification, please check the version number and date in the page footer against that of the Qualification Specification on the NCFE website.

If you advertise this qualification using a different or shortened name, you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the full regulated qualification title.

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## Support Handbook

This qualification specification must be used alongside the mandatory support handbook which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with planning, delivery and assessment.

This qualification specification contains all the qualification-specific information you will need that is not covered in the support handbook.

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## Learning Resources

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

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Qualification summary	
<b>Qualification title</b>	Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Business Improvement Techniques
<b>Qualification number (QN)</b>	603/4306/0
<b>Aim reference</b>	60343060
<b>Total Qualification Time (TQT)</b>	155
<b>Guided Learning Hours (GLH)</b>	110
<b>Minimum age</b>	16
<b>Qualification purpose</b>	The purpose of this qualification is to provide learners with knowledge and understanding of business improvement techniques, which can be applied across many different sectors and job roles.
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>This qualification aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on the study of business improvement techniques</li> <li>• offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge.</li> </ul> <p>The objectives of this qualification are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide the knowledge and understanding in a range of areas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- safe and effective team working</li> <li>- the principles and techniques that support workplace organisation</li> <li>- an understanding of continuous improvement techniques (Kaizen) and their application in the workplace</li> <li>- visual management systems</li> <li>- problem solving</li> <li>- flow process analysis.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Work/industry placement experience</b>	This is a knowledge only qualification. Work/industry placement experience is not required.
<b>Real work environment (RWE) requirement/ recommendation</b>	This is a knowledge only qualification. Experience in the real work environment is not required.

<b>Rules of combination</b>	Learners must achieve 6 mandatory units.
<b>Assessment method</b>	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence
<b>Progression</b>	<p>Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Business-Improvement Techniques</li> <li>• Level 3 qualifications in Business Improvement Techniques</li> <li>• Level 4 qualifications in Business Improvement Techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation information</b>	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/4306/0.
<b>Funding</b>	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.

## Entry guidance

This qualification is designed for:

- learners who wish to learn about business improvement techniques
- learners with responsibility for improving business performance
- learners who are looking for a career change, or wish to learn new skills.

It may also be useful to learners studying qualifications or looking to work in a variety of sector areas.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy and health and safety aspects of this qualification.

Learners registered on this qualification should not undertake another qualification at the same level with the same or a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

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## Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve **6 mandatory units**.

Please refer to the list of units on pages 8-9 or the unit summaries in Section 2 for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the units as detailed in this Qualification Specification. A partial certificate may be requested for learners who do not achieve their full qualification but have achieved at least one whole unit.

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## Units

To make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

The regulated unit number is indicated in brackets for each unit (eg M/100/7116) within Section 2.



Knowledge only units are indicated by a star. If a unit is not marked with a star, it is a skills unit or contains a mix of knowledge and skills.

## Mandatory units

	Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
★	Unit 01	R/617/5236	Safe and effective team working	2	25
★	Unit 02	Y/617/5237	Workplace organisation	2	15
★	Unit 03	D/617/5238	Continuous improvement (Kaizen)	2	20
★	Unit 04	H/617/5239	Visual management systems	2	15

	<b>Unit number</b>	<b>Regulated unit number</b>	<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>GLH</b>
☆	Unit 05	Y/617/5240	Problem solving	2	15
☆	Unit 06	D/617/5241	Flow process analysis	2	20

The units above may be available as stand-alone unit programmes. Please visit our website for further information.

## How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in a qualification.

This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.

The assessment consists of one component:

- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence which is assessed by centre staff and externally quality assured by NCFE.

Unless stated otherwise in this qualification specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.

## Internal assessment

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks, which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. On completion of each unit, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the Assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio for each unit are provided in Section 2.

Internally assessed work should be completed by the learner in accordance with the Qualification Specification.

The Tutor must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own.

If a centre chooses to create their own internal assessment tasks, they must:

- be accessible and lead to objective assessment judgements
- permit and encourage authentic activities where the learner's own work can be clearly judged
- refer to Course File Documents on the NCFE website.

## Supervision of learners and your role as an Assessor

Guidance on how to administer the internal assessment and the support you provide to learners can be found on the NCFE website.

## Feedback to learners

Guidance on providing feedback during teaching and learning and each stage of the assessment can be found on the NCFE website.

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# Section 2

## Unit content and assessment guidance

### **Unit content and assessment guidance**

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally quality assured. For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact our Quality Assurance team.

The Explanation of terms explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification. This document can be found in Section 3.

For further information or guidance about this qualification, please contact our Customer Support team.

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**Unit 01 Safe and effective team working (R/617/5236)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with an understanding of how to work safely and effectively as part of a team. Learners will understand regulations, safe working practices and procedures that apply to a work area, and be able to identify hazards and risks and how they can be reduced. Learners will also understand effective team working, the importance of building effective teams and working relationships, the types of problems that can occur and how to deal with them.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	25
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand how to work safely

The learner can:

- 1.1 Describe the specific regulations, safe working practices and procedures that apply to a work activity
- 1.2 Explain what constitutes a **hazard** in the workplace
- 1.3 Explain what constitutes a **risk** in the workplace
- 1.4 Identify potential risks and hazards associated with a work activity
- 1.5 Describe how potential risks and hazards can be reduced

**Key words**

**1.2 hazard** – something which has the potential to cause harm

**1.3 risk** – the likelihood of the hazard causing harm

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

1.1. Regulations, working practices and procedures will vary depending on the nature of the work activity. Learners could refer to an organisation they are familiar with or a case study could be provided.

Regulations could include: the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations, Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations, Manual Handling Operations Regulations, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, and Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulations.

Safe working practices could include maintaining a tidy workplace, keeping exits and walkways free from obstruction and safe use of equipment.

Procedures could include those relating to accidents and emergencies.

1.2 Learners should explain what could be considered as a hazard in the workplace. Hazards could include moving parts of machinery, electricity, slippery and uneven surfaces, poorly placed equipment, working at height and working in confined spaces.

1.3 Learners should explain what could be considered as a risk in the workplace. Risks could include non-reporting of accidental breakages of tools or equipment, and not following working practices and procedures.

1.4 and 1.5 Learners could complete a risk assessment to identify the risks and hazards associated with a work activity and describe how they can be reduced.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

### Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study
- product evidence such as a completed risk assessment.

## Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

2 Understand effective team working

The learner can:

- 2.1 Describe the characteristics of an effective team
- 2.2 Identify the factors that contribute to effective team working
- 2.3 Describe the importance of creating and maintaining effective working relationships
- 2.4 Explain how the principle of team role theory is used in team building
- 2.5 Describe the types of problem that can occur with working relationships
- 2.6 Describe the actions that can be taken to deal with specific problems in working relationships
- 2.7 Describe the importance of sharing knowledge, information and performance measures with other people in the team and with other groups

## Assessment guidance

### Delivery and assessment

2.1 Characteristics of an effective team could include common goals, good communication, trust, good leadership and clearly defined roles.

2.2 Factors that contribute to effective team working include (but are not limited to) team size, motivation levels, company culture and balance of roles within the team.

**Delivery and assessment**

2.3 When describing the importance of creating and maintaining effective working relationships, learners could consider the benefits of doing so and the consequences of ineffective working relationships.

2.4 When explaining how the principle of team role theory is used in team building, learners should refer to Belbin's team role theory.

2.5 Types of problems could include conflict, lack of trust, lack of sharing of information and poor communication.

2.6 Learners could refer to conflict management techniques.

2.7 Learners could refer to the benefits of sharing knowledge, information and performance measures with other people in the team and with other groups, and the consequences if knowledge, information and performance measures are not shared.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study.



**Unit 02 Workplace organisation (Y/617/5237)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with knowledge of workplace organisation. Learners will understand the principles and techniques that support workplace organisation and the benefits of having an organised work environment.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	15
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand workplace organisation

The learner can:

- 1.1 Explain the principles and techniques of workplace organisation
- 1.2 Describe the factors to be considered when selecting a work area for an activity
- 1.3 Describe the benefits of having an organised working environment
- 1.4 Explain how to score and audit a workplace organisation
- 1.5 Perform a workplace organisation audit using appropriate tools and techniques
- 1.6 Provide recommendations for the creation of, or changes to, **standard operating procedures (SOPs)** and visual controls

**Key words**

**1.6 standard operating procedures (SOPs)** – a set of step by step instructions that can be followed to carry out a work activity

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

- 1.1 Learners should refer to principles and techniques such as Lean Organisation and 5S.
- 1.2 Factors could include (but are not limited to) cleanliness, health and safety and product quality.
- 1.3 Benefits of having an organised working environment could include (but are not limited to) health and safety, efficiency and staff morale.
- 1.4 Learners should explain the use of 5S in relation to auditing and scoring workplace organisation.
- 1.5 Learners should perform a workplace organisation audit. Learners could perform this in their own organisation or could be provided with a case study.
- 1.6 Learners should provide recommendations for the creation of, or changes to, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and visual controls as a result of the workplace organisation audit completed in 1.5.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study
- product evidence such as a completed workplace audit.

**Unit 03 Continuous improvement (Kaizen) (D/617/5238)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	This unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of continuous improvement techniques (Kaizen) and their application in the workplace. It also covers the benefits of standard working methods and standardised work documents.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	20
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand continuous improvement techniques (Kaizen)

The learner can:

- 1.1 Identify the main Kaizen principles and their application
- 1.2 Describe the 8 wastes of lean and how to eliminate them
- 1.3 Explain how to carry out a Kaizen activity and establish measurable improvements
- 1.4 Identify waste, problems or conditions within a work area or activity where improvements can be made
- 1.5 Describe the benefits of standardised working methods
- 1.6 Describe the information required to create a **standard operating procedure (SOP)**
- 1.7 Prepare a standardised work document suggesting how to eliminate variance to process

**Key words**

**1.6 standard operating procedure (SOP)** – a set of step by step instructions that can be followed to carry out a work activity

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

- 1.1 Learners should identify the principles of Kaizen and their importance in lean business techniques and practice.
- 1.2 Learners should refer to the 8 wastes of lean, which include poor quality, over-production, waiting time, failure to exploit human potential, inventory, transport, motion and over-processing.
- 1.3 Learners should explain how to carry out a Kaizen activity and establish measurable improvements, which could include reduction in cost, improved health and safety and/or working environment, improved quality, improved regulatory compliance, improvements to working practices, reduction in waste and/or energy usage, improved customer service and improved resource utilisation.
- 1.4 Learners should identify waste, problems or conditions within a work area or activity where improvements can be made, which could include cleaning of equipment or a work area, maintenance of equipment, health and safety, processes and procedures.

**Delivery and assessment**

1.5 Benefits of standard working methods could include reduced waste, increased productivity and increased customer satisfaction.

1.6 Information could include the format to be used to create the SOP, information about the work activity, including problem areas, and the intended audience.

1.7 A specific activity or area should be selected (work documents, working methods, safe working practices) for which the learner should design a standardised work document suggesting how to eliminate variance to process.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study
- product evidence such as a standardised work document.

**Unit 04 Visual management systems (H/617/5239)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with an understanding of visual management systems and how they can be used to improve the work environment.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	15
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand visual management systems

The learner can:

- 1.1 Explain the purpose of a visual management system
- 1.2 Identify appropriate parts of a process or work area that would benefit from visual controls
- 1.3 Describe the factors to be considered when selecting a visual management system
- 1.4 Describe the visual management systems available to create 'the visual workplace'
- 1.5 Identify elements that contribute to good visual management in the workplace
- 1.6 Prepare appropriate visual indicators for parts of a process or work area

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

1.1 Learners could refer to the benefits of visual management systems, which could include compliance with health and safety, improved communication and awareness of performance.

1.2 Learners should identify appropriate parts of a process or work area that will benefit from visual controls. Learners could refer to their own organisation or could be provided with a case study.

1.3 Factors to be considered could include the type of information to be communicated, how to make information informative and cost effectiveness.

1.4 Visual management systems could include Kanban systems, card systems, colour coding, floor footprints, graphs and team boards.

1.5 Elements that contribute to good visual management could include ensuring information is purposeful, involving team members in production, and ensuring information is up-to-date and customer focused.

1.6 Learners should prepare visual indicators for the parts of the process or work area identified in 1.2.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study
- product evidence such as visual indicators produced.

**Unit 05 Problem solving (Y/617/5240)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	The aim of this unit is for learners to understand how to identify and solve problems using formalised problem solving processes. Learners will understand how to identify and verify the root cause of a problem to prevent recurrence.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	15
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand how to identify and solve problems

The learner can:

- 1.1 Describe the business need for problem identification and removal
- 1.2 Describe the benefits of adopting a formalised problem solving process
- 1.3 Explain the impact of unresolved problems
- 1.4 Explain how to identify and verify the root cause of a problem
- 1.5 Explain how to prevent reoccurrence of the problems
- 1.6 Apply a structured approach to problem solving

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

1.1 Learners could refer to the benefits to the business of problem identification and removal.

1.2 Benefits of adopting a formalised problem solving process could include use of a consistent approach, the ability to solve problems and ensuring the problem solving process is fit for purpose.

1.3 Impacts could include decreased productivity/performance, low staff morale and increased health and safety risks.

1.4 Learners could refer to the use of brainstorming, the '5 Whys', Ishikawa diagrams, testing decisions, verification techniques and root cause paths.

1.5 Learners could include changes to management systems, changes to operating systems and procedures and the identification of opportunities for improvement.

1.6 Learners should apply a structured problem solving approach to an identified problem. Learners could apply this to a problem in their own organisation or could be provided with a case study.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.



**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study.

**Unit 06 Flow process analysis (D/617/5241)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	This unit aims to give learners an understanding of flow process analysis. Learners will understand how to map out a process using recognised symbols within a process map and how to identify value added and non-value added activity to suggest improvements for a given work area.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	20
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

**Learning outcome 1**

The learner will:

- 1 Understand flow process analysis

The learner can:

- 1.1 Explain how to carry out flow process analysis
- 1.2 Explain how to map out a process using **recognised symbols**
- 1.3 Produce a process map using appropriate symbols and terminology within a given work area
- 1.4 Describe the difference between value added and non-value added activities
- 1.5 Identify value added and non-value added steps in the process and any waste that may occur
- 1.6 Explain how to identify opportunities for improvements to the process
- 1.7 Provide recommendations as to where improvements can be made
- 1.8 Describe the purpose of an action plan

**Key words**

**1.2 recognised symbols** – such as those symbols used within lean processing

**Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment**

- 1.1 Learners should explain the steps involved in carrying out flow process analysis, to include informative and directive.
- 1.2 Learners should use recognised symbols such as those used within lean processing, to include operation, inspection, transport, waiting and storage.
- 1.3 Learners should produce a process map using appropriate symbols and terminology within a given work area. Learners could use a process within their own organisation or one that they are familiar with.
- 1.4 Learners should describe the difference between value added and non-value added activities.
- 1.5 Learners should identify value added and non-value added steps in the process they have produced and any waste that may occur.
- 1.6 Opportunities for improvement could include areas where cost savings can be made and waste can be reduced.

**Delivery and assessment**

1.7 Learners should provide recommendations as to where improvements can be made within the process.

1.8 Learners should describe the purpose of an action plan (prioritises and evaluates improvement opportunities). Learners could refer to the use of a payback matrix in analysing cost benefit and cost risk to support any recommendations made.

The Explanation of terms (Section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

**Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- learner written report
- written or oral question and answer
- discussion
- assignment
- case study
- product evidence.

# Section 3

## Explanation of terms

## Explanation of terms

This table explains how the terms used at Level 2 in the unit content are applied to this qualification (not all verbs are used in this qualification).

<b>Apply</b>	Link existing knowledge to new or different situations.
<b>Assess</b>	Consider information in order to make decisions.
<b>Classify</b>	Organise according to specific criteria.
<b>Compare</b>	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences.
<b>Define</b>	State the meaning of a word or phrase.
<b>Demonstrate</b>	Show an understanding of the subject or how to apply skills in a practical situation.
<b>Describe</b>	Write about the subject giving detailed information.
<b>Differentiate</b>	Give the differences between two or more things.
<b>Discuss</b>	Write an account giving more than one view or opinion.
<b>Distinguish</b>	Show or recognise the difference between items/ideas/information.
<b>Estimate</b>	Give an approximate decision or opinion using previous knowledge.
<b>Explain</b>	Provide details about the subject with reasons showing how or why. Some responses could include examples.
<b>Give (positive and negative points...)</b>	Provide information showing the advantages and disadvantages of the subject.
<b>Identify</b>	List or name the main points (some description may also be necessary to gain higher marks when using compensatory marking).
<b>Illustrate</b>	Give clear information using written examples, pictures or diagrams.
<b>List</b>	Make a list of key words, sentences or comments that focus on the subject.
<b>Perform</b>	Do something (take an action/follow an instruction) which the question or task asks or requires.
<b>Plan</b>	Think about and organise information in a logical way. This could be presented as written information, a diagram, an illustration or other suitable format.
<b>Provide</b>	Give relevant information about a subject.
<b>Reflect</b>	Learners should look back on their actions, experiences or learning and think about how this could inform their future practice.

<b>Select</b>	Choose for a specific purpose.
<b>Show</b>	Supply sufficient evidence to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
<b>State</b>	Give the main points clearly in sentences.
<b>Use</b>	Take or apply an item, resource or piece of information as asked in the question or task.

# Section 4

## Additional information

## **Additional information**

### **Resource requirements**

There are no specific resource requirements for this qualification, but centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the appropriate learning outcomes.

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### **Support for learners**

#### **Learner's Evidence Tracking Log (LETL)**

The LETL covers the mandatory units in this qualification and it can help learners keep track of their work. This document can be downloaded free of charge from the Qualifications page on the NCFE website. You do not have to use the LETL – you can devise your own evidence tracking document instead.

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### **Support for centres**

#### **Key Facts**

This document outlines the key information of this qualification for the centre, learner and employer.

#### **Useful websites**

Centres may find the following website helpful for information, materials and resources to assist with the delivery of this qualification:

- [www.asme.org/about-asme/standards](http://www.asme.org/about-asme/standards)
- 

### **Learning resources**

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the Qualifications page on the NCFE website for more information and to see what is available for this qualification.

### **Third-party products**

Products to support the delivery of this qualification are offered by the following third-party supplier:

- Learning Curve Group.

For more information about these resources and how to access them, please visit the NCFE website.

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## Contact us

NCFE  
Q6  
Quorum Park  
Benton Lane  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE12 8BT

Tel: 0191 239 8000\*

Fax: 0191 239 8001

Email: [customersupport@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@ncfe.org.uk)

Websites: [www.ncfe.org.uk](http://www.ncfe.org.uk)

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***\* To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.***