

**NCFE**

**CACHE**

# Qualification specification

**NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in Suicide  
Awareness  
QN: 603/6063/X**

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## Summary of changes

This section summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version (v1.3 October 2021).

Version	Publication Date	Summary of amendments
v1.0	September 2020	First publication
v1.1	November 2020	p.7, further information added into the staffing requirements section in relation to equivalent qualifications and significant experience.
v1.2	February 2021	p.7 and p.10, further information added on the internal quality assurance process.
v1.3	October 2021	p.25, further information added regarding <a href="#">third-party products</a> .
v1.4	March 2022	p.15, the command verb in assessment <a href="#">criteria 7.3</a> has been changed from 'reflect on' to 'explain'. p.25, information regarding assessment criteria has been deleted from the <a href="#">third-party products</a> section.
v1.5	June 2022	Further information added to the <a href="#">how the qualification is assessed</a> section to confirm that unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.  Information added to the <a href="#">entry guidance</a> section to advise that registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the Portal.  Information added to the <a href="#">support handbook</a> section about how to access support handbooks.

# Section 1

## About this qualification

## Introduction

This Qualification Specification contains details of the unit 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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- you may copy and paste any material from this document; however, we do not accept any liability for any incomplete or inaccurate copying and subsequent use of this information
- the use of PDF versions of our support materials on the NCFE website will ensure that correct and up-to-date information is provided to learners
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- 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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## 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.

<b>Qualification summary</b>	
<b>Qualification title</b>	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in Suicide Awareness
<b>Qualification number (QN)</b>	603/6063/X
<b>Aim reference</b>	6036063X
<b>Total Qualification Time (TQT)</b>	13* *The completion of all mandatory content (to include internal assessment) is completed under supervised conditions therefore GLH and TQT are identical
<b>Guided Learning Hours (GLH)</b>	13
<b>Minimum age</b>	16
<b>Qualification purpose</b>	The purpose of the Level 2 Award in Suicide Awareness is to provide learners with knowledge of the scale and context of suicide within the United Kingdom, its associated stigma and the main risk factors, and to increase their understanding that suicide is preventable.
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>This qualification aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide learners with knowledge of tolerance levels and coping strategies, and of positive and solutions-focused responses</li> <li>• focus on the study of suicide risks and triggers</li> <li>• offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge and understanding.</li> </ul> <p>The objectives of this qualification are to help learners understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the context of suicide</li> <li>• the impact of stressful situations on an individual</li> <li>• how individuals cope differently with stressful situations</li> <li>• the possible effects of stressful situations on an individual's wellbeing</li> <li>• how an individual's outlook might impact their susceptibility to suicidal thoughts</li> <li>• the importance of talking about suicide, suicidal thoughts and seeking support.</li> </ul>

<b>Real work environment (RWE) requirement/recommendation</b>	This is a knowledge only qualification. Experience in the real work environment is not required.
<b>Grading</b>	Pass/Fail
<b>Assessment method</b>	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence.
<b>Staffing requirements</b>	<p>In order to deliver this qualification it is recommended that Tutors complete Unit 1 of the Level 4 Award in Delivering the STEPS Suicide Awareness and Reduction Programmes, have achieved an equivalent qualification in delivering mental health qualifications or have gained significant experience in the Mental Health sector to include delivering counselling or therapy.</p> <p>Equivalent qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)</li> <li>• Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST)</li> <li>• Suicide First Aid (SFA).</li> </ul> <p>Significant experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mental health nursing</li> <li>• professional therapy</li> <li>• counselling</li> <li>• psychotherapy</li> <li>• therapy in a community services setting</li> <li>• 3 years' experience in supporting people in a pastoral capacity (such as a head of year in a school or workplace mentor).</li> </ul> <p>Centres delivering this qualification must have sufficiently qualified or experienced Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) to verify the assessment decisions made are reliable and valid.</p>
<b>Progression</b>	<p>Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCFE CACHE Level 3 Award in STEPS Towards Suicide Reduction (603/6064/1)</li> <li>• NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Mental Health Awareness (600/6134/0)</li> <li>• NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Problems (601/3438/0)</li> <li>• NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Working with People with Mental Health Needs (601/3434/3)</li> <li>• NCFE CACHE Level 3 Certificate in Understanding Mental Health (601/8968/X)</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation information</b>	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/6063/X.

<b>Funding</b>	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.
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## Entry guidance

This qualification is designed for learners over the age of 16 who want to gain an understanding of suicide risk and how people might react when faced with a difficult situation or circumstance.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal. However, learners should be aged 16 or above to undertake this qualification.

There is no specific prior knowledge requirement a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already completed a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification in Mental Health Awareness prior to studying this qualification.

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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## IMPORTANT

This qualification focuses on risks and triggers that may lead an individual to experience suicidal thoughts. In view of the subject matter, **it is essential** that any learner who is either undergoing talking therapies (such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)) or receiving counselling is aware of the sensitivity of the content.

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## Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve the one mandatory unit.

Please refer to the listed unit on the following page or the unit summary in Section 2 for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the unit as detailed in this Qualification Specification.

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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 the unit.

There is one regulated unit number for this qualification (J/618/2703).



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 unit



Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
Unit 01	J/618/2703	Understanding suicide	2	13

## How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skills, 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.

Learners must be successful in **this** component to gain the Level 2 Award in Suicide Awareness.

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 the unit. On completion of the 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 the unit are provided in Section 2.

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

Any work submitted for internal assessment must be completed and authenticated as attributable to the learner. The Tutor must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own.

A centre may choose to create their own internal assessment tasks. The tasks should:

- 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.

## Assessors and internal quality assurance

Staff involved in the assessment and internal quality assurance of the qualification must be able to demonstrate they have (or are working towards) relevant occupational knowledge and/or competence at Level 2 or above. This may be gained through experience and/or a relevant internal quality assurance qualification. A sample of learner portfolios must be checked by an Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) to ensure consistency. The IQA will follow the centre's sampling strategy in selecting the sample to be internally quality assured. See our website [www.ncfe.org.uk](http://www.ncfe.org.uk) for further information on sampling.

## 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 Understanding suicide (J/618/2703)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	In this unit, learners will develop the understanding and knowledge required to identify how an individual might respond on an emotional level to a challenging situation. They will consider risks, tolerance levels and coping strategies and how negative thoughts and behaviours might lead an individual to consider suicide.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	13
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory

<b>Learner name:</b>	
<b>Centre no:</b>	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> The learner will:	<b>Assessment criteria</b> The learner can:	<b>Evidence record</b> eg page number & method	<b>Assessor</b> Initial and date
1. Understand the context of suicide in the UK and the importance of suicide awareness	1.1 Describe the scale of known suicides in the UK and the importance of suicide awareness		
	1.2 Explain and correct the myths associated with suicide		
	1.3 Identify the facts about suicide that relate to different demographics		
	1.4 Describe the perceived stigma associated with suicide		
2. Understand different stressful situations an individual may face in their lives that may increase their suicidal thoughts	2.1 Identify situations an individual may face that might contribute to an increase in suicidal thoughts		
	2.2 Identify risk factors that contribute to suicide		
3. Understand stress vulnerability and how an individual's ability to cope influences their response to stressful situations and the likelihood of them having suicidal thoughts	3.1 Describe the negative impact stressors can have on an individual that could lead to suicidal thoughts		
	3.2 Describe the range of responses an individual might have as a result of a stressful situation		
	3.3 Identify typical behavioural signs that an individual is not coping		

4. Understand the impact stressful situations may have on an individual's mental health, the use of helpful coping strategies and how the stressors (and unhelpful coping strategies) may lead to suicidal thoughts	4.1 Explain how aspects of an individual's mental health can be affected by a stressful situation		
	4.2 Describe how different individuals may use a range of positive and/or negative strategies to cope with the same stressful situation		
	4.3 Identify verbal and non-verbal clues that may indicate that an individual is struggling to cope emotionally		
5. Understand how an individual's current perspective and view of the future may be a strong indicator of their level of suicide risk	5.1 Describe the role that ambivalence plays in whether suicidal thoughts are acted upon		
	5.2 Describe the impact that an individual's values might have on their perspective		
	5.3 Explain the influence of triggers on an individual's suicide risk		
6. Understand the importance of a conversation taking place with an individual at risk of suicide. The learner will be able to identify solutions-focused responses	6.1 Explain why having a conversation with an individual at risk of suicide is important		
	6.2 Identify the components of a successful conversation when talking to an individual at suicide risk		
	6.3 Explain the role of confidentiality in acute suicide risk		
	6.4 Explain why the support preferences of an individual at risk of suicide should be considered		
7. The learner will know how to sign-post the individual to appropriate support and professional services	7.1 Identify suicide support organisations and their focus		
	7.2 Describe the type of help that support organisations can provide to an individual at suicide risk		
	7.3 Explain how to offer support to an individual at suicide risk		



**Unit 01 Understanding suicide (J/618/2703) (cont'd)****Assessment guidance****Delivery and assessment****Section 1: Suicide in context**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- describe the prevalence of known suicide in the United Kingdom
- explain the stigma surrounding suicide
- give examples of the myths associated with suicide
- describe how demographics can impact on suicide risk, which could include age, gender, family circumstances, financial and/or employment situations
- describe the impact of a conversation with a person at suicide risk.

It is important for learners to recognise that the number of deaths reported equates to the number of deaths registered as suicide; however, the true number of suicides may be higher.

**Section 2: Situations – an individual's stressors**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- identify a minimum of 3 difficult situations an individual may encounter in their lives, which could include:
  - social isolation
  - change in employment situation
- describe the main risk factors:
  - poor mental health
  - substance abuse
  - previous history and/or exposure to suicide
- provide a minimum of 3 examples of other factors that may contribute to suicide, which could include:
  - bullying and peer pressure
  - the death of a loved one.

Learners must be able to identify that individuals have different stress limits when dealing with a difficult situation.

**Section 3: Tolerance – an individual's coping mechanisms**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- provide a minimum of 3 examples of risk factors and stressors, which must include aspects of an individual's:
  - physical health
  - mental health
  - relationships
- describe a minimum of 3 different responses to stressors, which could include:
  - avoiding the situation
  - leading a healthy lifestyle
- describe a minimum of 3 ways in which an individual's behaviour might change, which could include:

- self-neglect
- social withdrawal.

#### **Section 4: Emotions – the impact on an individual’s wellbeing**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- explain the stress vulnerability model
- describe the impact of mood, anxiety and psychosis on an individual’s wellbeing
- discuss different positive and negative coping strategies and describe a minimum of 3 examples of each, which could include:
  - **positive:**
    - access mental health services
    - exercise
  - **negative:**
    - substance abuse
    - changes in sleep pattern
- identify verbal and non-verbal signs that an individual is not coping. Learners must identify a minimum of 3 examples for each.

#### **Section 5: Perspective – an individual’s view of the situation and the future**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- explain the term ‘ambivalence’
- describe the choices faced by a person at suicide risk
- give 3 examples of the impact of different values on an individual’s perspective, which could include:
  - future goals
  - sense of responsibility to others
- provide a minimum of 3 examples of a positive outlook and reasons for an individual to continue to live
- provide a minimum of 3 examples of direct verbal signs that an individual has expressed suicidal intent
- provide a minimum of 3 examples of indirect verbal signs an individual is considering suicide
- provide a minimum of 3 examples of self-limiting beliefs, which could include:
  - ‘I am not good enough for this’.

#### **Section 6: Solutions– what works and the importance of a conversation**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- provide a minimum of 3 examples of support
- provide 3 examples of organisations that support an individual who may have suicidal thoughts.

#### **Section 7: Support – sign-post support and professional services**

In this section, you must provide evidence to meet the following criteria:

- provide examples of wider support organisations and describe their role
- explain the role of a conversation to provide effective support
- explain how to support an individual at suicide risk.

**Useful websites:**

Office for National Statistics: [www.ons.gov.uk/](http://www.ons.gov.uk/)  
 World Health Organization: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)  
 Samaritans: [www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)  
 Zero Suicide Alliance: [www.zerosuicidealliance.com/](http://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/)  
 Mind: [www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)  
 Centre for Mental Health: [www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/)  
 Mental Health Foundation: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)  
 Rethink Mental Illness: [www.rethink.org/](http://www.rethink.org/)  
 Andys Man Club: [www.andysmanclub.co.uk/](http://www.andysmanclub.co.uk/)  
 Combat Stress: [www.combatstress.org.uk/](http://www.combatstress.org.uk/)  
 Maytree: [www.maytree.org.uk/](http://www.maytree.org.uk/)  
 Papyrus: [www.papyrus-uk.org/](http://www.papyrus-uk.org/)

**Types of evidence**

Evidence must meet all of the assessment criteria requirements.

Evidence could include:

- written accounts
- reflective accounts
- professional discussion
- direct observation
- peer observation and feedback.

**Learner declaration of authenticity:**

I declare that the work presented for this unit is entirely my own work.

Learner signature:

Date:

**Assessor sign off of completed unit:** Unit 01: Understanding suicide

I confirm that the learner has met the requirements for all assessment criteria demonstrating knowledge and skills for this unit.

Assessor name:

Signature:

Date:

For e-portfolio a signature is not required, providing the learner has a personalised and secure login.

### Recommended assessment methods

A recommended range of assessment methods has been identified, which may be used for the content areas in this qualification. This gives the opportunity for different learning styles and individual needs of learners to be taken into account.

If you are proposing to use an assessment method that is not included within the recommended list, you should contact your External Quality Assurer with full details of your proposed method. It will need formal approval from us before it can be used.

Each learner must generate evidence from appropriate assessment tasks which demonstrate achievement of all the learning outcomes.

Please refer to the notes relating to expert witness testimony and simulation which follow this table.

Ref	Assessment Method	Assessing Competence/ Skills	Assessing Knowledge/ Understanding
A	Direct observation of learner by Assessor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by an Assessor who meets the relevant Sector Skills Council's or other assessment strategy/principles and includes inference of knowledge from this direct observation of practice</li> </ul>	No	Yes
B	Professional discussion	No	Yes
C	Expert witness testimony* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when directed by the Sector Skills Council or other assessment strategy/principles</li> </ul>	No	Yes
D	Learner's own work products	No	Yes
E	Learner log or reflective diary	No	Yes
F	Activity plan or planned activity	No	Yes
G	Observation of children, young people or adults by the learner	No	Yes
H	Portfolio of evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include simulation**</li> </ul>	No	Yes
I	Recognition of prior learning	No	No

J	Reflection on own practice in real work environment	No	No
K	Written and pictorial information	No	Yes
L	Scenario or case study	No	No
M	Task set by CACHE (for knowledge learning outcomes)	No	No
N	Oral questions and answers	No	Yes

\* **Expert witness testimony** should be used in line with the relevant assessment strategy/principles. This method must be used with professional discretion, and only selected when observation would not be appropriate. Those providing an expert witness testimony must be lead practitioners with experience of making judgements around competence. The circumstances that may allow for an expert witness testimony include:

- when assessment may cause distress to an individual, such as supporting a child with a specific need
- a rarely occurring situation, such as dealing with an accident or illness
- confidential situations – such as safeguarding strategy meetings – where it would be inappropriate for an Assessor to observe the learner’s performance.

\*\* **Simulation.** A learner’s portfolio of evidence may only include simulation of skills where simulation is permitted by the relevant assessment strategy/principles.

### Assessment strategy

### Knowledge learning outcomes

- Assessors will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make assessment decisions.
- Internal Quality Assurers will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

### Competence/Skills learning outcomes

- Assessors will need to be both occupationally competent and qualified to make assessment decisions.
- Internal Quality Assurers will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

# 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>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>Perform</b>	Do something (take an action/follow an instruction) which the question or task asks or requires.
<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.
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# Section 4

## Additional information

## **Additional information**

### **Resource requirements**

There are no mandatory 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 centres**

#### **Qualification Factsheet**

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

#### **Useful websites**

Centres may find the websites listed in the assessment guidance in Section 2 helpful for information, materials and resources to assist with the delivery of this qualification.

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### **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 third-party supplier:

- LearnBox Ltd

Centres must be able to demonstrate that each learning outcome has been covered and that learners have met all mandatory assessment requirements and are able to describe and explain the qualification content which must be evidenced in their portfolios.

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

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**This qualification was developed in conjunction with mental health training experts Big Dog Little Dog (BDLD).**

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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.***