

## Qualifications and Credit Framework Glossary

**Date of issue** 28 February 2011

**Publication intent** NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>access arrangements</b>	Arrangements that are approved in advance of an examination or assessment to allow achievement to be demonstrated by candidates with a disability, special learning needs (including where the candidate's first language is not English, Welsh or Irish) or to avoid unlawful discrimination
<b>accreditation</b>	The process through which the qualifications regulators confirm that a qualification conforms to the requirements of the QCF regulatory arrangements
<b>active units</b>	Units that have been included in an accredited qualification and as a result can be made available by awarding organisations to learners to achieve credit for
<b>additional information (about units)</b>	Information added to the designated design specifications of the unit, some of which is required and some which may be specified, to support the processes of searching for, selecting, assessing and reviewing units from the databank
<b>appeal</b>	The process through which an awarding organisation may be challenged on the outcome of an enquiry about results or, where appropriate, other procedural decisions affecting a centre or an individual learner

### Skills Funding Agency

Cheylesmore House Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT  
 T 0845 377 5000 [www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)  
 An agency of the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

<b>assessment</b>	The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment criteria of a unit, or any additional assessment requirements of a qualification
<b>assessment criteria</b>	Descriptions of the requirements a learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved
<b>assessment standard</b>	The standard that a learner is expected to reach in order to achieve credit for a unit, expressed through a combination of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of that unit
<b>assessor</b>	A person who assesses a learner's work
<b>award of credits or qualifications</b>	A certificate (electronic or paper-based) issued to an individual that recognises their achievement
<b>award</b>	A qualification and credit value between 1 and 12
<b>awarding</b>	The process by which learners results are determined on the basis of the evidence produced through their assessment
<b>awarding organisation</b>	A body recognised by the qualifications regulators against the requirements set out in these regulatory arrangements to award credits and qualifications
<b>barred combinations (of units)</b>	Units that cannot be counted together as part of a rule of combination for a qualification
<b>centre</b>	An organisation accountable to an awarding organisation for assessment arrangements leading to the award of credit or qualifications
<b>centre recognition</b>	A process through which a centre wishing to offer an award or awards is confirmed as being able to maintain the required quality and consistency of assessment, and comply with other requirements of the awarding organisation
<b>certificate (1) for a unit or qualification</b>	A record of attainment of credit or a qualification issued by an awarding organisation
<b>certificate (2)</b>	A qualification with a credit value between 13 and 36

<b>comparability of assessment</b>	The extent to which assessment outcomes are equivalent between centres, awarding organisations, units and qualifications, and over time
<b>component</b>	A subset of a qualification to which a particular set of assessment methods and/or awarding arrangements is applied
<b>condition of accreditation</b>	Requirements, relating to non-compliance with the regulatory arrangements, that awarding organisations must meet which, although important, are not deemed sufficiently serious to delay or reverse an accreditation decision
<b>credit</b>	An award made to a learner in recognition of the achievement of the designated learning outcomes of a unit
<b>credit accumulation</b>	The process of putting together a combination of credits to meet the achievement requirements of a qualification
<b>credit from 'other' units</b>	Opportunities for a learner to count credit towards a qualification from optional units that are not listed individually but instead are defined by noting the number of credits that can be counted towards the qualification and one or more of the following constraints: the level or levels at which these credits must be achieved; the subject/sector classification of the units through which credits may be achieved; any time constraints on the award of credit that may be counted towards achievement of the qualification
<b>credit transfer</b>	The process of using a credit or credits awarded in the context of one qualification towards the achievement requirements of another qualification
<b>credit value</b>	The number of credits that may be awarded to a learner for the successful achievement of the learning outcomes of a unit
<b>diploma endorsed sub-title (for a qualification)</b>	A qualification with a credit value of 37 or above A bracketed addition to a qualification title that reflects a particular specialism that a learner demonstrates by completing the requirements of a particular pathway

<b>equivalent unit/s</b>	A unit / units from a different qualification or submitted by another recognised organisation that is/are deemed to be of equivalent value and so can count towards a qualification in place of designated mandatory or optional unit/s from it
<b>exemption</b>	The facility for a learner to claim exemption from some of the achievement requirements of a QCF qualification, using evidence of certificated, non-QCF achievement deemed to be of equivalent value
<b>expiry date of a unit</b>	The date a unit will cease to be part of the unit databank and after which the unit will become archived and so can no longer feature in accredited qualifications
<b>grade</b>	A point on a scale of performance used to differentiate achievement within a qualification
<b>guided learning hours</b>	The number of hours of teacher-supervised or directed study time required to teach a qualification or unit of a qualification
<b>learner record</b>	An authoritative record of all credit and qualification achievements made by an individual learner in the QCF
<b>learning outcome</b>	A statement of what a learner can be expected to know, understand or do as a result of a process of learning
<b>learning time</b>	The amount of time a learner at the level of the unit is expected to take, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard determined by the assessment criteria
<b>level</b>	An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement, and/or the autonomy of the learner in demonstrating that achievement
<b>level descriptors</b>	A set of statements that enable achievements to be located at a particular level in the framework Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework

<b>malpractice</b>	The deliberate or wilful contravention or ignoring of the regulatory requirements of the QCF by an organisation recognised to operate within the framework
<b>mandatory units</b>	Units in a set of rules of combination that must be achieved for the qualification to be awarded
<b>national occupational standards (NOS)</b>	Describe what a person needs to do, know and understand in a job to carry out the role in a consistent and competent way
<b>monitoring</b>	The review of, and reporting on, an organisation's compliance with the regulatory arrangements by the qualifications regulators
<b>optional unit</b>	A unit named in a set of rules of combination that a learner may choose to complete to achieve the required number of units/credits for award of the qualification
<b>pathway</b>	A route to the achievement of a qualification that requires a combination of credits to be achieved from particular units and is identified by an endorsement to a qualification title
<b>provision planning tools</b>	Strategies, such as sector qualification strategies and associated action plans or the Foundation Learning Tier Qualifications Strategy, developed by an SSC or other appropriate body, that set out requirements for units and qualifications in a particular area
<b>purpose and aim(s) of a unit</b>	Provides additional information about a unit to users in the form of a succinct statement that clearly summarises the content of the unit
<b>qualification</b>	An award made to a learner for the achievement of the specified combination of credits, or credits and exemptions, required for that award
<b>qualification level</b>	An indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement, and/or the autonomy of the learner, represented by a qualification
<b>qualification purpose</b>	A means of identifying qualifications with a set of shared characteristics

<b>qualification specification</b>	A detailed statement defining the purpose, content, structure and assessment arrangements for a qualification
<b>qualification title</b>	A short description of the level, size and content of the qualification
<b>qualification type</b>	A group of qualifications defined through the application of an additional set of regulatory requirements that are particular to that group of qualifications Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework
<b>qualifications regulator</b>	Government-designated statutory organisations required to establish national standards for credits and qualifications and secure consistent compliance with them
<b>reasonable adjustments</b>	Defined in the Disability Discrimination Act as reasonable steps to ensure disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people, 'substantial' being more than minor or trivial
<b>recognised organisation</b>	A body recognised by the qualifications regulators, against the requirements set out in these regulatory arrangements, to perform one or more of the following functions: developing units, developing rules of combination, assessing and awarding credits and qualifications
<b>recognition of prior learning (RPL)</b>	A method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning
<b>reliability of assessment</b>	The extent to which assessment results are an accurate measurement of a learner's achievements against the requirements of a unit – reliable assessment repeatedly produces the same outcome without inherent bias or variability in the assessment instrument

<b>required combinations of units</b>	Units that must be counted together as part of a rule of combination for a qualification
<b>requirements about the way in which units are assessed</b>	Set requirements about the way in which particular units must be assessed. This section of the additional information about units is only completed if a particular approach to assessment is needed for one or more qualifications. These requirements are detailed at unit level and must not refer to specific qualifications. They are then applied, as appropriate, for particular qualifications
<b>restricted units</b>	A unit that a recognised organisation places in the unit databank and restricts the use of to a list of recognised organisations to access for use in the development of its rules of combination and to award credit for. An organisation may choose to restrict the use of the unit to its own organisation
<b>rules of combination</b>	A description of the credit accumulation requirements for the achievement of a named qualification
<b>sector skills council</b>	A body responsible for formulating and reviewing occupational standards for a specific sector across the UK, and for supporting the development of units and qualifications based on these standards. Each SSC is an employer-led, independent organisation and is licensed by government
<b>sector qualifications strategy</b>	A specification of the current and future needs of sector, with a timeline and action plan
<b>shared unit</b>	A unit that a recognised organisation places in the unit databank and makes available to all other recognised organisations to access for use in the development of its rules of combination and to award credit for
<b>special consideration</b>	A process that allows candidates that suffer from temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of an assessment to demonstrate the achievement they are capable of for the units that are subject to special consideration

<b>subject/sector classification system</b>	A series of categories based on industry sectors and academic subjects used to classify qualifications
<b>standardisation of assessments</b>	A process to ensure that assessment leading to the award of credits and qualifications is applied consistently by individuals, centres and awarding organisations
<b>unique learner number (ULN)</b>	The unique number that is used to identify an individual learner
<b>unit</b>	A coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria, with a title, credit value and level
<b>unit data bank</b>	A repository within which all units used in qualifications are stored, classified and made available to users
<b>validity of assessment</b>	The fitness for purpose of an assessment tool or scheme – valid assessment gives an accurate measurement of what it is supposed to measure

**Date created**            28 February 2011  
**Version**                    1