



National Occupational Standards and Qualifications Course: Functional Analysis and NQF Levelling

14 – 18 December 2026

London - Central London four-star



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Introduction:

National occupational standards and qualifications development, from functional analysis to NQF levelling, is the subject of this 5-day course for sector skills councils, qualifications bodies and corporate academies, who produce an Occupational Standard and Qualification Development Dossier for a case sector. Qualifications lose employer trust when standards are written from job titles instead of work functions, units cannot be assessed and levels are assigned by habit rather than descriptors. Nominees already draft or review standards, units or qualification specifications and work through case studies built on sector workforce data. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this occupational standards course.

Course Objectives:

- Map an occupational area and run a functional analysis that moves from key purpose to key roles, key functions and units
- Write units with elements, performance criteria, range statements and knowledge requirements that assessors can apply without interpretation
- Level units and qualifications against NQF level descriptors using best-fit judgement and assign credit from notional learning hours
- Package qualifications with mandatory and optional units, rules of combination and progression routes
- Specify an assessment strategy and a recognition of prior learning route that fit the evidence each unit demands
- Validate draft standards and qualifications with employer panels and set a review and revision cycle

Target Audience:

- Sector skills council units responsible for commissioning, drafting and maintaining occupational standards
 - Qualifications development teams responsible for writing qualification specifications and submitting them for approval
 - Framework and levelling units responsible for placing qualifications on a national qualifications framework
 - Corporate academy managers responsible for converting in-house job roles into recognised standards and qualifications
 - Assessment strategy and RPL coordinators responsible for setting evidence rules for awarding bodies and training providers
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Occupational Standards Landscape and Sector Mapping

- Occupational Standards Versus Qualifications Versus Curricula Role Map
- Standards Development Stakeholder Map Across Employers and Awarding Bodies
- Sector Occupational Map With Job Families and Workforce Data
- Labour Market Signals Used to Prioritise New Standards
- Existing Standards Inventory and Gap Audit for a Sector

Day 2: Functional Analysis, DACUM and Unit Architecture

- Functional Analysis Tree From Key Purpose to Key Functions
- DACUM Panel Method for Duty and Task Listing
- Unit Boundary Rules and Avoiding Overlapping Work Functions
- Unit Template With Title, Overview, Scope and Elements
- Occupational Profile Versus Unit Library Design Choices

Day 3: Writing Units and Levelling Against an NQF

- Performance Criteria Drafting With Verb, Object and Condition
- Knowledge and Understanding Statements Linked to Each Element
- NQF Level Descriptors for Knowledge, Skills and Autonomy
- Best-Fit Levelling Grid and Panel Levelling Record
- Credit Value Calculation From Notional Learning Hours

Day 4: Qualification Packaging, Assessment Strategy and RPL Design

- Rules of Combination for Mandatory and Optional Units
- Qualification Specification With Purpose Statement and Progression Routes
- Unit Assessment Strategy With Evidence Types and Simulation Limits
- Recognition of Prior Learning Route With Portfolio and Challenge Test
- Common Drafting Faults Found in Standards and Qualification Approvals

Day 5: Case Study on a Sector Standard and Qualification Dossier

- Case Sector Data Pack and Functional Analysis Workshop
 - Two Units Drafted With Criteria and Knowledge Statements
 - Qualification Levelling and Credit Allocation for the Case
 - Employer Validation Panel Simulation and Comment Log Resolution
 - Occupational Standard and Qualification Dossier Completion and Defence
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Skills You Will Gain:

- Occupational Mapping
- Functional Analysis Facilitation
- Performance Criteria Writing
- Qualification Levelling
- Credit Allocation
- Rules of Combination Design
- RPL Route Design
- Employer Validation Management

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver an Occupational Standard and Qualification Development Dossier to the sector skills council board or the qualifications approval committee
- Decide where a unit boundary falls, which level a qualification sits at and how much credit it carries using descriptors rather than custom
- Avoid rejected submissions, unassessable criteria and duplicated units that delay approval and waste employer panel time
- Coach standards writers and subject experts in the drafting rules, levelling grid and validation log behind the dossier

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant submits the Occupational Standard and Qualification Development Dossier to the sector skills council board or qualifications approval committee and shares the unit drafts with employer panels. The organisation uses it to decide which occupations receive new standards first, how qualifications are levelled and credited, and which assessment and RPL routes awarding bodies must follow. After the first approval round, the unit should review panel comments, assessor feedback on the criteria and early registration figures, then revise units and the review cycle.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants prepare before the occupational standards and qualifications course?

Participants should already draft, review or approve standards, units or qualification specifications. Bringing an existing standard, a qualification specification or sector workforce data from their own organisation lets them test functional analysis, levelling and packaging tools on familiar material.

How does an occupational standards and qualifications course differ from a workplace assessor course?

This course designs the standards, qualifications and evidence rules that others later use. A workplace assessor course trains people to judge individual candidates against those standards, and an institutional management course runs the colleges that deliver them.

Why is functional analysis used to build national occupational standards?

Functional analysis starts from the key purpose of an occupation and breaks it into the functions people actually perform. Units built this way describe outcomes of work rather than job titles or tasks, so they stay valid when roles and technologies change.

What does a participant take back from the occupational standards and qualifications course?

Each participant leaves with an Occupational Standard and Qualification Development Dossier for a case sector, holding a functional analysis tree, drafted units, a levelling record, credit values, rules of combination, an assessment strategy, an RPL route and an employer validation log.
