

A photograph of a man and a woman in a library or study setting. The man, on the left, is wearing a light-colored striped shirt and is looking down at a document. The woman, on the right, has long blonde hair and is wearing a black top with a white ruffled collar. She is also looking at the document. Bookshelves filled with books are visible in the background.

**SUPPORTING YOUR
TRANSITION TO THE
NEW ESSENTIAL SKILLS
WALES QUALIFICATIONS**



WHY IS ESSENTIAL SKILLS CHANGING?

Following the Welsh Government's review of qualifications in 2012, much of the qualifications system is being reformed to make it more rigorous and appropriate to the needs of the Welsh economy.

As part of these changes, the Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications' standards and assessment arrangements have been reviewed. The revised qualifications have a more structured approach to assessment, as well as being repositioned specifically as part of the post-16 qualification offer. The wider Key Skills have also been reviewed, and their replacements will form part of the new suite of Essential Skills qualifications.

City & Guilds has worked closely with the Welsh Government throughout the review process, and we are currently working with the other awarding bodies intending to offer the new qualifications to develop a shared bank of assessment materials.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

Most of the current ESW qualifications will be replaced by new qualifications from this autumn. The only exceptions to this are the Entry Level qualifications in Communication and Application of Number, although we will be moving where they appear on our Walled Garden (the online portal used to register candidates for all City & Guilds qualifications) so they're located with the rest of the new Essential Skills qualifications.



**THE OLD QUALIFICATIONS
WILL BE WITHDRAWN
AS FOLLOWS:**

Qualification(s)	City & Guilds number(s)	Last registration	Last certification	Notes
Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Entry 1, 2 and 3)	3768-01 3768-02	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	These qualifications will remain available under the new City & Guilds number for Essential Communication Skills 3868-01 .
Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Level 1, 2 and 3)	3768-01 3768-02	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	Replacement qualifications in Essential Communication Skills will be available at levels 1, 2 and 3 under the new City & Guilds number 3868-01 .
Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Entry 1, 2 and 3)	3768-01 3768-03	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	These qualifications will remain available under the new City & Guilds number for Essential Application of Number Skills 3868-02 .
Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Level 1, 2 and 3)	3768-01 3768-03	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	Replacement qualifications in Essential Application of Number Skills will be available at levels 1, 2 and 3 under the new City & Guilds number 3868-02 .
Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology (Entry 1, 2 and 3; Level 1, 2 and 3)	3768-01 3768-04	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	Brand new qualifications in Essential Digital Literacy Skills will be available at Entry 1 to Level 3 under the new City & Guilds number 3868-03 .
Key Skills in Improving Own Learning and Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others (Level 1, 2, 3 and 4)	3638-21 3768-01 3768-02 3768-03 3768-04	31 December 2015	31 December 2016	Brand new qualifications in Essential Employability Skills will be available at Entry 3 to Level 3 under the new City & Guilds number 3868-04 .



NEW

QUALIFICATIONS

**AVAILABLE FOR FIRST
TEACHING AND CANDIDATE
REGISTRATION FROM
1 SEPTEMBER 2015**

	Essential Communication Skills	Essential Application of Number Skills	Essential Digital Literacy Skills	Essential Employability Skills
Level 3	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding. Graded pass, merit, distinction
Level 2	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding. Graded pass, merit, distinction
Level 1	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Two part assessment: controlled task and multiple choice confirmatory test	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding. Graded pass, merit, distinction.
Entry 3	No change to qualifications or assessment model	No change to qualifications or assessment model	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding.
Entry 2	No change to qualifications or assessment model	No change to qualifications or assessment model	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	
Entry 1	No change to qualifications or assessment model	No change to qualifications or assessment model	Controlled task, with structured discussion to confirm candidates' understanding	



WHAT ISN'T CHANGING?

No substantive changes are being made to the standards for **Communication or Application of Number** – they've been 'cleansed' to take account of no longer being portfolio-assessed, although the underlying skill and knowledge requirements haven't changed.

There are no changes to the qualifications in **Communication or Application of Number at Entry Level** – the pre-approved assignments are very similar in concept to the controlled tasks that will be used within the new qualifications at levels 1, 2 and 3. We may review and update the bank of assignments in due course, although the model itself won't be changing.

The Essential Skills suite as a whole will continue to span six levels – Entry 1 to Level 3 (there won't be any qualifications at Level 4); although the new Essential Employability Skills qualifications won't be available at Entry 1 or Entry 2.

OUR NEW ESSENTIAL SKILLS OFFER



We have developed one of the most flexible, competitive and best supported Essential Skills offers on the market.

Full range of qualifications

A complete range of Essential Skills learner qualifications in Application of Number, Communication, Digital Literacy and Employability covering Entry 1 to Level 3.

Flexible, on-demand assessments

Choice of named-on-demand paper-delivered assessment or onscreen assessment through our online assessment platform, e-volve. Assessments available when ready, with no assessment windows or registration deadlines.

Wide range of teaching and learning materials

Resources including sample assessments, detailed qualification handbook and FAQs. Further online support is available through the Maths and English e-Toolkit, to supplement the mandatory Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST).

On-going face-to-face support

Network events held throughout the year and additional support is provided from locally-based business managers, advisors and external quality assurers.

Welsh-language service

Dedicated Welsh language co-ordinator, with certificates and support material available bilingually.

Help to get up and running quickly

Active Essential Skills Wales centres will benefit from fast-track approval. All other centres can request assistance to complete a qualification approval (QAP).

Part of a wider Essential Skills offer

Our Essential Skills qualifications are complemented by a full range of Essential Skills for Work and Life Framework qualifications that allow learners to build confidence and address any specific gaps in their numeracy, literacy and digital skills. A range of Level 3 qualifications for Essential Skills Practitioners, covering Literacy, Numeracy, ESOL and Digital Literacy is also available to support staff training and development.

Unrivalled experience

Our experience of offering basic skills qualifications across every jurisdiction of the UK for more than four decades is unrivalled, as is our ability to make these skills relevant to learners' needs in the world of work.

**IF YOU ARE
INTERESTED
IN DELIVERING ANY
OF OUR ESSENTIAL
SKILLS
QUALIFICATIONS
PLEASE SPEAK TO
YOUR BUSINESS
MANAGER, OR
CONTACT US ON
T3QUALITY@
CITYANDGUILDS.COM**



**WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO
TO MOVE TO THE NEW
ESSENTIAL SKILLS
QUALIFICATIONS?**

We have developed a quick and straightforward transition checklist which will help you identify some of the key areas for consideration and action.

STAGE 1 – SET UP

Are you ready as a centre to deliver the new Essential Skills qualifications? What do you need to do? How can City & Guilds support you?

STAGE 2 – INITIAL AND DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

Are you comfortable using the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) to conduct initial and diagnostic assessment? Have you considered how you will use WEST, and other tools and resources, to inform and guide teaching and learning?

STAGE 3 – ESTABLISHING KEY OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

Do you understand the administrative and technical processes involved in offering the new Essential Skills assessments? Are there any quality assurance processes to consider?

STAGE 4 – PLANNING DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

Have you considered the differences between the old and new Essential Skills and what this means in terms of changes to delivery models, learner preparation and assessment practices? Are staff clear and confident about the assessment criteria and the new approach to assessing Essential Skills? Do teams require any additional development? Do teams know how to access the full range of support City & Guilds has to offer?

Please refer to the checklist, which is available as a separate document.

SUPPORTING YOUR TRANSITION TO THE NEW ESSENTIAL SKILLS WALES QUALIFICATIONS

TRANSITION CHECKLIST

We have put together the following four stage checklist to help you to prepare and manage your transition to the new Essential Skills qualifications in the simplest and most effective way possible. You can use this checklist to ensure you have everything in place to make the transition.

STAGE 1 – SET UP

Things to consider	Clear	Need more information	Comments
Working with City & Guilds			
Understanding changes to the Entry Level offer for Communication and Application of Number			
Understanding the levels 1-3 offer for Communication and Application of Number			
Understanding the offer for Digital Literacy			
Understanding the offer for Employability			
Understanding the local support offer			
Understanding the wider support offer			
Centre/qualification approval process – offering each of the Essential Skills			
Understanding fees			
Information, promotion and marketing of the new Essential Skills qualifications to key stakeholders			

STAGE 2 – INITIAL AND DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

Things to consider	Clear	Need more information	Comments
Understanding and using the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST)			
Using WEST (and/or other insights and resources) to inform teaching and learning			

STAGE 3 – OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

Things to consider	Clear	Need more information	Comments
Working with Walled Garden			
Candidate registration process – methods, dates and deadlines			
Process for accessing and administering controlled tasks			
Process for administering structured discussions (Digital Literacy and Employability)			
Process for entering candidates for confirmatory tests – including differences between onscreen and paper-based delivery (Communication and Application of Number)			
Receiving, administering and returning paper-based confirmatory tests			
Accessing and administering confirmatory tests through the e-volve system			
Claiming results for controlled tasks (and structured discussions)			
Quality arrangements - internal quality assurance of internally assessed components			
Quality arrangements – local office support, EQA visits and other support			
Using e-portfolios			
Obtaining Direct Claims Status (DCS)			

STAGE 4 – PLANNING DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

Things to consider	Clear	Need more information	Comments
Understanding the standards			
Understanding key changes and differences between old and new Essential Skills			
Building on existing good practice – eg embedding/ contextualisation			
Knowing where to find sample assessment materials			
Readiness of key staff and others supporting Essential Skills. Practitioner upskilling through Essential Skills Practitioner (8375)			
Readiness of key staff – exams officers and administrators			
Working with apprentices – is there anything to bear in mind?			
Relationship between these and other qualifications, eg Essential Skills for Work and Life (3846)			
Understanding relationship between Essential Skills qualifications and GCSE (Communication and Application of Number)			
Understanding relationship between Essential Skills qualifications and Welsh Bac (Digital Literacy and Employability)			
Assessment timings and arrangements			
Recording requirements			
Accessing performance information			

FLEXIBLE QUALIFICATIONS

ON-DEMAND ASSESSMENTS

FULLY SUPPORTED

WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE SPEAK TO YOUR BUSINESS MANAGER,

EMAIL US ON T3QUALITY@CITYANDGUILDS.COM OR VISIT

WWW.CITYANDGUILDS.COM/CHANGESTOESSENTIALSKILLS

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