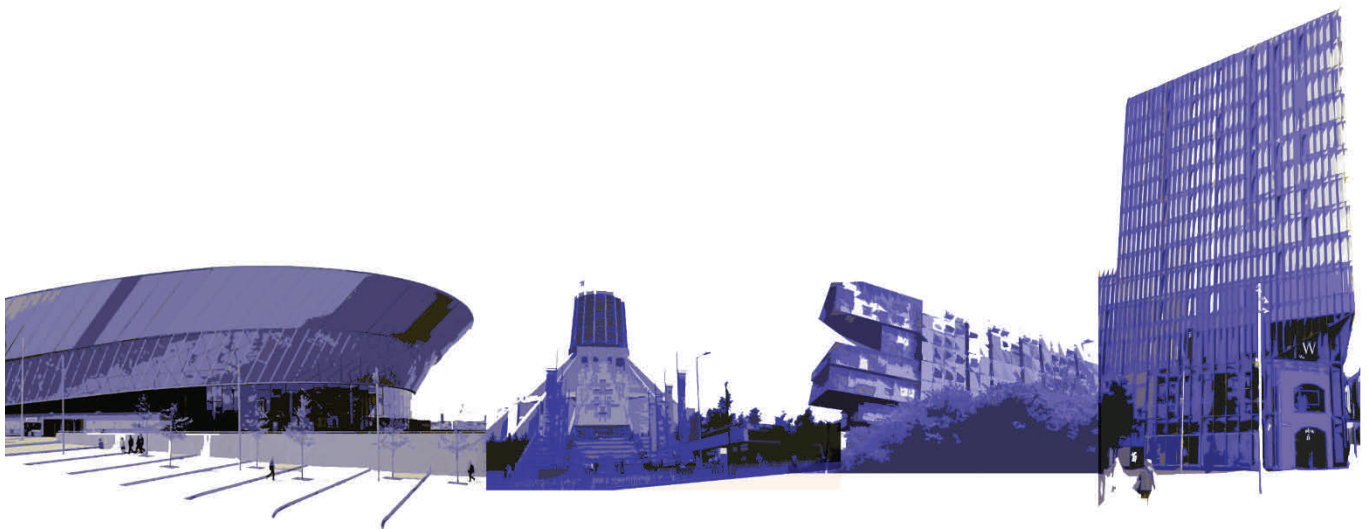


Construction Industry Council

Educator's Toolkit

Guidance on developing a course curriculum informed by National Occupational Standards

February 2011





About the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and ConstructionSkills

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) represents the views of the industry (from a professional, managerial and technical viewpoint) in ConstructionSkills – the Sector Skills Council for construction.

ConstructionSkills is a partnership between CIC, CITB-ConstructionSkills and CITB ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland.

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1. Introduction

This guidance has been developed by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to assist educators with the development of structured learning or training courses to meet industry, sector, discipline and occupational needs.

CIC manages on behalf of the sector, the database of higher level **Professional, Managerial and Technical National Occupational Standards and NVQ Diplomas/SVQs Framework for the Built Environment**. For detailed information on the standards and how they relate to specific roles visit the Skills for Business website at http://www.ukstandards.org.uk/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=3&OrganisationID=74

The National Occupational Standards are generic and provide pan-sector coverage in disciplines across the built environment representing a detailed map of the functions performed, covering:

- **Town and transport planning;**
- **Statutory control;**
- **Design disciplines;**
- **Conservation and maintenance;**
- **Contracting supervision and management;**
- **Project management;**
- **Property disciplines;**
- **And building services disciplines.**

2. The Principle

This guidance sets out a method of systematically developing a learning or training course programme designed to meet the needs of particular occupations, disciplines or cross-discipline provision.

This is informed by an analysis of learning needs from sector **National Occupational Standards (NOS)** and includes content, mode of delivery and assessment.

The NOS for Professional, Managerial and Technical Roles in the Built Environment cover all the higher level functions across the sector and provide a powerful multi-purpose tool.

NOS has existed since the early 1990s as part of national education and skills policy for industry people, by industry people including employers, practitioners and professional bodies.

They are designed to improve the performance of the Industry by enhancing the performance of people in the workplace and by helping to inform training and vocational education about contemporary industry needs.

Extensive work has been carried out to review and update this web-accessed database of generic NOS for the Built Environment to ensure they currently reflect changing industry practice and needs.

The NOS have been specifically structured so that knowledge specifications are directly related to, and derived from, the performance requirements of each standard.

These indicate the breadth and depth of the principal topics/subjects that underpin individually and in combination, **occupational competence**. Consequently it is possible to identify the pattern of learning needs across the sector.

This is not to suggest that NOS should dictate built environment curricula. The analysis is merely a way of giving a structured picture of the learning needs from the world of formally expressed sector employment requirements to help inform the development of learning programmes.

The curriculum will inevitably need to be developed taking into account other perspectives and considerations.



3. The benefits



What are the benefits of using NOS to inform curriculum development? A learning or training programme which is related to NOS provides a means of:

Working with Industry

- **Opening** up new opportunities to engage with employers.
- **Connecting** with a bench mark best practice performance and underpinning knowledge and understanding.
- **Enabling** learning and training providers to demonstrate that programme outcomes meet requirements for external benchmarking, the employability of students and have validity beyond an individual teaching team/ provider.

Facilitating learner progression

- **Interrelating** academic, vocational and professional qualifying systems based on a common currency of industry NOS.
- **Meeting the requirements** of the Sector Qualification Strategy in terms of harmonisation and progression between qualifications across the industry

Meeting Industry learning needs

- **Identifying** areas of knowledge and learning needed in the sector to fill skills gaps, or meet changing sector needs for **Future Skills**.
- Identifying the functions and knowledge and understanding that are common to a range of occupations or specific to particular occupations.

Supporting curriculum development

- Helping to inform the broader programme outcomes in terms of general educational aims for example key skills.
- Recording and accrediting student performance in work-based learning.

Providing learning provision opportunities

- Widening access and reducing barriers to learning and training opportunities
- Developing a learning programme that can support and run in parallel with a higher level NVQ Diploma/ SVQ or professional qualification.

4. The STEPS

The STEPS* are presented below in a sequential format, however the process is not intended to be sequential and as can be seen in the diagram on page 17 are flexible enough to be performed in an interchangeable order.

1

STEP 1 Review sector knowledge needs analysis

- a. Identify the prevalence of need (the commonality of need in relation to size of occupational groups), of areas of knowledge across the sector, by reference to the **Knowledge Analysis Prevalence Summary and Chart** - visit <http://www.cicskills.org.uk/resources/resources.php> separate analyses exist for the higher levels of built environment sector as a whole, for particular qualification levels across the sector; for particular disciplines in the sector; particular occupations, or groups of occupations in the sector.
- b. Identify areas of knowledge and learning needed in the sector to fill skills gaps, or meet changing sector needs for future skills that could inform education & training programmes, initial professional development, or continuing professional development, by reference to the Occupational Standards http://www.ukstandards.org.uk/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=3&OrganisationID=74



* Some of the STEPS have been directly referenced ConstructionSkills and official sources of further guidance, whilst other are “typical” internal curriculum development processes.

- c. Consider areas in which opportunities for a new or revised course programme may be needed for particular disciplines in the sector; particular occupations, or groups of occupations in the sector and that will fit with organisational objectives and capabilities.
- d. Identify whether the need is for new entrants to the sector or from other routes such as, those transferring in from other sectors, those moving between occupations, re-skilling, or upskilling, continuing professional development for those already operating in the sector – this will certainly be the case for those aspects of knowledge identified as relating to changing sector needs for future skills.

2

STEP 2. Consult employers on learning needs

- a. Consult with employers within the catchment of likely sector/ occupation/ discipline interests to identify skills and learning needs – the consultation might use the *sector analysis information above* to identify possible categories of learning need. The aim should be to identify more specific needs – particularly related to regional or local needs. Note that the *sector analysis* will provide a broader perspective of sector employment needs than may be obtained from a small sample of individual employers. It is appropriate to consult with employers throughout the course development.

3

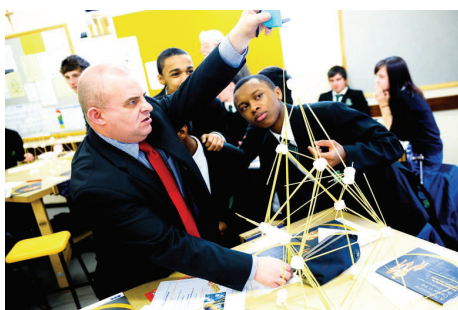
STEP 3. Identify any expectations of external bodies – accreditation

- a. Identify any significant stakeholder sector organisations that may have an interest in courses that relate to its interests/membership. Within the built environment, courses that lead to a professional qualification are very important and are usually accredited against specified criteria and through prescribed processes, by a professional body. For professions (i.e. Architecture) which are regulated by statute, only graduates of accredited or ‘prescribed’ courses will be able to practice in the professional area concerned. <http://www.cic.org.uk/about/full.shtml>
- b. Identify any formal recognition or accreditation criteria and processes laid down by relevant bodies, including any curriculum content, assessment, quality assurance, timescales, course documentation, reporting or inspection visit requirements. From a professional body perspective: “An accredited course can be said to have been evaluated against agreed criteria set by professional institutions. These criteria are intended to assess whether a learning programme will produce graduates who can meet the educational standards for registration and which can provide a foundation for a professional career in the construction industry.” It is appropriate to consult with accrediting bodies throughout the course development.

- c. Refer to ConstructionSkills best practice guidance on **Common/Core Principles for Approval, Certification and Accreditation Criteria and Processes** [<http://www.cic.org.uk/activities/lifeEducation.shtml#cqss5>] in relation to accrediting bodies (including professional bodies) and qualification providers in the sector.
- d. **Consider the expectations of professional bodies and their members in relation to Continuing Professional Development.** In order to help advance the importance of Continuing Professional Development across the built environment, the Construction Industry Council in conjunction with ConstructionSkills and with the involvement of its Member Institutions, has published **Continuing Professional Development Best Practice Guidelines** which highlight mechanisms for structuring CPD: [<http://www.cicskills.org.uk/resources/resources.php>]

STEP 4. Identify any qualification framework regulator stipulations

- a. **Identify any relevant national regulating bodies that may have an interest in course approval** in relation to national qualification frameworks. Key regulating bodies include:
- Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) [<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>] - The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) – vocational qualifications. Note that the QCF provides public access to already approved Units of Assessment that can be grouped into new qualifications.
 - The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) [<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/>] - The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland - independent reviewer and setter of subject benchmarks.
 - The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) [<http://www.scqf.org.uk/>] - Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework.
 - ConstructionSkills (Sector Skills Council for the industry) [<http://www.cskills.org/aboutus/sectorskillscouncil/sectorstrategy/qualificationstrategy/index.aspx>] – Construction Qualifications Strategy – identifying, monitoring and validating qualification needs for the sector.



- b. **Identify any formal approval criteria and processes laid down by relevant national regulating bodies**, including any curriculum content, assessment, quality assurance, timescales, course documentation, reporting or inspection visit requirements. It is appropriate to consult with regulating bodies throughout the course development.

5

STEP 5. Identify internal approval stipulations

- a. **Identify any formal approval or accreditation criteria and processes** laid down by the organisations internal policy requirements, including any curriculum content, assessment, quality assurance, timescales, course documentation, resourcing, reporting etc..
- b. Refer to ConstructionSkills best practice guidance on ***Common/Core Principles for Approval, Certification and Accreditation Criteria and Processes*** [<http://www.cic.org.uk/activities/lifeEducation.shtml#cqss5>].

6

STEP 6. Identify the target learning audience

- a. **Identify from an analysis of a combination of the information gathered in steps 1 – 5, the occupation or discipline areas that the proposed course is to cover.**
- b. **Consider opportunities for a new or revised course programme for particular disciplines in the sector;** particular occupations, or groups of occupations in the sector and that will fit with organisational objectives and capabilities. Note that the ***ConstructionSkills Professional, Managerial and Technical Roles in the Built Environment Knowledge Analysis Prevalence Summaries and charts*** [URL] indicate where functions and knowledge and understanding are common to a range of occupations or specific to particular occupations.

7

STEP 7. Identify relevant National Occupational Standards

- a. **Review relevant NOS that will inform the development of the subject areas.** The detail within the related NOS includes particular outcomes that will help provide identification of the purpose and application of the learning to be developed through the course. The knowledge of particular subjects/topics will potentially not be contained in a single NOS, but be found in varying contexts in different NOS – which can thus provide a more ‘rounded’ view of how knowledge may need to be applied in practice. It is also possible to use the NOS to inform the broader programme outcomes in terms of general educational aims, key skills, attributes, underpinning pre-knowledge, assessment.

- b. **Define the occupational role(s) or job functions** for the target learning audience.
- c. **Identify relevant NOS.** This can be done by identifying from CIC's Knowledge Analysis, Guidance on the Professional Managerial and Technical roles in the Built Environment (visit <http://www.cicskills.org.uk/resources/resources.php>) and click on the Resources page). Those NOS identified either against particular subject/topic areas, or those identified for particular occupational groups.
- d. **Access relevant NOS:**
 - The generic (non discipline specific) **NOS for Professional, Managerial and Technical Roles in the Built Environment** can be freely searched and individually downloaded online at [http://www.ukstandards.org.uk/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=3&OrganisationID=74].
 - The discipline specific NVQ Units for particular occupations (based on the generic NOS), can be freely accessed at [<http://www.cic.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx>].

8

STEP 8. Identify and aggregate Knowledge topics/ subjects

- a. Group together potentially related topics identified from the analysis carried out in steps 6 and 7 and organise them to produce a logical sequence of coverage of the subject(s)/topic(s). This can be informed by logically grouping related knowledge areas, and also the relative prevalence 'weight' of topics identified in the **ConstructionSkills Professional, Managerial and Technical Roles in the Built Environment Knowledge Analysis Prevalence Summaries and charts** [URL].

9

STEP 9. Identify prior learning pattern of intake

- a. Identify any prior learning factors that may need to be taken into account when designing the programme. Entry requirements for the programme may take into account that potential learners may have relevant experience without pre-requisite (academic or vocational) qualifications, pre-requisite qualifications without relevant experience, a mixture of experience and qualifications, or neither. Factors that may be relevant include:
 - Learner motivation
 - Career aspirations and objectives
 - Base level capabilities
 - Relevant certified prior educational achievement - academic or vocational
 - Relevant endorsed work experience/achievement
 - Potential employment/work based learning opportunities

- b. **Identify any support and learning opportunities necessary to ‘accessibility’** and to ensure a high chance of successful completion of the programme in the allocated time. This might relate to curriculum content – particularly where any pre-requisite knowledge or skills are required, assessment and academic support. Learners may need to be diagnostically profiled, counseled and inducted to ascertain their pathway/progression pattern.

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STEP 10. Identify progression needs of destination qualifications

- a. **Review the range of qualifications to which learners could progress** (i.e. academic, vocational, professional) and their pre-requisites for access and/or aspects of the qualifications that the course could potentially support and complement (as more qualifications match to industry NOS, this aspect becomes easier).

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STEP 11. Decide on relationship with work-based learning

- a. **Consider where learning best takes place.** There are potentially four alternative models:
- **Unlinked Sequential:** The course provides for the development of assessed knowledge and skills. There is then no formal link with subsequent work experience and assessment of competence.
 - **Linked Sequential:** The course provides for the development of assessed knowledge and skills. This is followed by joint academic/training and workplace supervision of work experience leading to a subsequent vocational qualification (e.g. NVQ Diploma/SVQ).
 - **Unlinked Parallel:** The course provides for the development of assessed knowledge and skills. Candidates separately and concurrently undertake work experience which provides them with opportunities for the workplace application and assessment of knowledge and skills.
 - **Linked Parallel or Integrated:** The course provides an integrated programme for the development and workplace application of assessed knowledge and skills, leading to both an academic/training qualification and a vocational qualification (e.g. NVQ Diploma/SVQ). This allows for a combination of academic development coupled with targeted work placements.
- b. Identify where work achievements/assessments on the course could provide corresponding ‘evidence’ for the achievement of other vocational qualifications (e.g. NVQ Diploma/SVQ or professional qualification). The discipline specific NVQ Diploma Units for particular occupations (based on the generic NOS), can be accessed at: [http://www.ukstandards.org.uk/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=3&OrganisationID=74].



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STEP 12. Devise course structure

- a. **Consider from the analysis carried out in steps 8, 9, 10 & 11, the way in which the course can be structured from a number of points of view.**
- Grouping of subjects/topics – identify and group those subjects/topics that logically relate to each other that can form components/modules within the course, taking into account:
 - Underpinning knowledge – identify the basic supporting or enabling knowledge which individuals will need to understand the main content of the course. Subject expert should be able to identify this;
 - Overarching knowledge – identify those aspects of knowledge that help to contextualize, synthesize or consolidate the course as a whole, balancing this with;
 - Volume of learning – consider the proportionate amount of course time that can be devoted to a subject/topic module, and considering;
 - Sequencing of subjects/topics – identify the logical sequence in which subjects/topics can be studied and understood, taking into account and taking into account what is common/core and what is specialized;
 - Theory – practice/work-based learning relationship.
- c. This can be informed by logically grouping related knowledge areas, and also the relative prevalence ‘weight’ of topics identified in the CIC’s *Knowledge Analysis, Guidance on the Professional Managerial and Technical roles in the Built Environment* (visit <http://www.cicskills.org.uk/resources/resources.php>). Identify the any level and credit rating/value required by the relevant qualification framework identified in step 4.

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STEP 13. Develop learning outcomes

- a. **Develop learning outcomes for each group of subjects/topics**, that describe what a learner should know, understand, or be able to do at the end of the learning experience. These follow from the phrase “a successful learner from this programme will be able to...” and use verbs to lead into the outcome. The development and refinement of the subject areas into learning outcomes can be further informed by the detail within the knowledge specifications within the related NOS, which include particular outcomes and will help provide identification of the purpose of the learning.
- b. **Derive learning outcomes from the knowledge items within industry NOS:**
- The generic (non discipline specific) *NOS for Professional, Managerial and Technical Roles in the Built Environment* can be freely searched and individually downloaded online at [<http://www.cic.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx>].



- The discipline specific **NVQ Units** for particular occupations (based on the generic NOS), can be freely accessed at: [http://www.ukstandards.org.uk/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=3&OrganisationID=74]
- c. **Consider the depth of learning to be acquired.** To enable this, the knowledge items in the NOS are further elaborated by giving a more precise indication of the type and depth of knowledge required relevant to the demands of the Standard. This is achieved by identifying the verbs in the performance criteria that relate to each *Range* (topic/subject). These verbs have been classified in a taxonomy under 1 of 5 headings of increasing depth, each with a descriptor to help identify the kind of knowledge requirement it contains:
- **Understanding:** “Know what and why” – the lowest level which requires only basic understanding of a topic/subject;
 - **Application:** “Know how to” – the next level, which requires the ability to apply an understanding of the topic/subject i.e. knowing how to do something;
 - **Analysis:** “Know how to examine information in order to understand, explain or predict” – the next level, which requires the ability to analyse the topic/subject matter for a purpose;
 - **Synthesis:** “Know how to bring together in order that something can be decided or acted upon” the next level, which requires the ability to draw together and relate different aspects of knowledge. This level is often needed on more substantial topics/subjects, normally so that a decision to do something can be made;
 - **Evaluation:** “Know how to weigh up ideas and make a judgment” – the highest level of understanding which requires the ability to evaluate subject matter from an authoritative point of view, so that decisions and judgments about something can be made.
- d. Consider any benchmarks prescribed by regulating bodies that relate to level descriptors in qualification frameworks (see step 4).
- e. Consider overall coverage in relation to the sector’s **Graduate Common Learning Outcomes and Intermediate Common Learning Outcomes** [<http://www.cic.org.uk/activities/lifeEducation.shtml>]. These provide a benchmark for construction and built environment graduate programmes. The criteria within the GCLOs and the ICLOs set out the personal skills and levels of technical and professional awareness that new graduates should have achieved as they embark upon their professional careers.

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STEP 14 Develop assessment and recording system

- a. Develop assessment methods that ensure coverage of the achievement of all the course learning outcomes (step 13) and whether they have been reached, rather than on sampling and grading the amount of learning acquired.

- b. **Select assessment methods that are appropriate to the type and depth of learning** (see step 13). Methods might include:
- portfolio
 - coursework
 - project
 - thesis/dissertation
 - practical test
 - written Exam
 - short test
 - oral exam
 - also consider integration of assessment across the award
- c. **Develop/use an assessment system that enables learners to record their progress** and acquired learning outcomes and performance (particularly electronic portfolios), and that can be used in conjunction with other qualifying systems.
- d. **Adopt required organisational quality control measures to ensure reliability of assessment** as well as the inclusion of external quality control and independent assessment measures as required by external bodies and qualification framework regulators (see steps 3, 4 and 5). Also consider compliance with **ConstructionSkills Assessment Strategy** [URL].

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STEP 15 Develop delivery modes and resources

- a. **Consider key aspects of course delivery** dependent on the model adopted (see steps 11, 12, 13 and 14).
- b. **Decide on delivery styles** or combination of styles:
- Classroom/lecture based delivery
 - Classroom/lecture delivery supplemented with real case studies
 - laboratory/workshop/studio
 - interactive group work
 - research/field work
 - simulated practice
 - project work-related using real data
 - placements – accredited structured work placements
 - learning delivered through the workplace.
- c. Identify necessary resources to support delivery taking into account the areas of learning that can be covered in the workplace (step 11).
- funding
 - staff
 - facilities
 - equipment
 - learning materials

- d. **Identify the course programme**, taking into account the relationship between course delivery and workplace learning and the structure of the course (step 12).
- e. **Consider the value of an introduction for learners about the use of NOS**: for learners, their employers, staff, assessors – particularly where a combined course-workplace delivery approach is to be used – to show how links with associated qualifications can be made (e.g. NVQ Diplomas/ SVQs, Professional Qualifications).

16

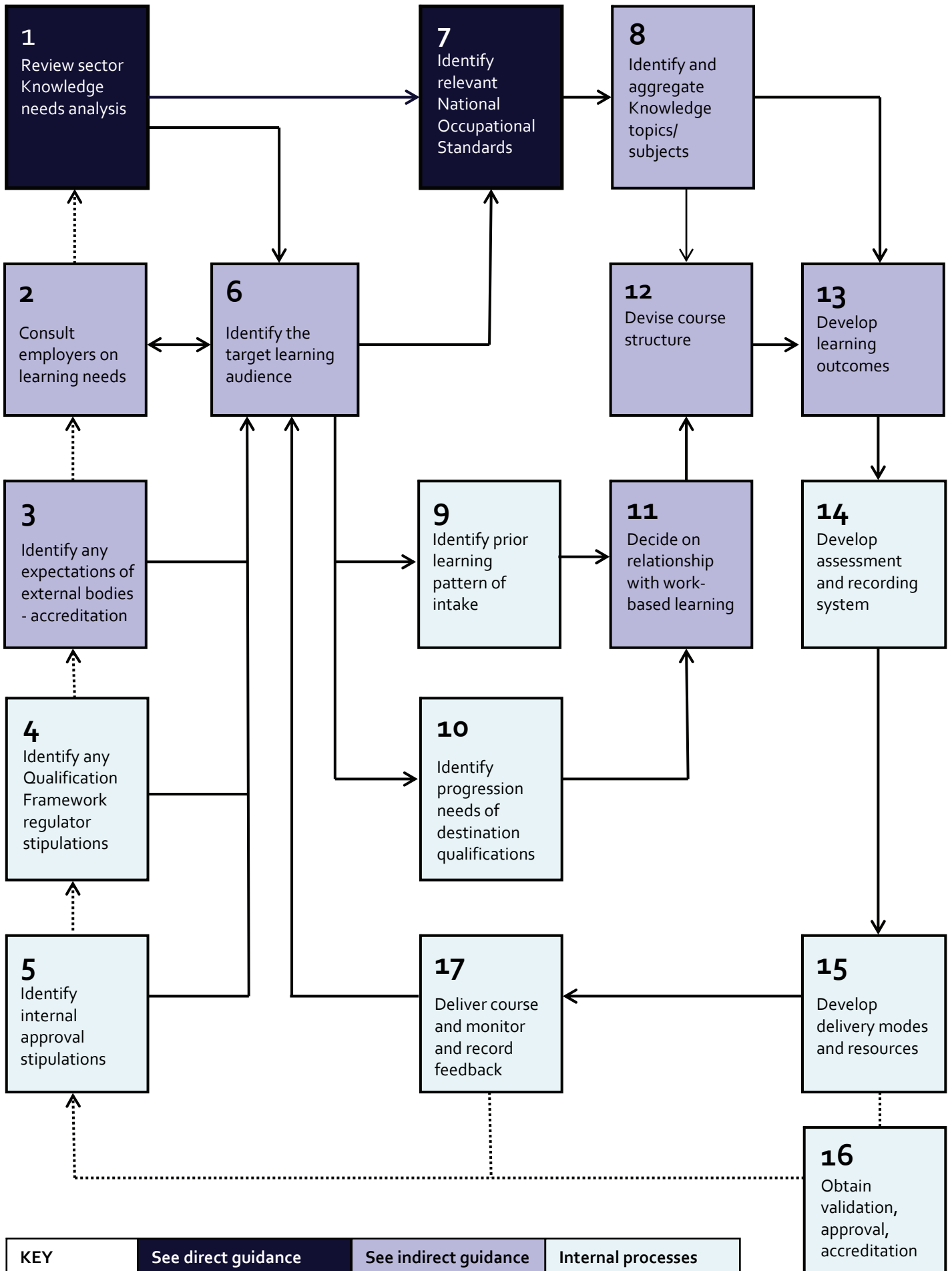
STEP 16 Obtain validation, approval, accreditation

- a. **Comply with any formal recognition or accreditation criteria and processes laid down by relevant external bodies** (step 3), qualification framework regulators (step 4), or internal to the organisation (step 5), including any curriculum content, assessment, quality assurance, timescales, course documentation, reporting or inspection visit requirements etc..
- b. Refer to ConstructionSkills best practice guidance on **Common/Core Principles for Approval, Certification and Accreditation Criteria and Processes** [<http://www.cic.org.uk/activities/lifeEducation.shtml#cqss5>] in relation to accrediting bodies (including professional bodies) and qualification providers in the sector.

17

STEP 17 Deliver course and monitor and record feedback

- a. **Undertake periodic reviews of the course** to check that the aims, structure, content, delivery and assessment of the course are meeting the needs of the learning audience (step 6), and make the necessary adjustments.
- b. **Undertake periodic reviews of any formal recognition or accreditation criteria** and processes laid down by relevant external bodies (step 3), qualification framework regulators (step 4), or internal to the organisation (step 5), including any curriculum content, assessment, quality assurance, timescales, course documentation, reporting or inspection visit requirements etc., to identify whether they have been changed incrementally to reflect changing practice in industry, and make the necessary adjustments.
- c. **Undertake periodic reviews of the selection of NOS used to inform the curriculum** (steps 1 and 7) to identify whether they have been changed incrementally to reflect changing practice in industry, and make the necessary adjustments.



Appendix A

For further information on the **formal recognition or accreditation criteria** and processes laid down by relevant external bodies visit their links below:

Professional Institutions

Building and Spatial Design		Engineering		Technical and Teaching	
CIAT	Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists	ICE	Institution of Civil Engineers	BRE	BRE
LI	Landscape Institute	CIBSE	Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers	CEBE	Centre for Education in the Built Environment
BIID	British Institute of Interior Design	IHE	Institute of Highway Engineers	BSRIA	Building Services Research and Information Association
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects	ISTRUCTE	Institution of Structural Engineer	NHBC	National House-Building Council
ACA	Association of Consultant Architects	CIPHE	Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering		
Planning		ABE	Association of Building Engineers		
RTPI	Royal Town Planning Institute	Surveying and Asset Management			
CIHT	Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation	RICS	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors		
Management		CQSA	Consultant Quantity Surveyors Association		
CIOB	Chartered Institute of Building	LABC	Local Authority Building Control		
APM	Association for Project Management	ICES	Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors		
ICWCI	Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate	BIFM	British Institute of Facilities Management		

Sector Skills Councils

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are independent, employer-led, UK-wide organisations designed to build a skills system that is driven by employer demand.

<p>http://www.cic.org.uk</p> <p>http://www.cicskills.org.uk/</p>	<p>The Construction Industry Council (CIC) is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations in the construction industry. It is also a partner in the Sector Skills Council for Construction.</p>
<p>http://www.citbni.org.uk/Home.aspx</p>	<p>CITB-ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland as an Industry Training Board and Sector Skills Council their role is to encourage the adequate training of those employed or intending to be employed in the construction industry.</p>
<p>www.cskills.org/</p>	<p>ConstructionSkills Sector Coverage: Construction.</p>
<p>www.assetskills.org/</p>	<p>Asset Skills Sector Coverage: Property, housing, cleaning services, parking and facilities management. Asset Skills works to improve productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in facilities management, housing, property, planning, cleaning and parking.</p>
<p>www.euskills.co.uk/</p>	<p>EUSkills is the sector skills council for Energy and Utilities and has a range of information on disciplines relating to power, water, gas and waste management.</p>
<p>www.summitskills.org.uk</p>	<p>Summit Skills the sector skills council for Building Services Engineering has a careers and progression information for those considering a future in related disciplines such as heating and ventilation engineers, gas fitters and much more.</p>
<p>http://www.lantra.co.uk/</p>	<p>Lantra look after the skills needs of land based and environmental industries and professions. There are 16 industries which are grouped around: Land management and production, Animal health and welfare , Environmental industries</p>
<p>http://proskills.co.uk/</p>	<p>Proskills UK is an employer-led organisation that represents the interests of the industries that make up the process and manufacturing sector to government</p>

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