



# NCC Education Academic Regulations

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# **Academic Regulations**

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## Contents

1.	Introduction.....	5
1.1.	Purpose of the Academic Regulations.....	5
1.2.	The Definitive Statement.....	5
1.3.	Applicability.....	5
1.4.	Adherence Statement.....	5
1.5.	Communications.....	5
2.	List of NCC Education Qualifications.....	6
3.	Regulation and Frameworks.....	7
3.1.	Reference Frameworks.....	7
3.1.1.	Regulated Qualifications Framework.....	7
3.1.2.	European Qualifications Framework.....	7
3.2.	Credit.....	7
3.3.	Total Qualification Time.....	7
3.4.	Level Descriptors.....	8
4.	Centre Standards.....	9
4.1.	Centre Regulations.....	9
A:	Centre Management and Governance.....	9
B:	Quality Assurance Systems.....	9
C:	Facilities.....	9
D:	Staff.....	10
4.2.	Centre Monitoring.....	10
4.3.	Centre Sanctions.....	10
5.	Entry Requirements.....	11
5.1.1.	Work Experience.....	11
5.1.2.	English Language.....	11
5.2.	Direct Entry.....	11
5.3.	Exemptions.....	12
6.	Candidate Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities.....	12
6.1.	Candidate Rights.....	12
6.2.	Candidate Responsibilities.....	12
7.	Assessment Regulations.....	13
7.1.	Purpose of Assessment.....	13
7.2.	Language of Assessment.....	13
7.3.	Marking and Moderation.....	13
7.4.	Assessment criteria.....	13

7.5.	Word/time limits.....	13
7.6.	Submission of Assessment .....	13
7.7.	Statement of Confirmation of Own Work.....	14
7.8.	Extensions to Assessment Deadlines.....	14
7.9.	Reassessment .....	14
7.10.	Pre-assessment Special Considerations.....	14
7.11.	Post-Assessment Special Considerations.....	14
7.12.	Conflicts of Interest.....	15
7.13.	Conduct of Examinations.....	15
8.	Awarding Authorities.....	15
8.1.	Assessment Boards .....	15
8.2.	Academic Board.....	15
8.3.	Chair of Examiners.....	15
9.	Results and Notification .....	16
9.1.	Notification of Results and Award.....	16
9.2.	Revoking Results .....	16
9.3.	Classification .....	16
9.4.	Eligibility for Certification .....	17
9.5.	Permission to Proceed Carrying Fails.....	17
10.	Post-Results Services (including Appeals).....	18
10.1.	Grounds for Post-Results Services and Appeals.....	18
10.2.	Submission.....	18
10.3.	Investigation .....	18
11.	Academic Misconduct and Assessment Offences.....	19
11.1.	Definitions.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
11.2.	Academic Misconduct.....	19
11.3.	Investigating Academic Misconduct .....	19
11.4.	Sanctions.....	19
11.5.	Malpractice and Maladministration .....	20
11.6.	Reviews of Academic Misconduct Penalties .....	20
	Appendix A – Variations to Academic Regulations for Digi-Qualifications .....	21
	Glossary.....	24

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of the Academic Regulations

This document explains the regulations which relate to the delivery, assessment and awarding of NCC Education qualifications, constituting a framework for academic standards.

## 1.2. The Definitive Statement

NCC Education is recognised as an awarding body in England by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), and by the Welsh Government in Wales (Qualifications in Wales (QIW)). Ofqual is a non-ministerial department of the UK government and is accountable directly to Parliament. NCC Education is subject to, and abides by, Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition, which are available through their website: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook>).

NCC Education, in accordance with these Academic Regulations, Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition, and the direction of its Academic Board, is empowered to determine:

- the content of qualifications and programmes of study
- the assessment strategy for qualifications
- the terms and conditions under which its qualifications are awarded.

NCC Education is also empowered under these same authorities to refuse or revoke any qualification for good reason, including academic misconduct and malpractice.

## 1.3. Applicability

These regulations are applicable with immediate effect on the publication date and may be changed from time to time. These regulations apply to existing and new NCC Education qualifications.

## 1.4. Adherence Statement

Centres agree to abide by these regulations as part of their contractual arrangement with NCC Education. Centres who do not abide by these regulations will be subject to sanctions, up to and including termination of their agreement and disaccreditation. The sanctions which may be imposed on Centres are outlined in NCC Education's *Centre Sanctions Policy*.

By registering on NCC Education qualifications at Centres, candidates are indicating that they agree to abide by these regulations. Centres should ensure that students have read and understand these regulations before commencing their first assessments.

Candidates who cannot abide by these regulations for whatever reason should inform their Centre before registering and commencing their studies. Candidates who do not abide by these regulations may be subject to penalties as outlined in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

## 1.5. Communications

NCC Education will not normally communicate directly with candidates, and all communication must be through the candidate's Centre. The only exceptions to this are

circumstances when a Centre is non-contactable (including where they have ceased to operate), or when the candidate wishes to allege malpractice on the part of the Centre or a member of staff at the Centre (for further information, see NCC Education's *Whistleblowing Policy*).

## 2. List of NCC Education Qualifications

NCC Education's main suite of qualifications consists of Ofqual regulated qualifications at levels 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7, computing qualifications at Key Stages 1-4 (Digi), unregulated level 6 and pre-masters programmes, and CPD accredited short courses/certificates.

The regulations in the body of this document apply to NCC Education's regulated qualifications and the unregulated Level 6 Diploma in Business Strategy and Management. Separate regulations for Digi qualifications are provided in Appendix A. For guidelines on the delivery of short courses, please see the Short Courses Guide 2020/21.

NCC Education's regulated qualifications are:

- Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ)
- Level 3 Diploma in Computing
- Level 3 Diploma in Business
- Level 3 International Foundation Diploma for Higher Education Studies
- Level 4 Diploma in Computing
- Level 5 Diploma in Computing
- Level 4 Diploma in Business
- Level 5 Diploma in Business
- Level 7 Diploma in Business Management

Unregulated qualifications:

- Level 6 Diploma in Business Strategy and Management
- Pre-masters in Business

NCC Education's computing qualifications at Key Stages 1-4:

- Digi Explorers
- Digi Navigators
- Digi Trailblazers
- Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ) "Digi Award"

Short Courses/Certificates:

- Data Science
- Cyber Security
- Computer Basics
- Fundamentals for Professional Development
- Applied Skills Certificate in Computing

NCC Education also offers programmes and qualifications which are validated and awarded by University partners. Such qualifications operate under the Academic Regulations of the awarding university.

## 3. Regulation and Frameworks

### 3.1. Reference Frameworks

#### 3.1.1. Regulated Qualifications Framework

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) is maintained by the Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation (Ofqual) in England. NCC Education's regulated qualifications are listed on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications (<http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>), along with their level and a link to the Qualification Specification document.

#### 3.1.2. European Qualifications Framework

The RQF is formally mapped to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as part of the Council of Europe's transferability strategy. The EQF relates different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers can use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems. More information is available from: <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>.

### 3.2. Credit

A framework for credit accumulation and transfer is intended to enable candidates' learning to be recognised and quantified; enable candidates, potential employers and others to assess the value of each unit in terms of level and amount of learning; and to facilitate the transfer of credit between different qualifications of NCC Education and those offered by other institutions.

The number of credits per qualification will vary, but a typical qualification which can be achieved in one year of full-time study will be rated at 120 credits. One credit is representative of 10 hours of study, regardless of whether that study is guided or independent.

In terms of size, NCC Education Qualification Credits are equivalent to CATS (Credit Accumulation and Transfer System) which is used by UK Higher Education Institutions. These both differ from the European standards, ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). Two RQF or CATS credits are equivalent to one ECTS credit.

### 3.3. Total Qualification Time

Total Qualification Time (TQT) is comprised of two elements;

- (a) Guided Learning Hours (GLH) are the number of recommended contact hours for the qualification which NCC Education specifies within the Qualification Specification and/or Student Handbook;
- (b) An estimate of the number of hours a Learner will reasonably spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment which takes place as directed but not under direct Guidance or Supervision.

For RQF qualifications, TQT is listed on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications (<http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>). While TQT should be consistent between all learners, it is acknowledged that GLH may vary from student to student and country to country due to the individual demands of students and locally preferred methods of tuition.

### 3.4. Level Descriptors

The levels of NCC Education qualifications are based on those of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) in England. These are shown in the table below, along with common qualification titles and a comparison to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) within which UK universities operate.

Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF)		Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	
2	GCSE grades A*-C	~	~
3	A-Level, Foundation Year	3	Access to HE Diploma
4	Diploma	4	Honours degree Year 1, CertHE
5	Advanced/Higher Diploma	5	Honours degree Year 2, DipHE
6	Graduate Diploma	6	Honours degree Year 3
7	Postgraduate Diploma	7	PgCert, PgDip, Master's degree
		8	Doctorate

Level descriptors can be found in the Ofqual Handbook:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>

## 4. Centre Standards

### 4.1. Centre Regulations

When a Centre is accredited by NCC Education, this is a confirmation that the required standards have been met. NCC Education requires accredited Centres to maintain those standards, and to adopt an approach of continual improvement to quality matters.

Every NCC Education Centre is expected to follow the regulations in this section at all times to ensure the integrity and security of qualifications is maintained and not brought into disrepute.

#### **A: Centre Management and Governance**

A1: Centre is solvent and financially sound.

A2: Centre is legally operating and holds necessary government licences.

A3: Centre has all necessary government or regulatory approval to offer NCC Education qualifications.

A4: Centre maintains high ethical standards with respect to equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination.

#### **B: Quality Assurance Systems**

B1: Centre has a Malpractice and Maladministration Policy in place to minimise the risk of malpractice occurring. There is a clear process in place to investigate and deal with suspected malpractice in an open, fair and effective manner.

B2: Centre has procedures in place to ensure the secure and fair delivery of assessments.

B3: Centre has policies and procedures in place to support candidates requesting special considerations in their assessments

B4: Centre has procedures in place for candidates to formally complain, and to enquire, question or appeal assessment decisions.

#### **C: Facilities**

C1: Centre complies with local health and safety legislation.

C2: Centre has appropriate facilities and procedures in place to ensure the secure and fair delivery of assessments<sup>1</sup>

C3: Centre has facilities appropriate to the mode of teaching/delivery of the qualification

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<sup>1</sup> Facilities requirements for Accredited Centres and specific qualifications are published on NCC Education's website.

## **D: Staff**

D1: Head of Centre (who has operational control and accountability) must be appropriately qualified. NCC Education must always be notified of any changes to the Head of Centre.

D2: Centre Co-ordinator (the person responsible for the day-to-day running of NCC Education qualifications and teaching programmes) must be appropriately qualified. NCC Education must always be notified of any changes to the Centre Co-ordinator.

D3: Centre has enough qualified and competent staff to deliver and assess the qualification

D4: Centre has a way of collecting feedback from candidates to help identify areas of improvements in the student learning experience

### **4.2. Centre Monitoring**

NCC Education monitors Centres to ensure that they are maintaining compliance with the Centre Regulations as set out in Section 4.1 above. The NCC Education Academic Standards team will review relevant performance data, compliance indicators, and any identified risk factors. For further information, please consult NCC Education's Centre Monitoring Policy. Where risks or areas of non-compliance are identified, NCC Education will specify required actions to be undertaken by the Centre in order to protect the integrity of the NCC Education qualifications offered and ensure ongoing compliance. The nature and timescales of these actions will be proportionate to the level of risk identified and subject to review by NCC Education. Risk-based monitoring may be conducted remotely or through a visit to the Centre. NCC Education may also carry out targeted or ad-hoc Centre visits, including visits at short notice or without prior notice, where this is considered necessary to obtain assurance that the Centre is operating in accordance with NCC Education's regulations.

For more information, please consult NCC Education's *Centre Monitoring Policy*.

### **4.3. Centre Sanctions**

NCC Education reserves the right to apply sanctions to a Centre, up to and including disaccreditation, where a Centre fails to maintain standards and does not develop a credible action plan for improvement, as well as any Centres which breach any part of these regulations. For further information, please refer to NCC Education's *Centre Sanctions Policy*.

For details of responsibilities of Centres delivering Short Courses, consult the Short Courses Guide 2020-21.

## 5. Entry Requirements

The overriding principle of entry to each qualification will be the expectation that the potential candidate will be able to derive benefit from study, to fulfil the objectives of the qualification and, through NCC Education assessment, demonstrate achievement to the standard required for the award.

All NCC Education candidates should satisfy the entry requirements as defined in the relevant Qualification Specification. This may be audited by NCC Education during the Centre Monitoring process.

### 5.1.1. Work Experience

Certain NCC Education qualifications accept work experience for admission within certain criteria. Details of the acceptability and criteria for admission by work experience can be found in the relevant Qualification Specification.

### 5.1.2. English Language

All NCC Education qualifications are taught and assessed in English. This means that all candidates who are not native English speakers will be expected to demonstrate that they can satisfy the level of competence required at their level of study. Candidates may demonstrate this through an appropriate recognised certification (e.g. IELTS.)

For guidance, the typical levels of English Language ability required are:

- IELTS 4.5 for preparatory or bridging programmes which include the teaching of English as a Foreign Language<sup>2</sup>;
- IELTS 5.5 or equivalent for Level 4 entry;
- IELTS 6.5 or equivalent for Level 7 entry.

However, there may be different English Language requirements applied on some qualifications, and the definitive standard is set out in the relevant Qualification Specification.

## 5.2. Direct Entry

NCC Education may, at its discretion, grant admission to a qualification on the grounds of qualifications and/or programmes of study which are not normally recognised as the academic entry requirements for that qualification. This is known as Direct Entry.

Requests for Direct Entry must be presented on the correct form (available on NCC Education's website) with appropriate supporting evidence as indicated in the *Direct Entry and Exemptions Policy*.

Direct Entry will not normally be granted by NCC Education for experiential learning (in industry, for example), though this may be considered as context to formal learning experiences which might otherwise not be approved.

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<sup>2</sup> At the time of publication, this is limited to NCC Education's Level 3 International Foundation Diploma for Higher Education Studies

### 5.3. Exemptions

NCC Education may, at its discretion, grant exemption from units in instances where a candidate has received an award in a unit/qualification that has been approved as sufficiently demonstrating the achievement of the learning outcomes of the equivalent NCC Education unit.

Requests for exemption must be submitted at the time of the candidate's first registration on the qualification, and must be presented on the correct form (available on NCC Education's website) with appropriate supporting evidence as indicated in the *Direct Entry and Exemptions Policy*. Requests for exemptions will not normally be accepted after a candidate has already been assessed for one or more unit(s) of a qualification.

Requests for exemption from a unit which a candidate has already attempted and failed will always be refused.

Exemptions are only available for a maximum of 50% of the credits associated with any given qualification.

## 6. Candidate Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities

### 6.1. Candidate Rights

Candidates have a right to:

- be informed about the basis for awarding their qualification
- be informed about the assessment methods and assessment criteria for the individual units they are taking
- be assessed and, where appropriate, be re-assessed in accordance with these Academic Regulations
- request a review of their results, subject to payment of a fee, if there is evidence of any perceived failure by NCC Education to correctly follow their published assessment processes and procedures, or if a candidate's performance has been affected by personal circumstances which, for valid reasons, could not be notified to the Assessment Board before the Board confirmed qualification and/or unit results
- submit any claim for special considerations in accordance with these Academic Regulations
- make a complaint about any aspect of NCC Education's products and services, and have that complaint receive appropriate consideration.

### 6.2. Candidate Responsibilities

Candidates have the following responsibilities:

- to attend the prescribed examinations and to submit work for assessment in accordance with the Academic Regulations, without committing academic misconduct or otherwise seeking to gain unfair advantage.
- to report to their Centre, if appropriate, and/or to NCC Education, any instance of malpractice or maladministration which they might be aware of, which might invalidate NCC Education qualifications or assessments.

## **7. Assessment Regulations**

### **7.1. Purpose of Assessment**

Assessment is used to confirm the achievement of an individual candidate in fulfilling the learning outcomes of a qualification, and to relate that achievement to a national and international standard of awards.

The Qualification Specification for each qualification will state the method and types of assessment used to test achievement of its learning outcomes. NCC Education reserves the right to change assessment methodology with reasonable notice where there is a sound basis of evidence to do so, and where such a change would not unreasonably disadvantage existing candidates.

Attending examinations and submitting assignments on time is the responsibility of each candidate.

Details of submission deadlines and the timing of assessments are published by NCC Education in the annual *Activity Schedules*, made available to all Centres. It is the responsibility of Centres to communicate this information to candidates.

### **7.2. Language of Assessment**

All NCC Education assessments are conducted in English.

### **7.3. Marking and Moderation**

Procedures for the marking and moderation of all articles of assessment are outlined in NCC Education's *Assessment Instructions* documents, which is provided to Centres on approval or accreditation.

### **7.4. Assessment criteria**

Assessment criteria are used in NCC Education qualifications to describe what a candidate may be expected to do in order to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been met. Assessment criteria are stated in Unit Specifications (in the relevant Qualification Specification), and in the Student Guide and Lecturer Guide for each unit. These criteria are considered by the Principal Examiner when developing assessments as the foundation of the questions and tasks set.

### **7.5. Word/time limits**

Information on word limits and time limits for assessments is contained within the rubric for that assessment, which is printed on the front page of the assessment itself. Failure to adhere to stated word limits may not result in a penalty, but will limit the candidate's ability to achieve the maximum marks for the assessment.

### **7.6. Submission of Assessment**

Completed assessments are normally submitted to the Centre, who will in turn submit them to NCC Education. Instructions for this are contained within NCC Education's *Assessment Instructions*. Any exceptions to this will be recorded in the relevant Qualification Specification.

### **7.7. Statement of Confirmation of Own Work**

All candidates must complete and submit a signed Statement of Confirmation of Own Work alongside all submitted assignments.

### **7.8. Extensions to Assessment Deadlines**

NCC Education offers a number of assessment cycles per year for each qualification (see the relevant Qualification Specification for details). Where a candidate cannot complete an assessment component for good reason, it is expected that he or she will normally defer until the next cycle. However, submission deadlines for Centre-marked assignments are determined by the Centre and flexibility for candidates with extenuating circumstances may be offered at their discretion. Details can be found in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

### **7.9. Reassessment**

A candidate will not be permitted to repeat any unit which they have passed previously in order to improve their mark for that unit.

A candidate who has failed a unit will be permitted to be reassessed on payment of a fee provided the reassessment can be completed within the eligibility period. Details of fees are available through the NCC Education Centre Portal. If the nature of the work which is to be reassessed requires the candidate to study the unit again, or to use facilities of the Centre in order to undertake the reassessment, then the candidate may be required to pay an additional fee to the Centre.

A candidate may not be offered reassessment in units which are no longer part of the qualification. NCC Education will make such special arrangements as it deems appropriate in such cases, normally involving a first attempt at a replacement unit.

### **7.10. Pre-assessment Special Considerations**

Where candidates require additional support during the examinations on medical or disability grounds, NCC Education will, where possible, approve special considerations to the assessment strategy. These adjustments are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated; for example the production of a modified paper for a candidate with a visual impairment, whose need has previously been established.

Full details of the scope of pre-assessment special considerations and how to request them from NCC Education can be found in the Special Considerations Policy on NCC Education's website, or upon request from the Partner Success Team.

### **7.11. Post-Assessment Special Considerations**

Post-assessment special considerations, which may be given following an examination or assessment, are intended to ensure that a candidate with a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time the assessment is conducted is given some recognition of the difficulty he/she has faced. These are also known as extenuating circumstances.

Full details of the scope of post-assessment special considerations and how to request them from NCC Education can be found in the Special Considerations Policy on NCC Education's website, or upon request from the Partner Success Team.

## 7.12. Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest (COI) is defined as a situation where a person has responsibility or makes a decision, and where that person or a person with a close relationship to them might benefit unfairly from that position of responsibility or from that decision.

All employees of NCC Education, examiners and moderators, everyone attending NCC Education's Assessment and Academic Boards, and all teaching and management staff employed by Centres are required to abide by the guidelines outlined in NCC Education's *Conflict of Interest Policy*. Details of how to declare a conflict of interest are outlined in the policy document.

## 7.13. Conduct of Examinations and Time-Constrained Assessments

Guidance on the delivery of examinations and Time-Constrained Assessments is available in NCC Education's *Instructions for Conducting Examinations* and *Instructions for Time Constrained Assessments* documents. Candidates will be informed of their expected conduct during examinations by the Centre, in line with these instructions. Candidates who break the rules of conduct during examinations will be subject to a penalty in line with NCC Education's *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

# 8. Awarding Authorities

## 8.1. Assessment Boards

An Assessment Board is convened for each subject area and each cycle. The Assessment Board is attended by members of NCC Education's Academic, Product Development, Operations and Quality Assurance departments. Every Assessment Board is also attended by the Chair of Examiners, who is normally an academic from a UK University with appropriate subject specialism.

The Assessment Board reviews statistical data on candidate performance and where appropriate approves adjustments (scaling) to results if required, for example where Centre markers have failed to correctly apply an assessment marking scheme. The Assessment Board also considers claims for special considerations and alleged cases of academic misconduct. The proceedings of Assessment Boards are strictly confidential.

The Assessment Board has the authority, devolved from the Academic Board, to approve results for publication. The dates on which results are released to Centres are published in the Activity Schedule for each qualification.

## 8.2. Academic Board

All of NCC Education's academic and quality assurance functions are monitored by the Academic Board. The Academic Board includes external members, made up of senior academics from UK universities and specialists from the education sector, and monitors NCC Education's academic functions to ensure global consistency across the systems and standards for examinations, marking, moderation and issuing of certificates.

## 8.3. Chair of Examiners

A Chair of Examiners for each qualification is appointed by NCC Education, and in accordance with specified requirements. Chairs of Examiners will normally be experienced

academics from UK Further and Higher Education institutions, although exceptional candidates with experience drawn from industry may be considered. Chairs of Examiners quality assure assessments and oversee NCC Education's Assessment Boards.

The Head of Assessments is authorised to suspend or remove a Chair of Examiners for negligence or malpractice, and to appoint any appropriately qualified person to fill a vacancy.

## 9. Results and Notification

### 9.1. Notification of Results and Award

Following the confirmation of results by the Assessment Board, a Statement of Results for each candidate will be issued to Centres, containing:

- the registered name of the candidate;
- the name of the candidate's Centre<sup>3</sup>;
- the name of all units successfully completed;
- a result for each unit.

The General Manager has the power to direct that the assessment result for any candidate who has not paid (or whose Centre has not paid) in full all fees due to NCC Education shall not be published until all such debts have been paid in full. Results may also be withheld if there are reasonable doubts about the authentication of a candidate's work, and/or where there is reasonable suspicion of Centre malpractice or candidate misconduct, which in either case warrants further investigation before a result can be issued.

### 9.2. Revoking Results

Where issues (such as malpractice) come to light after the issuing of a Statement of Results, NCC Education reserves the right to revoke results and issue an amended Statement of Results.

NCC Education also reserves the right to revoke qualifications and certificates in such circumstances (see Section 1.2, above).

### 9.3. Classification

NCC Education unit results are graded in the following manner:

Grade	Mark	Descriptor
Distinction	70+	The candidate has demonstrated significantly higher than average performance in all learning outcomes for the unit
Merit	60-69	The candidate has demonstrated above average performance in all learning outcomes for the unit
Pass	40-59	The candidate has met all learning outcomes for the unit

<sup>3</sup> Except in a small number of countries where there is a local regulatory or legal requirement meaning that the name of the Centre is not included on the certificate.

<b>Fail</b>	39 and below	The candidate has not met all learning outcomes for the unit
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Specific grade descriptors for each unit can also be found in the relevant Qualification Specification document.

Candidates who complete all units making up a qualification will also receive a final overall grade and mark for the qualification, which is calculated from the weighting and marks awarded for each unit making up that qualification.

#### **9.4. Eligibility for Certification**

A candidate will be deemed eligible for an award only when they have successfully achieved all of the unit learning outcomes and have demonstrated this through successful completion of the required assessments. The accumulated units to achieve the award must be in the required combination, which may include both core and elective units as outlined in the Qualification Specification, or through a recognised exemption or other Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) agreed with NCC Education. This must be completed within the eligibility period for the qualification.

For details of the award of e-certificates for Short Courses, consult the Short Courses Guide 2020-21.

#### **9.5. Permission to Proceed Carrying Fails**

Where candidates are following pathways leading to multiple levels of NCC Education qualifications over time, there is an expectation that the candidate should complete one qualification in full, in order to meet the entry requirements of the qualification at the next level up. Therefore, a Level 4 Diploma would normally be fully completed and awarded before registering on a Level 5 Diploma. However, under certain circumstances candidates may (at the Centre's discretion) be permitted to proceed to the next level of NCC Education qualification whilst awaiting reassessment at the level below. This is known as 'carrying fails'.

A candidate may be permitted to carry a failed unit or units totalling no more than

- 30 credits of a 120 credit qualification
- 15 credits of a 60 credit qualification

if they meet the following conditions:

- a) the candidate has attempted all units at least once
- b) both the qualification with the carried fail and the qualification at the next level are awarded by NCC Education.

Candidates should be aware that if they complete a qualification whilst carrying a failed unit at the level below, they will not receive the lower level qualification certificate until the carried unit(s) is successfully passed. This may prevent the candidate from proceeding onto university 'top-up' degree programmes, if a qualification is awarded at Level 5 but fails are still carried from Level 4.

Candidates seeking to progress to a university or other institution should confirm entry requirements directly with that institution.

## **10. Post-Results Services (including Appeals)**

NCC Education's Post-Results Services provide an opportunity for candidates and Centres to confirm that NCC Education's marking processes and procedures have been followed correctly, and therefore that the marks issued to candidates are correct. All post-results services carry a fee as set out in the Post-Results Services Policy.

### **10.1. Grounds for Post-Results Services and Appeals**

Full details of acceptable grounds for post-results services and appeals can be found within NCC Education's Post-Results Services Policy. A request for a review which questions the academic or professional judgement of those charged with the responsibility for assessing a candidate's academic performance or professional competence shall not be permitted.

### **10.2. Submission**

Full details of the process for submitting a request for a Post-Results Service can be found in the Post-Results Services Policy, available on NCC Education's website. Appeals may only be submitted after completion of a Service 2 Review of Marking or Service 3 Cohort Moderation Review.

All Post-Results Services are subject to a fee, fully refundable in the event that the review establishes that NCC Education's assessment procedures were not correctly followed and/or the candidate received an incorrect mark. The fees associated with these services are given in the policy document.

### **10.3. Investigation**

Where appropriate grounds for a Post-Results Service have been met, the request will be investigated by the designated Appeals Officer and an outcome issued to the Centre within the timeframes set out in the Post-Results Services Policy.

All Appeals lead to the convening of an Appeals Panel, of which one member is an independent member.

## 11. Academic Misconduct and Assessment Offences

### 11.1. Academic Misconduct

All work submitted for an assessment must be the candidate's own work. It is an offence for any candidate to be guilty of, or party to, collusion, plagiarism, or any other act which may mislead the examiners about the development and authorship of work presented in assessments. Full definitions of the various forms of academic are contained within NCC Education's *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

All academic writing must fully acknowledge all sources of information used in preparing the work being submitted. This includes acknowledging all written and electronic sources. For all NCC Education qualifications, it is expected that candidates will use 'Harvard'-style referencing standards. Where work is produced under examination conditions it is sufficient to acknowledge the source without providing a full reference.

Candidates must not take any means of accessing information into an examination room, unless the rubric for that examination explicitly states that this is allowed. This includes:

- all internet-connected devices – e.g. computers, tablets, smart watches
- mobile phones or other messaging devices
- books, journals, or notes

NCC Education considers all instances of plagiarism, collusion, impersonation, fabrication of results, or misconduct in an exam to be failures to respect the integrity and fairness of the assessment process.

### 11.2. Investigating Academic Misconduct

NCC Education will investigate any evidence of academic misconduct to ensure that all marks awarded to candidates are accurate.

In some cases, Centres may be required to interview candidates as part of the investigation process. In such cases, NCC Education will write to the Head of Centre setting the information required. Centres are expected to comply with any such requests in a prompt manner, and failure to comply with any requests as part of an investigation will be deemed to be Malpractice on the Centre's part, as defined in NCC Education's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. Candidates are also expected to comply fully with any investigation.

NCC Education holds the right to withhold marks as appropriate beyond the published results release date pending the outcome of any investigation into alleged academic misconduct.

### 11.3. Sanctions

Where academic misconduct is proven, candidates who have committed it or helped someone else to do so will be penalised. Details on sanctions which NCC Education may impose on candidates are outlined in NCC Education's *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

#### **11.4. Malpractice and Maladministration**

Sometimes, an instance of academic misconduct may reveal evidence of malpractice or maladministration on the part of a candidate's Centre. For definitions of malpractice and maladministration and details of how such concerns may be investigated, please see NCC Education's *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*.

#### **11.5. Reviews of Academic Misconduct Penalties**

Candidates who have had penalties applied to their marks and/or whose certificates have been invalidated as a result of an academic misconduct penalty have the normal right to request a Post-Results Service, as outlined in NCC Education's Post-Results Services Policy.

Any such request will operate according to the procedures for all Post-Results Services and Appeals, and is subject to payment of a fee which is refundable if the review is successful.

## Appendix A – Variations to Academic Regulations for Digi-Qualifications

These Academic Regulations apply to all NCC Education qualifications. However there are a number of variations to these regulations that apply **only** to the suite of Digi qualifications. These are outlined below. Variations apply to the following sections of the Academic Regulations:

1. List of NCC Education Qualifications
2. Regulations and Frameworks
  - Levels
  - Guided Learning Hours
  - Level Descriptors
3. Entry Requirements
4. Awarding Authorities
5. Results and Notification
  - Notification of Results and Award
  - Revoking Results
  - Classification

### 1. List of NCC Education Qualifications

NCC Education’s suite of Digi Qualifications consists of qualifications at four levels:

- Digi Explorers
- Digi Navigators
- Digi Trailblazers
- NCC Education Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ) (also known as the Digi Award)

### 2. Regulation and Frameworks

NCC Education’s suite of Digi Qualifications are aimed at, but not exclusive to, primary and lower secondary students, encompassing English Key Stages 1-4. The qualifications can be mapped as follows:

Digi-Explorers	Key Stage 1	5-7 years
Digi-Navigators	Key Stage 2	7-11 years
Digi-Trailblazers	Key Stage 3	11-13 years
Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ) “Digi Award”	Key Stage 4	14-16 years

### Guided Learning Hours

NCC Education specifies recommended Guided Learning Hours (GLH) within the Digi-Qualification syllabus and specification as follows:

Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ) “Digi Award”	60 hours
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### Level Descriptors

Each Digi-Qualification syllabus and specification references the English National Curriculum learning descriptors for Computing (at the relevant Key Stage level) and all syllabus learning outcomes are linked to these curriculum descriptors.

### **3. Entry Requirements**

Information regarding entry requirements for NCC Education's suite of Digi-Qualifications can be found in the Qualification Syllabus and Specification. There are no prerequisite qualification requirements for entry to any Digi-Qualification.

### **4. Awarding Authorities**

#### **Ratification of Marks**

NCC Education provides oversight of all marking and moderation for the Digi suite of qualifications. Statistical data on candidate performance is reviewed and claims for special considerations and alleged cases of academic misconduct are also considered. Final marks are ratified as an additional agenda item at NCC Education's Computing Assessment Board.

### **5. Results and Notification**

#### **a.) Level 2 Award in Computing (VRQ) "Digi Award":**

##### **Notification of Results and Award**

Following the approval of results for publication, a Statement of Results for each candidate will be issued to Centres, containing:

- the registered name of the candidate;
- the name of the candidate's Centre;
- the candidate's numerical score

For candidates who have passed a certificate will then be issued to Centres.

General Manager has the power to direct that the assessment result for any candidate who has not paid (or whose Centre has not paid) in full all fees due to NCC Education shall not be published until all such debts have been paid in full. Results may also be withheld if there are reasonable doubts about the authentication of a candidate's work, and/or where there is reasonable suspicion of Centre malpractice or candidate misconduct, which in either case warrants further investigation before a result can be issued.

##### **Revoking Results**

Where issues (such as malpractice) come to light after the issuing of a Statement of Results, NCC Education reserves the right to revoke results and issue an amended Statement of Results. NCC Education also reserves the right to revoke qualifications and certificates in such circumstances (see Section 1.2, above).

#### **b.) Digi Explorers, Navigators and Trailblazers**

Results are displayed to students on screen immediately after they complete their online assessment. If a student has passed the assessment, they will then be able to print their e-certificate.

### Classification

NCC Education's suite of Digi-Qualifications are graded as follows:

Mark (%)	Grade
0% - 49%	Fail
50% - 100%	Pass

## Glossary

Term	Definition
Absent	If a candidate does not attend a scheduled assessment they will be recorded as absent. Also applies when a candidate fails to submit an Assignment by the stated deadline
Accredited Partner Centre	A centre that has been accredited to carry out assessments towards NCC Education qualifications and use programme teaching and learning resources for given qualification(s), together with marketing materials
Amendment	When an enrolment for an assessment session is changed, added to or withdrawn from a candidate's enrolment record
Articulation	An agreement in which completion of all or part of an NCC Education qualification is recognised by a UK University as a valid entry qualification
Assessment Cycle	The defined window in which assessments are available to candidates
Assessment	Any formal testing used to measure candidate achievement of qualification or unit learning outcomes.
Assignment	Usually a project or extended study undertaken in a component for certain qualifications. An Assignment must be submitted by a set closing date and be authenticated. It is usually marked by the centre and moderated by NCC Education, but where a specification requires it, NCC Education may mark it.
Authentication	The process under which evidence generated by a candidate in an assessment is confirmed as having been generated by that candidate and as being generated under the required conditions
Authenticator	A person confirming an Assignment is a candidate's own work
Award	A qualification in the RQF with 1 to 12 credits or Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 10 to 120 hours
Awarding Body	The organisation that produces the specification, sets the assessments, marks or moderates candidates' assessments, awards certificates and maintains standards
Candidate	A student entered for an assessment
Candidate Fee	The charge for each candidate registration
Candidate Summary	A report in Candidate Registration Portal, available by candidate, for a given Programme which provides individual unit and credit status together with summary totals
Centre	An organisation accredited by NCC Education to undertake the delivery of assessment; Centres are typically educational institutions, training providers, or employers.
Centre Co-ordinator	A member of staff at an Accredited Partner Centre responsible for the day to day running of NCC Education qualifications and administering assessments

Certificate	1) The official document produced when a qualification award is achieved by earning the minimum pass grade. 2) A qualification in the RQF with 13 to 36 credits or a Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 130 to 360 hours
Certification	The process of awarding a qualification
Chair of Examiners	A person contracted by NCC Education to confirm the quality and fitness for purpose of an assessment together with the related examining and moderating
Comparability	Generating assessment outcomes that are comparable in standards between assessments within a qualification, between similar qualifications, with other awarding organisations, and over time. Where an assessment has equivalent forms then it is important to ensure comparability of outcomes
Component	The constituent assessment(s) making up a unit. Some units will have one component (e.g. an Assignment) others will have multiple components (e.g. an Examination and an Assignment)
Credit	The credit value of a unit or qualification gives an indication of how long it will normally take a candidate to prepare for the unit or qualification
Diploma	A qualification in the RQF with at least 37 credits or Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 370 hours
Enrolment	The official notification via an NCC Education Accredited Partner Centre of the cycles in which a candidate wants to be assessed
Examiner	A person contracted by NCC Education to mark a candidate's work
Examination	A timed, invigilated assessment consisting of a question paper/answer book taken by a candidate at a specified date in an assessment cycle
Fail	The classification for a candidate who does not achieve the minimum requirements for a qualification unit
Global Assignment	An Assignment set by NCC Education and marked by a centre tutor (with the exception of Level 7 Global Assignments which are marked by NCC Education contracted examiners)
Global Examination	An examination set and marked by an NCC Education contracted examiner
Grade	A candidate's level of achievement for each unit within a qualification attempted. There are three passing grades; Pass, Merit and Distinction
Head of Centre	A person at a centre who has operational control and accountability
Local Examination	An examination set by NCC Education and marked by a centre tutor, and moderated by NCC Education
LRS	Learning Records Service; a shared service for education stakeholders delivered by the Skills Funding Agency, jointly sponsored by DfE and BIS in England, Wales and NI only
Maladministration	Any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications

Malpractice	Any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates
Moderator	A person contracted by NCC Education to ensure that either all centre marking (Local Examinations and Assignments) is to the same standard
Module	A set of teaching and learning resources for a qualification unit, available within a Programme
Ofqual	Ofqual, the UK Government's Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, is the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England
PLR	Personal Learning Record; a record of general and vocational unit and qualification achievement for a learner registered with the LRS in England, Wales and NI only
Post-Results Service	A service providing clerical checks, marking/moderation reviews and appeals where a candidate or Centre believes a procedural error has resulted in an incorrect mark being released to one or more candidates.
Principal Examiner	A person contracted by NCC Education to write an assessment and marking scheme. For centrally marked work the Principle Examiner will also be the lead marker for the assessment.
Product	A qualification, programme or resource
Programme	A teaching and learning resource available to an Accredited Partner Centre
Qualification	A product that: Gives a reliable indication of an individual's knowledge, skills and understanding; Is awarded only to a candidate who has demonstrated a specified level of attainment across all components
Registration	The registering of a person or persons by an Accredited Partner Centre onto a specific qualification. Payment of candidate fees is triggered by registration.
Reliability	Reliability is about consistency and so concerns the extent to which the various stages in the assessment process generate outcomes which would be replicated were the assessment repeated. Reliability is a necessary condition of Validity, as it is not possible to demonstrate the Validity of an assessment process which is not Reliable. The reliability of an assessment is affected by a range of factors such as the sampling of assessment tasks and consistency in marking by examiners and moderators
Resit	A candidate enrolment for a given assessment which has previously been attempted and failed. A resit fee is triggered on enrolment
Reviser	A person contracted by NCC Education to check and provide feedback on an assessment and mark scheme written by a setter
RQF	The Regulated Qualifications Framework, Ofqual regulate qualifications that use the rules of the RQF

Scaling	An adjustment to candidate marks for a unit or module made by the moderator
Script	A question paper/answer book completed in an examination
Standardisation	A process which ensures a marking scheme is applied consistently by centre based markers, NCC Education examiners and moderators
Special Consideration	A Special Consideration is a pre or post assessment adjustment applied to a candidate's mark or the assessment itself, and is requested by a centre administrator. A pre-assessment adjustment is for a candidate with a particular requirement to ensure the candidate is not disadvantaged in assessments e.g. a student with impaired sight can have a question paper in enlarged font or a reader. A post-assessment special consideration is an adjustment to the mark of a candidate who was temporarily ill, injured or indisposed at the time of assessment
Specification	A document describing the subject content, the assessment, modules/units and their weighting, grade descriptors and learning outcomes of a qualification. Also acts as a <i>syllabus</i> for the qualification. All qualification specifications are available on NCC Education's website.
Statement of Results	A statement of results provided on the published results release date
Student	A person with access to an NCC Education qualification and if studying at an Accredited Partner Centre, an NCC Education Programme of teaching and learning resources for a qualification.
Syllabus	See Specification
Teacher (Top-Up programmes only)	Teaching staff on NCC Education Top Up Programmes covering module leader, course leader and project module leader
Top-Up	A 'Top-Up' programme delivered either online or as a franchised face-to-face taught programme, to allow students to achieve a Bachelors (Honours) or Master's Degrees after completing an NCC Education Level 5 or 7 qualification.
Transcript	A breakdown by candidate of all unit grades associated with a given qualification and issued with the Certificate
Tutor	A person preparing a candidate for an assessment in an Accredited Partner Centre using Programme teaching and learning resources
Unique Candidate Number	A unique numeric code allocated to a candidate for administering enrolment and results and certification
Unique Learner Number (ULN)	A unique number generated by a centre in the LRS for an individual candidate aged 14+ taking assessment <b>within England, Wales and NI only</b>
Unit	The part of qualification that can be separately certified. A unit can comprise separately assessed components. Units build up to qualifications

Validity	The extent to which evidence and theory support the interpretation that the assessment outcomes meet their intended uses. The evaluation of validity involves the development of a clear argument to support the proposed interpretation of the outcomes and as a consequence the intended uses of the assessment. The validity argument should be built on statements of the proposed interpretation and supporting evidence collected from all stages of the assessment process
Withdrawal	The cancelation by the Centre of a candidate enrolment for an assessment and/or for a qualification/programme