

Name of Course:	ITQ NVQ
Awarding body:	British Computer Society
Qualification:	BCS ITQ



What is an ITQ NVQ?

ITQ stands for Information Technology Qualification. An ITQ is a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) for IT Users which enables you to demonstrate competence in the use of IT in a working or voluntary place. ITQ is primarily aimed at IT users and not professional IT staff such as engineers and developers. ITQ was developed by employers for use in the workplace and has the full backing of several awarding bodies. North Devon Pathfinder Trust offers the ITQ NVQ in conjunction with the British Computer Society.

The ITQ is flexible. The content of the qualification can be adjusted to suit the requirements of your workplace or your individual role. In addition to being able to mix-and-match traditional IT skills in an ITQ (such as word processing, databases, email etc) ITQ also recognises bespoke software.

The different levels that you can achieve are made up of selected units which have an assigned value. To gain a Level 2 ITQ for example a candidate has to build a programme of units that totals 100 points.

The diagram below shows the units and values available:

Unit values	S/NVQ Level 1			S/NVQ Level 2			S/NVQ Level 3		
	5	10	15	15	20	25	25	30	35
Minimum total value per level	40			100			180		
Name of unit	Make selective use of IT (mandatory)								
	Use IT systems								
	Operate a computer								
	IT trouble-shooting for users								
	IT maintenance for users								
	IT security for users								
	Use IT to exchange information								
	Internet and intranets								
	E-mail								
	Word processing software								
	Spreadsheet software								
	Database software								
	Website software								
	Artwork and imaging software								
	Presentation software								
	Specialist or bespoke software								
Evaluate the impact of IT									
Sector specific unit									

There is a mandatory unit that everyone has to complete, which comprises production of 4 comprehensive tasks for an end user, created using at least two software applications used within the optional units chosen. It may also include work based observation by a qualified NVQ assessor.

There are two main routes to achieving an ITQ:

Option 1 - Design a work-based ITQ

Using entirely work-based units from the ITQ framework. An assessment portfolio is developed with evidence for both mandatory and optional units. This can be assessed wholly in the workplace if appropriate so a learner can apply their IT skills directly to their day-to-day work and prove competence in this way. You have to produce 4 tasks, which include a minimum of given skills, from a real work environment for your evidence for the mandatory unit.

Option 2 Incorporating contributing qualifications

ITQ can also be assessed by using other contributing qualifications (or Accreditation of Prior Achievement - APA) to achieve the optional units, and then assess the final mandatory work-based unit to complete the ITQ. Where optional units have been assessed using APA, a minimum of 2 of these options must be demonstrated and assessed through the mandatory unit. You have to produce 4 tasks, which include a minimum of given skills, from a real work environment for your evidence for the mandatory unit.

What is the top-up route?

You may be able to complete "top up" activity where you already hold a previously awarded EC DL/CLAiT or other module contributing qualification.

How do I start?

Once you have decided that ITQ is for you, an assessor will work closely with you to design a programme that best meets your individual needs. This starts with an analysis of your skills and work activities and use of an e-skills passport to identify existing and required skills. You can expect to spend some time planning your programme so that it is the right one for you.

What does the course cost?

The course is supported through the body that funds Adult Education (The Learning Skills Council) in the UK and eligibility/cost is dependent on your existing level of qualifications.

Further information about eligibility can be given upon consultation.

How is the course delivered?

Several of the units for the ITQ can be claimed from existing IT qualifications from a range of awarding bodies, or study towards a certificate such as the BCS Level 1&2 Certificates for IT Users, or OCR CLAiT suite of certificates, and many more.

Once you and your assessor have selected the route that is right for you, you then go on to study for the additional knowledge you require through self-paced study.

How is learning assessed?

Your NVQ assessor will arrange a planned observation in your workplace by arrangement. You will build your portfolio of evidence as you go along with guidance from your tutor and/or assessor and you will also have regular reviews of progress and action plans to give you targets to work towards. For assessment of recognised qualifications you would follow the normal procedures laid down by the relevant awarding body.

How long will the course take?

This depends entirely on you and which option you follow. Working through the underpinning knowledge materials and generating the evidence for a portfolio will vary for each individual. You set your own deadlines through creating action plans and reviews with your tutor and assessor.

What are the entry requirements?

You need to be able to demonstrate activities that incorporate a sufficient level of information technology skills to be able to demonstrate the competence required. The ITQ NVQ is aimed at the average IT users, not the higher professional levels such as engineers and developers.

Where can you get further information?

**Contact Lorna Lacey, Training Manager, on 01271 815812
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for further information.**