

Construction and Built Environment Qualifications Reform



Building
the future

Construction and the built environment is one of the most important employment sectors in Wales.

A new suite of Construction and Built Environment qualifications are being developed to meet the skills needs of Wales for learners in schools, colleges and on apprenticeships. Beginning in September 2021, the new qualifications will offer clear progression from learning and into employment in the sector.

SIMPLIFYING A COMPLEX QUALIFICATION LANDSCAPE

The change aims to simplify the complex landscape of more than 400 qualifications in construction and building services in Wales and to ensure that learners are better prepared for careers across the sector. There'll be an increased focus on new and traditional techniques, on knowledge of the industry as a whole and on the generic skills needed to progress into work from education.

[City & Guilds](#), [EAL](#) and [WJEC](#) are working collaboratively to deliver the new suite of qualifications. WJEC bring their expertise to the development of the new GCSE, AS and A level Built Environment qualifications. City & Guilds are working with EAL to develop new Foundation, Progression and Apprenticeship qualifications, bringing together the strength of two market-leading awarding bodies in vocational qualifications to support a wide range of trades in construction and building services engineering.

WORKING WITH INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

Industry representatives are significant to the success of this new suite of qualifications. The knowledge and competencies that are included in the qualifications are being shaped by employers in Wales.

Working with CITB, BESA, ECA, APHC and Cadw, amongst others, we will make sure that what is learnt is relevant to what the industry needs in their recruits, reducing the need for re-training once a learner moves into the world of work.

THE QUALIFICATIONS

A thriving Welsh language. Many learners will have a Welsh language preference, and our qualifications and apprenticeship qualifications are helping to empower our bilingual nation by ensuring that all learners will be able to be assessed in Welsh and/or English. Official support material for the qualifications will also be made available in both Welsh and English.

New GCSE and AS/A level Built Environment qualifications will be delivered in schools and colleges. These qualifications provide hands-on tasters of practical skills while introducing knowledge and understanding of buildings and the construction industry that will prove valuable to learners progressing into further or higher education. The innovative new AS/A level will provide an exciting new route into degree programmes such as surveying, architecture and construction management.

The new Foundation in Construction and the Built Environment qualification will provide learners with a broad introduction to the sector as a whole, including developing their employability skills and ability to perform tasks in ways that protect health, safety and wellbeing. Learners will also develop introductory practical skills in two trade areas, enabling them to make an informed choice about their future trade and to draw on these skills in their future careers. Having completed Foundation, learners will be well prepared to start an apprenticeship. This qualification is designed primarily for full time study and will be awarded at level 2.

The Foundation qualification is also recommended for direct entrants into an apprenticeship – though a shorter qualification, the Core in Construction and Built Environment will also be available for this group of learners if they are not able to study more than one trade area. This qualification will also be awarded at level 2.

The Progression Qualification provides a route for learners to further develop their skills in further education for another year, if they do not progress directly to an apprenticeship upon completing their Foundation qualification. Learners specialise in a single trade, developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of current practice in the trade and changes over time, while also continuing to develop their broader employability skills. This qualification is designed primarily for full-time study, although it will be of great benefit to learners if centres are able to arrange work experience for learners on this course. Any such work experience will not be assessed in the qualification. The Progression qualification is also awarded at level 2.

The Apprenticeship Qualification can be taken by learners following a two, three or four-year apprenticeship. It allows learners to demonstrate the range of their technical knowledge, skills and understanding in their trade specialism according to the national occupational standards for that trade. Learners will also study sector practices within Wales. Apprentices will typically attend college or another learning provider on a day-release, or block-release basis, to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

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Keep up to date with the development of these qualifications by signing up to [The Slate](#)

For more information visit the [Skills for Wales](#) or [WJEC](#) websites