

## NVQ

# LABORATORY AND ASSOCIATED TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

## FAQs

- **How will the LATA NVQ help me in my job and my career?**

Undertaking the NVQ qualification will help you identify areas of your job in which you wish to develop skills and knowledge. This will allow you to progress in your career and may open up alternative or advanced job opportunities within your field. The qualification is linked to the common 4-level framework for science technicians so acquisition of the relevant award is not essential to achieve promotion, you will be viewed favourably if you have demonstrated your commitment to continued professional development.

- **Who else may be enrolled on the NVQ?**

You will be enrolled on the NVQ along with technicians in other schools and colleges and possibly colleagues from your own institution. This will be a great help to you as you will become a member of a community in which you are encouraged to share ideas and learn from each other. Using discussion boards, email and archives of resources, you will be able to engage in discussion with other technicians and find out how they manage various aspects of their job which are common with your own.

- **How can i do the NVQ?**

You can contact TechCen (the Technicians working in Education National assessment centre) by either emailing [admin@aseinsetservices.org](mailto:admin@aseinsetservices.org) or by telephone on 02476690053

- **Do I have to study on a course?**

You don't have to do a course to complete the NVQ. If you are an experienced technician, you may already have some or all of the necessary skills and knowledge to do the NVQ without formal training. You complete the process by developing your skills in the work place, with the NVQ competencies assessed as part of working practice. Many NVQ candidates find this a very worthwhile learning experience that fits in with the way they like to learn. However, if you are less experienced or feel you would benefit from training, TechCen is also a training provider and therefore will develop or adapt training programmes which support the NVQ.

- **Do I need any particular resources/equipment to do the LATA NVQ?**

Everything you need to complete the NVQ should already be available in your workplace. Your employer will need to ensure that you have access to a modern PC with internet access and printing facility. They will be asked to sign a declaration that they will provide this access. You may also wish to use ICT facilities and internet access outside the workplace but it is not a requirement that you have this.

- **How much does it cost?**

The typical cost of an NVQ is approximately £900. During the pilot TECHCEN will provide a bursary to cover the majority of the cost. The remainder will need to be met by you or your employer.

- Is any financial support available to meet the remainder of the cost?

Yes. Financial support may be available from the school. Funding may also be available from your local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Please visit <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/> for information on how to contact your local LSC. You may be eligible for a bursary through your trade union. You will need to contact the relevant trade union for information.

- **Who will support me while working toward gaining the NVQ?**

You will not be on your own. In addition to other technicians who will be completing the award, you will be supported in your workplace by a mentor. This is likely to be your line manager but might also be another significant person in the establishment who has the necessary skills and knowledge, for instance a senior technician who already has the

qualification. You will also be allocated an assessor who will work with you through the programme.

- **Do I have to do the level 1 before i do the level 2?**

No you do not. There is no requirement to do the Level 1 NVQ before you start the Level 2. You can go straight in at Level 2 as long as your responsibilities at work are appropriate to the all the mandatory units and the optional units. (This also applies for level 3 or 4)

- **How do I know which NVQ level is appropriate for me to work towards achieving?**

You have to bear in mind that NVQs are work-based. To gain a unit in the NVQ, a technician must already be in a post that includes the responsibilities the unit covers. If you are a science technician, the “career structure for science technicians” leaflet (available via [www.ase.org.uk](http://www.ase.org.uk)) could be useful in selecting the appropriate level as it outlines a common 4- level framework for science technicians. Similarly, if you are a D&T technician, you can visit the D&T Technician’s area (available at [www.data.org.uk](http://www.data.org.uk) where you will find descriptions of technicians’ roles at each of the 4 levels. The new Laboratory & Associated Technical Activities (LATA) NVQ (offered at levels 1-4) underpins this 4 - level route. Also TechCen will help you through a needs analysis process to select the most appropriate level to fit your requirements.

- **What if my job doesn't involve all of the responsibilities covered by the whole NVQ?**

The NVQ has been designed to be as flexible as possible and should fit most Technician roles at a given level. However, if the role doesn't cover enough of the responsibilities to gain the full NVQ, do not despair. Talk to the head teacher or other line manager and see if it would be possible to rearrange the job responsibilities so that enough units can be covered for the full NVQ.

- **How easy is it to progress from level 2 to level 3?**

As with any NVQ, you have to be doing a job appropriate to the level of the qualification. However, if you complete the Level 2 NVQ and your experience and job responsibilities increase, you will find that the NVQs

have been designed to help you to progress from Level 2 to Level 3 and then on to level 4

### **How is assessment organised?**

There are five stages in the assessment and verification process:

#### *Stage One:*

The assessment process begins with the candidate's induction. They are then guided through the processes of collecting evidence and assessment by their personal Assessor. This will be facilitated through a dedicated website.

#### *Stage Two:*

Once the Candidate, in partnership with their Assessor, considers that the evidence collated in a portfolio meets the requirements of the relevant national standards, the portfolio is authenticated.

#### *Stage Three:*

An Internal Verifier appointed by the Approved Centre verifies assessments made by Assessors.

#### *Stage Four:*

Once the evidence has been assessed as meeting the unit requirements of the relevant national standards, and the Internal Verifier is satisfied with the assessment process, the Approved Centre may request Unit Certificate from the awarding body through their External Verifiers (EV).

#### *Stage Five:*

Once all units are complete and the EV is satisfied that the national standards have been met, the portfolio will be authorised for award certification. The Project Management NVQ/SVQ will be awarded to individuals who successfully demonstrate competence against the Standards relevant to the specific level undertaken.