

# Qualification Specification

## BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core)

Version 1.0

December 2015

# Contents

---

<b>1. About BCS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Equal Opportunities</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Introduction to the qualification</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Qualification summary	4
3.2 Purpose of the qualification	4
3.3 Structure of the qualification	5
3.4 Prior learning	5
3.5 Learner progression	6

---

<b>4. Units</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Guidance on the unit content	6
4.2 Learning outcomes and assessment criteria	7

---

<b>5. Assessment</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Summary of assessment methods	15
5.2 Availability of assessments	15
5.3 Pass Marks	15
5.4 Internally assessed units	15
5.5 Externally assessed units	15
5.6 Specimen assessment materials	15
5.7 Support materials	16
5.8 Access to Assessment	16

---

<b>6. Contact Points</b>	<b>17</b>
--------------------------	-----------

---

---

## **1. About BCS**

Our mission as BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, is to enable the information society. We promote wider social and economic progress through the advancement of information technology science and practice. We bring together industry, academics, practitioners and government to share knowledge, promote new thinking, information the design of new curricula, shape public policy and inform the public.

Our vision is to be a world class organisation for IT. Our 70,000 strong membership includes practitioners, businesses, academics and students in the UK and internationally. We deliver a range of professional development tools for practitioners and employees. A leading IT qualification body, we offer a range of widely recognised qualifications.

---

## **2. Equal Opportunities**

BCS wishes to ensure good practice in the area of Equal Opportunity. Equality of opportunity extends to all aspects for the provision of BCS qualifications. Further information about our equal opportunities policy can be found on the Approved Centre Forum, a secure website for approved centres.

---

### 3. Introduction to the qualification

#### 3.1 Qualification summary

Qualification Title	QAN	Accreditation Start
BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core)	601/8240/4	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2016

The BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core) qualification is a fixed selection of eight units developed by e-Skills, the sector skills council for IT and Telecoms. It covers the core applications commonly used in many businesses around the world.

All BCS qualifications are subject to our quality assurance and validation process is to ensure that new and revised qualifications are fit for purpose. Qualifications are reviewed to ensure the alignment of the qualification with agreed design principles, regulatory requirements and to ensure accuracy and consistency across units and qualifications. Through our quality assurance and validation process, we ensure the qualification, its units and assessments, are fit for purpose and can be delivered efficiently and reasonably by centres.

#### 3.2 Purpose of the qualification

This qualification is designed for anyone who is looking to gain knowledge and skills of core IT user skills and software applications to progress their learning in IT, or any subject where basic IT skills are required.

This qualification covers core IT User skills and applications commonly used in many organisations around the world.

Completing this qualification will improve the learner's basic IT skills and understanding of IT applications. It will teach them how to use the software efficiently and also teach them how to use a computer confidently and effectively, and encourages problem-solving, creativity and communication.

### 3.3 Structure of the qualification

The BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core) qualification structure is shown in the table below. This structure meets the requirements for a Level 2 Certificate in terms of the number of guided learning hours and credits from level 2 units.

Mandatory Units	Unit code	Level	Credit value
IT Security for Users	Y/507/9680	1	1
IT User Fundamentals	D/507/9681	1	3
Using email	H/507/9682	1	2
Using internet	K/507/9683	1	3
Word Processing	F/507/9687	2	4
Spreadsheet Software	A/507/9686	2	4
Presentation Software	T/507/9685	2	4
Database Software	M/507/9684	2	4
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>25</b>

Qualification Level 2 Descriptor	
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems.</li> <li>It includes taking responsibility for completing tasks and procedures and exercising autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use understanding of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems</li> <li>Interpret relevant information and ideas</li> <li>Be aware of the types of information that are relevant to the area of study or work</li> </ul>
<b>Application and action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems</li> <li>Select and use relevant skills and procedures</li> <li>Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions</li> <li>Identify how effective actions have been</li> </ul>
<b>Autonomy and accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures</li> <li>Exercise autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Prior learning

There are no pre-requisites that a learner must achieve prior to taking this BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills qualification, all knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject will be covered within the training.

### 3.5 Learner progression

Following completion of the BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core) qualification, learners can progress onto other qualifications. Qualifications are available in a number of sizes (Award, Certificate, and Diploma) and levels (i.e. Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3). The benefits of this are that learners can progress in two ways; either by working towards a larger qualification at the same level or by working towards a higher level qualification.

This qualification and its credits can be used to contribute towards a larger IT qualification either at Level 2 or 3 or by size to a Diploma.

---

## 4. Units

### 4.1 Guidance on the unit content

The units indicated below form the fixed units packaged for the purpose of obtaining the BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core) qualification.

There is no specific order for completion of the units. However, it is recommended that the learner should complete the level 1 units prior to the level 2 units to assist with learning progression.

Unit Name (Level 2)	Unit Code	Unit Owner	Guided Learning Hours	Credits
IT Security for Users	Y/507/9680	BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT.  Content written by e-skills UK The Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology	10	1
IT User Fundamentals	D/507/9681		20	3
Using email	H/507/9682		15	2
Using internet	K/507/9683		20	3
Word Processing Software	F/507/9687		30	4
Presentation Software	T/507/9685		30	4
Spreadsheet Software	A/507/9686		30	4
Database Software	M/507/9684		30	4

## 4.2 Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Y/507/9680 IT Security for Users Level 1

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Use appropriate methods to minimise security risks to IT systems and data	Take appropriate security precautions to protect IT systems and data	Identify security issues that may threaten system performance	A foundation user can identify day-to-day security risks and the laws and guidelines that affect the use of IT; and use simple methods to protect software and personal data (e.g. risks from people getting access to it who are not authorised, from viruses or from hardware not working properly). Examples of context: Regular change of password using a range of alphanumeric characters and symbols. Understanding the importance of applying organisational procedures for maintaining security consistently.
	Take appropriate precautions to keep information secure	Identify threats to information security associated with the widespread use of technology	
	Follow relevant guidelines and procedures for the secure use of IT		
	Ensure personal data is backed up to appropriate media	Describe why it is important to backup data securely	

D/507/9681 IT User Fundamentals level 1

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Select and use software applications to meet needs and solve problems	Select and use appropriate software applications to develop, produce and present different types of information to meet needs and solve problems	Identify different software applications and give examples of their use	<p>A foundation user can use suitable techniques to operate IT systems for activities most of which are routine and straightforward, to respond appropriately to common IT errors and problems and review own use of IT. Any aspect that is unfamiliar will require support and advice from others.</p> <p>An activity will typically be 'straightforward or routine' because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the tasks or context will be familiar; and</li> <li>• the techniques required will also be commonly undertaken.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of context: Using a personal computer or laptop; organising and backing up own data files</p>
		Identify what types of information are needed	
Enter, develop and format different types of information to suit its meaning and purpose	Enter, organise and format different types of information to meet needs	Apply editing techniques to refine information as required	
	Combine information of different forms or from different sources to meet needs		
	Select and use appropriate page layout to present information effectively		
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	Produce information that is fit for purpose and audience using commonly accepted layouts as appropriate	Work accurately and proof-read, using software facilities where appropriate for the task	
Make effective use of IT tools and facilities to present information	Review and modify work as it progresses to ensure the result is fit for purpose and audience	Review the effectiveness of the IT tools selected to meet presentation needs	



H/507/9682 Using email Level 1

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Use e-mail software tools and techniques to compose and send messages	Use software tools to compose and format e-mail messages	Identify how to stay safe and respect others when using e-mail	A foundation user can understand and use a connection method and basic Internet software tools and techniques to search for and exchange information for straightforward or routine activities. Any aspect that is unfamiliar will require support and advice from others.
	Attach files to e-mail messages		
	Send e-mail messages		
	Use an address book to store and retrieve contact information		
Manage incoming email effectively	Follow guidelines and procedures for using e-mail	Identify when and how to respond to e-mail messages	Internet tools and techniques will be defined as 'basic' because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the software tools and functions will be pre-determined or commonly used; and</li> <li>• the range of techniques used for searching and exchanging information will be familiar or commonly undertaken.</li> </ul> An activity will typically be 'straightforward or routine' because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the task or context will be familiar and involve few factors (for example, time available, audience needs, content, structure); and</li> <li>• the input and output of information will be predetermined by the person supervising the task</li> </ul>
	Read and respond to e-mail messages appropriately		
	Organise and store e-mail messages	Identify what messages to delete and when to do so	
	Respond appropriately to common e-mail problems		

K/507/9683/ Using the internet Level 1

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Enter, edit and organise structured information in a database	Access the Internet or intranet	Identify different types of connection methods that can be used to access the Internet	<p>A foundation user can understand and use a connection method and basic Internet software tools and techniques to search for and exchange information for straightforward or routine activities. Any aspect that is unfamiliar will require support and advice from others. Internet tools and techniques will be defined as 'basic' because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the software tools and functions will be pre-determined or commonly used; and</li> <li>the range of techniques used for searching and exchanging information will be familiar or commonly undertaken.</li> </ul> <p>An activity will typically be 'straight forward or routine' because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the task or context will be familiar and involve few factors (for example, time available, audience needs, content, structure); and</li> <li>the input and output of information will be predetermined by the person supervising the task</li> </ul>
Use browser software to navigate web pages	Use browser tools to navigate webpages	Identify when to change browser settings to aid navigation	
	Adjust browser settings to meet needs		
	Use browser help facilities		
Use browser tools to search for information from the internet	Select and use appropriate search techniques to locate information	Outline how information meets requirements	
	Download and save different types of information from the Internet	Use references to make it easier to find information another time	
Use browser software to communicate information online	Select and use tools and techniques to communicate information online	Identify opportunities to post or publish material to websites	
	Use browser tools to share information sources with others		
	Submit information online using forms or interactive sites		
	Outline how to minimise internet security risks	Identify the threats to user safety when working online	
	Work responsibly and take appropriate safety and security precautions when working online		
	Follow relevant laws, guidelines and procedures for the use of the Internet		
Store and retrieve web files effectively, in line with local guidelines and conventions where available	Keep personal information secure		

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Use a spreadsheet to enter, edit and organise numerical and other data	Enter and edit numerical and other data accurately	Identify what numerical and other information is needed in the spreadsheet and how it should be structured	<p>An intermediate user can select and use a wide range of intermediate spreadsheet software tools and techniques to produce, present and check spreadsheets that are at times non-routine or unfamiliar. Any aspect that is unfamiliar may require support and advice from others.</p> <p>Spreadsheet software tools and techniques will be defined as 'intermediate' because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the range of data entry, manipulation and outputting techniques will be at times non-routine or unfamiliar;</li> <li>the tools, formulas and functions needed to analyse and interpret the data requires knowledge and understanding (for example, mathematical, logical, statistical or financial); and</li> <li>the user will take some responsibility for setting up or developing the structure and functionality of the spreadsheet.</li> </ul>
	Combine and link data across worksheets		
	Store and retrieve spreadsheet files effectively, in line with local guidelines and conventions where available		
Select and use appropriate formulas and data analysis tools to meet requirements	Select and use a range of appropriate functions and formulas to meet calculation requirements	Identify which tools and techniques to use to analyse and manipulate data to meet requirements	
	Use a range of tools and techniques to analyse and manipulate data to meet requirements		
Select and use tools and techniques to present and format spreadsheet information	Select and use appropriate tools and techniques to format spreadsheet cells, rows, columns and worksheets	Plan how to present and format spreadsheet information effectively to meet needs	
	Select and format appropriate chart or graph type to display selected information	Describe how to find errors in spreadsheet formulas	
	Select and use appropriate page layout to present and print spreadsheet information		
	Check information meets needs, using spreadsheet tools and making corrections as necessary		
	Respond appropriately to any problems with spreadsheets		

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Enter and combine text and other information accurately within word processing documents	Use appropriate techniques to enter text and other information accurately and efficiently	Identify what types of information are needed in documents	An intermediate user can select and use a range of intermediate word processing software tools and techniques to produce documents that are at times non-routine or unfamiliar. Any aspect that is unfamiliar may require support and advice from others.  Word processing tools and techniques will be described as 'intermediate' because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the software tools and functions will be at times non-routine or unfamiliar;</li> <li>the choice of techniques will need to take account of a number of factors or elements; and</li> <li>the user will take some responsibility for the inputting, manipulating and outputting of the information.</li> </ul>
	Select and use appropriate templates for different purposes		
	Select and use a range of editing tools to amend document content	Identify when and how to combine and merge information from other software or other documents	
	Combine or merge information within a document from a range of sources		
	Store and retrieve document and template files effectively, in line with local guidelines and conventions where available		
Create and modify layout and structures for word process documents	Create and modify columns, tables and forms to organise information	Identify the document requirements for structure and style	
	Select and apply styles to text	Identify what templates and styles are available and when to use them	
Use word processing software tools to format and present documents effectively to meet requirements	Select and use appropriate techniques to format characters and paragraphs	Identify how the document should be formatted to aid meaning	
	Select and use appropriate page and section layouts to present and print documents		
	Check documents meet needs, using IT tools and making corrections as necessary	Describe and quality problems with documents	
	Respond appropriately to quality problems with documents so that outcomes meet needs		

T/507/9685 IT User Presentation Software Level 2

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required	
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge		
Input and combine text and other information within presentation slides	Enter text and other information using layouts appropriate to type of information	Identify what types of information are required for the presentation	An intermediate user can select and use a wide range of intermediate presentation software tools and techniques effectively to produce presentations that are at times non-routine or unfamiliar. Any aspect that is unfamiliar may require support and advice from others.  Presentation tools and techniques will be described as 'intermediate' because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the software tools and functions used will be at times non-routine or unfamiliar;</li> <li>• the choice and use of input, manipulation and output techniques will need to take account of a number of factors or elements; and</li> <li>• the user will take some responsibility for inputting, structuring, editing and presenting the information, which at times may be non-routine or unfamiliar.</li> </ul>	
	Insert charts and tables into presentation slides			
	Insert images, video or sound to enhance the presentation			
	Organise and combine information of different forms or from different sources for presentations	Identify any constraints which may affect the presentation		
	Store and retrieve presentation files effectively, in line with local guidelines and conventions where available			
Use presentation software tools to structure, edit and format slide sequences	Select, change and use appropriate templates for slides	Identify what slide structure and themes to use		
	Select and use appropriate techniques to format slides and presentations	Identify what presentation effects to use to enhance the presentation		
	Select and use appropriate techniques to edit slides and presentations to meet needs			
	Select and use animation and transition effects appropriately to enhance slide sequences			
Prepare slideshow for presentation	Prepare slideshow for presentation	Describe how to present slides to meet needs and communicate effectively		
	Check presentation meets needs, using IT tools and making corrections as necessary	Identify and respond to any quality problems with presentations to ensure that presentations meet needs		

Learning outcomes The learner will...	Assessment criteria The learner can...		Knowledge, skills and understanding required
	Performance Criteria	Knowledge	
Create and modify non-relational database tables	Create and modify database tables using a range of field types	Identify the components of a design database	<p>An intermediate user can select and use a wide range of intermediate database software tools and techniques to produce, present and check databases that are at times non-routine or unfamiliar. Any aspect that is unfamiliar may require support and advice from others.</p> <p>Database tools and techniques will be described as 'intermediate' because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the software tools and functions used will be at times non-routine or unfamiliar;</li> <li>the choice and use of input, manipulation and output techniques will need to take account of a number of factors or elements; and</li> <li>the user will take some responsibility for inputting, structuring, checking and editing the information in the database.</li> </ul>
	Respond appropriately to problems with database tables	Describe the field characteristics required	
	Use database tools and techniques to ensure data integrity is maintained	Describe ways to maintain data integrity	
Enter, edit and organise structured information in a database	Create forms to enter, edit, and organise data in a database	Respond appropriately to data entry errors	
	Select and use appropriate tools and techniques to format data entry forms		
	Checks data entry meets needs, using IT tools and making corrections as necessary		
Use database software tools to run queries and produce reports	Create and run database queries using multiple criteria to display or amend selected data	Select and use appropriate tools and techniques to format database reports	
	Plan and produce database reports from a single table non-relational database		
	Check reports meet needs using IT tools and making corrections as necessary.		

---

## **5. Assessment**

### **5.1 Summary of assessment methods**

All units within this qualification are tested in controlled exam conditions, with the choice of using either automated or manual testing (see sections 5.5/5.6).

### **5.2 Availability of assessments**

To be able to offer BCS Qualifications you need to become a BCS Approved centre.

All staff members who are involved in the management, invigilation, training, marking and verification of assessments, must be registered with BCS. Suitably qualified individuals may be registered for more than one role. At least two members of staff must be registered with BCS in one of the roles in order for the centre to retain centre approval.

### **5.3 Pass Marks**

The pass mark for all units in this qualification is 75%. All units are ungraded, as such each assessment is pass/fail.

### **5.4 Internally assessed units**

Manual tests are assessments marked internally by the centre. The tests are designed and managed by BCS and are stored on the Approved Centre Forum.

To ensure consistency, all manual tests are subject to remote sampling, where BCS moderate, on average, 10% of all manual tests taken.

### **5.5 Externally assessed units**

External tests from BCS come in the form of automated tests. The tests cover all the units within the qualification and offer instant results to the learner.

### **5.6 Specimen assessment materials**

Sample test papers are available for all units. Where automated testing is used, sample and diagnostics tests are available. Diagnostic tests provide detailed feedback, advising of areas for improvement.

## 5.7 Support materials

BCS provides the following resources specifically for this qualification:

Description	How to access
Syllabus	Available on website
Sample tests	Available on website
Unit guidance	Available on website
Courseware	Available from approved third party providers (see <a href="http://www.bcs.org/ecdl">www.bcs.org/ecdl</a> )

## 5.8 Access to Assessment

BCS seeks to provide equal Access to Assessment for all learners, ensuring that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment and that any reasonable adjustments for learners preserve the validity, reliability and integrity of the qualification.

We will consider requests from BCS approved centres for reasonable adjustments and special considerations to be approved for a Learner. The decision will be based on the individual needs of the Learner as assessed by suitably qualified professionals. In promoting this policy, BCS aims to ensure that a Learner is not disadvantaged in relation to other learners and their certificate accurately reflects their attainment.

Further information about our access to assessment policy can be found on the Approved Centre Forum.



---

## 6. Contact Points

BCS Qualifications Client Services is committed to providing you with professional service and support at all times through a single, dedicated point of contact. With a flexible and proactive approach, our team will work together with you to ensure we deliver quality solutions that are right for you.

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT  
First Floor, Block D, North Star House, North Star Avenue,  
Swindon SN2 1FA

T: +44 (0) 1793 417530

E: [qualifications@hq.bcs.org.uk](mailto:qualifications@hq.bcs.org.uk)

W: [www.bcs.org/qualifications](http://www.bcs.org/qualifications)

If you require this document in accessible format please call  
+44 (0) 1793 417 530

© BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, is the business name of The British Computer Society (registered charity no. 292786).