



# **Qualification Specification**

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

Version 2.1

June 2018

This is a United Kingdom government regulated qualification which is administered and approved by one or more of the following: Ofqual, Qualifications in Wales, CCEA or SQA

# Contents

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|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <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        |

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

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|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| <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        |

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

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## **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.

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## **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.

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### 3. Introduction to the qualification

#### 3.1 Qualification summary

| Qualification Title                                   | QAN        | TQT | Accreditation Start          |
|---|------------|-----|------------------------------|
| BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Core) | 601/8240/4 | 141 | 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. 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.

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## 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.

Following the calculation of Total Qualification Time (TQT) in 2017, the confirmed Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification is 103 hours. This calculation did not take into account the individual GLH for specific unit(s). Therefore, it is suggested that the Guided Learning Hours indicated in the table below are followed as a general guideline.

| 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. | 6                     | 1       |
| IT User Fundamentals     | D/507/9681 |                                      | 12                    | 3       |
| Using email              | H/507/9682 |                                      | 9                     | 2       |
| Using internet           | K/507/9683 |                                      | 12                    | 3       |
| Word Processing Software | F/507/9687 |                                      | 16                    | 4       |
| Presentation Software    | T/507/9685 |                                      | 16                    | 4       |
| Spreadsheet Software     | A/507/9686 |                                      | 16                    | 4       |
| Database Software        | M/507/9684 |                                      | 16                    | 4       |

## 4.2 Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

### Y/507/9680 IT Security for Users Level 1

| Learning outcomes<br>The learner will...                                  | Assessment criteria<br>The learner can...                            |   | Knowledge, skills and<br>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).<br>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<br>The learner will...   | Assessment criteria<br>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<br>Identify what types of information are needed | <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> |
| 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<br>The learner will...                              | Assessment criteria<br>The learner can...                     |  | Knowledge, skills and understanding<br>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<br>The learner will...  | Assessment criteria<br>The learner can...   |  | Knowledge, skills and understanding<br>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<br>The learner will...  | Assessment criteria<br>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<br>The learner will...  | Assessment criteria<br>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.<br><br>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<br>The learner will...                                      | Assessment criteria<br>The learner can...  |   | Knowledge, skills and understanding<br>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.<br><br>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<br>The learner will...                       | Assessment criteria<br>The learner can...   |  | Knowledge, skills and understanding<br>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.              |  |  |

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## **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.



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## 6. Contact Points

BCS Qualifications Customer 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.

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