



NEBOSH Certificate in Fire Safety (April 2020 specification)

FAQs for Learners (v2)

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What's changed and why

Why has the syllabus been updated?

NEBOSH has reviewed the syllabus in line with the normal qualification development cycle. The syllabus content, following extensive research, has been updated to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding required in the modern workplace.

We developed the syllabus following wide consultation with key stakeholders, including Learning Partners, employers, Trade Unions, standard setting organisations, as well as past and present learners.

What are the differences between the November 2014 and April 2020 specifications?

The main change is that the new Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) replaces the current National and International Certificates in Fire Safety and Risk Management (NFC/IFC). The structure of the qualification has been changed (the general health and safety management content covered in Units NGC1/NG1 or IGC1/IG1 has been removed). The removal of this content has reduced the hours of study for the qualification. The following table gives a summary of the changes.

NFC/IFC 2014 specifications		FSC - 2020 specification	
Total hours (taught + self-study)	Assessment Units	Total hours (taught + self-study)	Assessment units
120	NGC1/IGC1 Written examination (2 hours)	48	FSC1 Open book examination (5 hours)
	FC1/IFC1 Written examination (2 hours)		
	FC2 Practical assessment (4 hours)		FSC2 Fire risk assessment (3 hours)

Other changes include:

- New style syllabus guides that have been designed specifically for you;
- The syllabus wording is easier to understand, more direct and less formal;
- We have separated the assessment criteria from the learning outcomes;
- We clearly set out what will be assessed by an open book examination and by the practical;
- There will no longer be any shared units with either the 2014 or 2018 specifications of the National or International General Certificates in Occupational Health and safety. The qualification will be standalone.



Has the grading structure for the qualification changed?

The grading has changed. A 'Pass' must be achieved in both assessments to achieve the Certificate in Fire Safety.

Unit FSC1: 45 marks

Unit FSC2: Pass or Refer

The qualification grade is based on the result from the Unit FSC1 examination. Learners need to achieve a pass in both assessments (Units FSC1 and FSC2) before a parchment can be issued. The qualification grading boundaries are as follows:

Distinction: 75 marks or higher

Credit: 65 – 74 marks

Pass: 45 – 64 marks

Has the assessment structure of the 2020 specification changed?

Yes - there will be an open book examination instead of two written examinations. The open book examination will assess learning from elements 2-6. The tasks will be written in a clear, accessible style in 'plain English'. The second assessment will be a fire risk assessment. It draws on the common workplace fire hazards in elements 1-6, as well as the process of fire risk assessment in element 6. Both assessments will be marked by NEBOSH.



What do the changes mean for me?

What if I originally registered to sit the National/International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management (November 2014 specification) and have not completed my qualification?

We will be running the current NFC/IFC (November 2014 specification) and the new FSC (April 2020 specification) side by side for a period of time. The last date for **new** learners to be registered will be 30 September 2021. The last assessment date for the NFC/IFC (November 2014 specification) will be 21 July 2023

How do I know which specification I am studying?

The most obvious way of telling which specification you are on is the name of the qualification (FSC vs NFC/IFC). Another easy way to tell which specification you are on is how many units, how long it is and how many elements. If it is three units (NGC1, FC1/IFC1, FC2), two weeks long and with eleven elements it is the November 2014 specification. Whereas, the April 2020 specification has two units (FSC1 and FSC2), is one week long and has six elements. If you are unsure, please speak to your Learning Partner.

I have achieved unit(s) from the November 2014 specification but need to take or resit unit(s) to complete the qualification. What will happen in these circumstances?

To allow existing learners time to complete their NFC/IFC qualification, assessments for the November 2014 specification will continue to be held for a set timeframe. The dates for the final assessments of the November 2014 specification will be 21 July 2023.

If I have already achieved one unit from the National/International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management (November 2014 specification) will this still be valid?

Yes. As stated earlier, the final assessment dates for these qualifications will be 21 July 2023. If you have not completed your qualification by the final assessment date, you will need to take both units of the revised April 2020 specification if you still want to obtain the fire qualification.

Can I use my successful unit NGC1/IGC1 unit towards the FSC?

No – In the new FSC (April 2020 specification) there will no longer be any shared units with either the National or Internal General Certificates in Occupational Health and Safety (November 2014 or October 2018 specifications). The FSC is a standalone qualification and Unit NG1 does not form part of the new qualification.



Can I take the assessments in a language other than English?

Assessments for this qualification will be offered in English only.

Are qualifications gained under previous specifications of the NFC/IFC still valid?

All qualifications gained under former specifications of the National/International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management are still valid; NEBOSH qualifications do not have expiry dates.

Transition arrangements

What are the timeframes?

April 2020 specification	
Product release (syllabus and assessment information)	27 January 2021
Taught from	10 May 2021
First assessment registration closing date	9 June 2021
First assessment	23 June 2021
November 2014 specifications	
Accreditation end date	30 September 2021
Last date for new learner registrations	30 September 2021
Last assessment date	21 July 2023

Can I take the 2020 specification assessments instead of the 2014 assessments?

Yes - but you must complete all units of the 2020 specification and any previous passed units of the 2014 specification will not count towards the 2020 specification. From launch we will be running the current NFC/IFC and the new FSC qualification side by side. Learning partners will be able to deliver courses to both specifications. You will need to speak to your Learning Partner to tell them that you want to study for and take the assessments from the April 2020 specification.

Can I take unit passes over from the November 2014 to the April 2020 specification?

No - we will not be transferring learners between the old and new qualifications. This is due to the changes in both the syllabus content and the assessment formats.



Fees / costs

Are the unit registration fees changing?

There has been a change to the registration fee structure. The fees are:

	Cost
Unit FSC1 – Question Paper	£75
Unit FSC2 – Practical	£75
Total for 2 units	£150

* Taken from the NEBOSH Fees List



Qualification level and recognition

Will the April 2020 specification of the Certificate in Fire Safety be accredited by SQA?

The NEBOSH Certificate in Fire Safety is accredited and credit rated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA - www.sqa.org.uk) for delivery across the UK. It is rated within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF - www.scqf.org.uk) at SCQF Level 6 with 5 SCQF credit points.

In England this is comparable to this is a Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ) at level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), or an A-Level standard.

Will I still be eligible for professional membership?

It is anticipated that professional bodies will recognise the FSC for membership. Details on potential professional recognitions are listed in the Guide for the qualification. This section will be updated as and when membership approvals are received.

If you require further information, please contact NEBOSH's Operations Team on +44 (0)116 263 4700 or at www.nebosh.org.uk/contact-us/.