

### What are National Occupational Standards?

National Occupational Standards (NOS for short) provide a clear description of the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by an individual to perform their job to the standard required. In other words, they tell you what you must be able to do and what you must know and understand.

Each set of NOS covers a specific industry and can be used in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. We, working together with industry, are responsible for developing, maintaining and updating the NOS for the land-based and environmental sector.

### What can National Occupational Standards be used for?

NOS are used in a variety of ways, from businesses to support the development of employees, to colleges, training providers and higher education institutes as benchmarks to develop programmes of learning and qualifications. NOS can help:

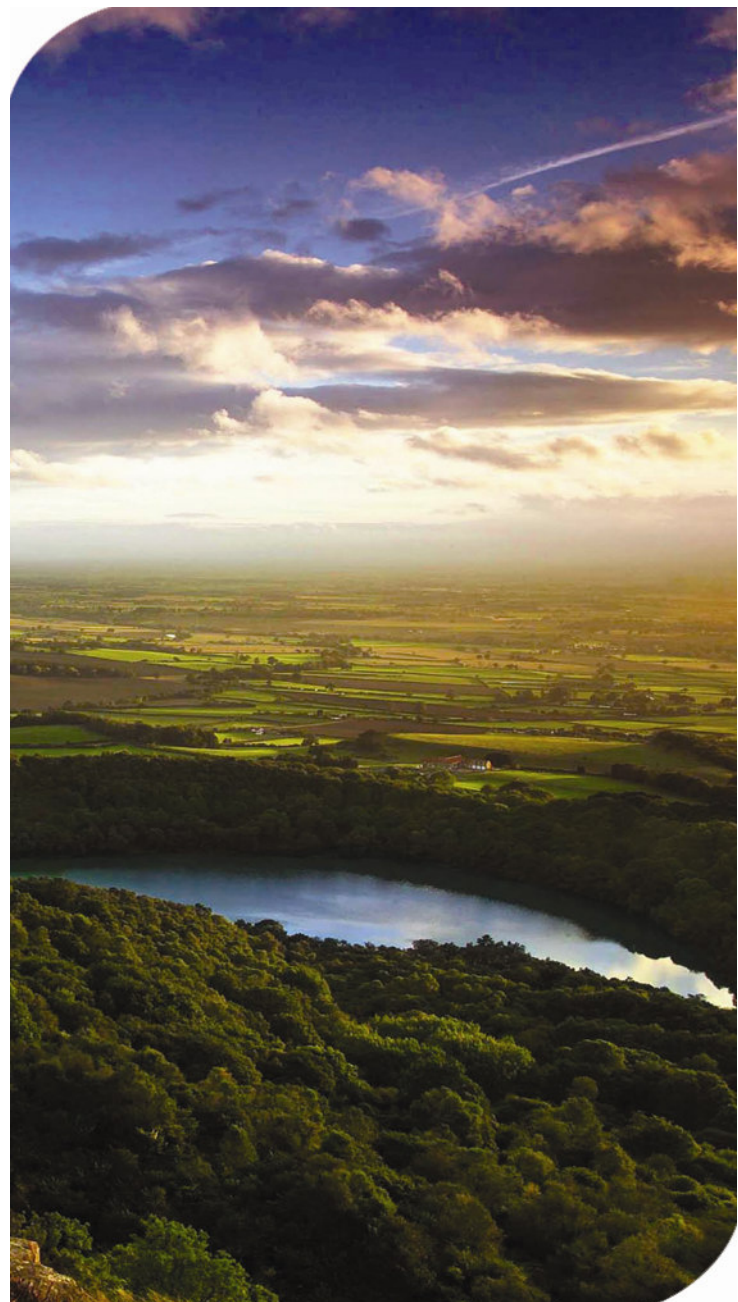
- Identify best practice
- Evaluate current skills or skills gaps
- Identify development needs of employer and employee
- Plan and identifying appropriate training
- Develop job descriptions and people specifications

Its important to remember that NOS are not courses, training programmes or units of learning.

### How are the Standards developed?

As the Sector Skills Council for the land-based and environmental sector, we work with 17 different industries to make sure that NOS are in place, up-to-date, relevant and cover key job roles. We use our network of relevant Industry Groups, employers, regulators, trade associations, focus groups, consultations and additional industry contacts, to help define what is in the NOS.

It is important that you work with us to make sure NOS accurately describe the skills and knowledge needed in your industry.



The process for developing and reviewing National Occupational Standards takes place in five stages:

**Stage 1 - Research:** Research within the industry area is carried out to identify what jobs there are, key trends and developments and links with other jobs. This is then used to inform the review of the NOS, which takes place every 3 - 5 years.

**Stage 2 - Initial meeting and development:** At the initial meeting, the plan for the NOS development/review is agreed as well as identifying the key people who need to be included in the working groups. This makes sure that all nations and aspects of the industry are covered.

During the development phase, working groups and focus groups share ideas and drafts through meetings held both electronically and face to face.

**Stage 3 - Consultation:** As NOS are not specific to a particular nation, consultation with all interested parties takes place across the whole UK. Consultations take place online through our website or via consultation meetings.

**Stage 4 - Final sign off:** The final stage of the process is sign off by the relevant National Occupational Standards Steering Group. This takes place at a final sign off meeting.

**Stage 5 - Submission:** Following industry sign off, we submit the NOS to Government representatives from all four nations. They then approve the NOS and then they are ready for use. Where requested, we also have the NOS translated into Welsh.

## How is the process funded?

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) contributes to the development and review of the NOS.

Generally, it is expected by the Governments across the UK that industries' contribution to maintaining the NOS will be through voluntary time of the working group members.

As NOS are publicly funded, they are in the public domain and are available to everyone on a national database: [www.ukstandards.org](http://www.ukstandards.org). They are also available on our website:

[www.lantra.co.uk/nos](http://www.lantra.co.uk/nos)

## How can industry get involved?

It is vital that industry plays a role in helping shape the future of NOS. Making sure they are correct and fit for purpose is key to the future of industry, its training and development. Details of upcoming NOS reviews and developments are available from the following places:

Visit our website: [www.lantra.co.uk/NOS](http://www.lantra.co.uk/NOS)

Email us: [standardsandquals@lantra.co.uk](mailto:standardsandquals@lantra.co.uk)

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