

# Levels 2 & 3 Awards in Confined Spaces (6150)

## Frequently asked questions

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# 1 Frequently asked questions

## **Why do some of the 6150 qualifications contain 'water' in their title?**

Water UK, the trade association, has for the past decade been influential in providing guidance to its members on the classification of, and working in, confined spaces through its respective health & safety working groups, along with the publication of its Occasional Guidance Note (OGN). This undertaking, together with the development of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the emphasis on safety that the water sector in general places on working in confined spaces, has yielded a benchmark in standards for guidance, training and assessment

For these reasons, EU Skills the sector skills council (SSC) has requested that versions of the qualifications be targeted at water sector employees and contractors through qualification titles contextualised with 'Water'.

## **What is the difference between the 6150 'Water' qualifications and those without 'Water' in the title?**

Many areas of the water sector classify confined spaces via the National Classification (NC) scheme, covering NCs 1 – 4. This approach to classification is arrived at through interpretation of physical dimensions set out in guidelines, which in turn influence the choice and type of equipment for use in the confined space, as well as the entry / exit procedures.

The 6150 qualifications emphasize a risk-based approach to confined space entry, irrespective of physical dimensions. It is here where there is a departure in the 6150 from the NC approach to the classification of confined spaces – risk-based versus physical dimensions.

Apart from knowledge requirements of NCs and certain water-specific areas of legislation and the like in practice, and given all of the qualifications are based around the risk-based approach, there are no differences between the 6150 qualifications, irrespective of whether they contain 'Water' in the title or not.

## **What sectors do the 6150 qualifications without 'Water' in their title cater for?**

Any sector that presents itself for confined spaces assessment.

Because of the 6150's risk-based approach, which the HSE supports, it is applicable to any sector. Further the training along with the assessment conditions can be contextualised for specific sectors, where required.

## **Which 6150 qualification should I choose?**

At the core of the qualifications is the risk-based approach, broken into low, medium & high risk. Building on this are qualifications for top men in high risk environments, as well as top men for medium risk environments, where entry is not part of the job. Finally there is the specialist emergency rescue & recovery qualification.

Which qualification is chosen will be driven in large part by employer operational requirements and engagement on suitable selection with the chosen training provider.

### **Why are NCs referenced in the assessments?**

The physical dimensions of NCs lend themselves to standardisation of assessment. For this reason they are referenced. However, it is imperative to understand that the assessments are contextualised to the risk level and simulated activities afford assessment in the chosen risk category.

### **Why is Water UK's Occasional Guidance Note (OGN) referenced in the documents?**

Water UK through its health & safety groups communicates up to date guidance, best practice and current thinking through the OGN. It is therefore important that the qualifications link into this document and implement its recommendations, where possible, and especially from a water sector perspective.

Given the influence of this document in certain areas of the assessment process, as well as its historical standing in confined spaces assessment, it is felt better, from a standardisation perspective, to reference this document, where necessary, in all of the qualifications.

However, this does not remove the opportunity to implement recommendations, where they exist, from other sector-specific documents.

### **What is the City & Guilds 5831?**

This qualification, launched by City & Guilds in 2004 with the support of Water UK was the forerunner to the 6150, providing the water sector (and others) with a benchmark in confined spaces assessment. It was always intended as an interim measure until the development of the NOS and the launch of the resulting qualification – 6150.

From October 2008 all provision has been through the 6150.

### **Is there a qualification for supervisors and managers?**

The suite of 6150 qualifications originally earmarked an Overseer's qualification for supervisor's and managers. However, during subsequent reviews it was decided by an influential industry task and finish group to make the Overseer's qualification applicable for top men operating in high risk environments – these are now the 6150-04 & 6150-54 qualifications.

Consequently, the 6150 does not at the time of publication of this document contain provision for supervisors and managers. However, the 972 supervisor's unit from the City & Guilds 5831 is the interim provision.

The SSC in summer 2010 constituted a working group to complete suitable national occupational standards (NOS) for supervisory / management roles and as soon as this is complete a qualification will appear within the 6150.

The 972 unit from the 5831 will remain as the interim provision until further notice.