

## Component Specification

### Laboratory Skills

NFQ Level 5

5N2751

#### 1. Component Details

<b>Title</b>	Laboratory Skills
<b>Teideal as Gaeilge</b>	Scileanna Saotharlainne
<b>Award Class</b>	Minor
<b>Code</b>	5N2751
<b>Level</b>	5
<b>Credit Value</b>	15
<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of this award is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill and competence to operate safely under supervision in a laboratory environment.
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Recognise international hazard warning symbols and labels and outline the procedures and arrangements for the safe storage and disposal of chemicals</li><li>2 Outline safety procedures to be followed when operating in a laboratory and the standard procedures in the event of a personal accident or major laboratory accident</li><li>3 Use correct procedures in working with electrical and gas supply systems distinguishing between different types of fire extinguishers, classifying different types of fires and the appropriate fire extinguisher</li><li>4 Demonstrate an ability to use a variety of safety equipment in the laboratory</li></ol>

- 5 Outline the procedures to separate substances to determine the percentage yields including, simple and fractional distillation, gravity and vacuum filtration: chromatography, recrystallisation, centrifugation and liquid/liquid extraction
- 6 Explain the Biuret and Bradford methods of determining protein concentration
- 7 Prepare sterile nutrient media and culture using aseptic techniques including, isolating and inoculating micro-organisms
- 8 Identify common bacteria and fungi using microscopic techniques to include their classification
- 9 Explain the role of disinfectants and fungicides in the control of microbial growth and determine, using serial dilution, the bacterial concentration of a liquid
- 10 Use automatic micro-pipettes to transfer a variety of volumes of solutions
- 11 Use pre-prepared wax slides of a variety of tissue types to include dewaxing and staining
- 12 Prepare common laboratory solutions applying scientific calculations, including indicators, reagents, buffers, stains, primary standard solutions and standardise solutions using titration techniques for acid or base and redox reactions
- 13 Separate substances using some of the following techniques to determine the percentage yields, simple and fractional filtration, distillation, gravity and vacuum filtration, chromatography, recrystallisation, centrifugation and liquid/liquid extraction
- 14 Digest deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) using restriction enzymes and separate deoxyribonucleic acid fragments using agarose gel electrophoresis
- 15 Use standard techniques to carry out an Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)
- 16 Determine protein concentration using spectroscopy
- 17 Maintain stock control and equipment records including, material safety disposal sheet (MSDS), storage plan and disposal records
- 18 Follow the correct procedures for the handling and sterilizing of dissection instruments and for investigating and storing biological specimens

- 19 Follow appropriate procedures and codes of practice for handling chemical and biological materials correctly and for the safe use of ionizing radiations
- 20 Handle safely, standard glassware and precision equipment including titration equipment, distillation equipment, pipette, burette, micrometer, pH meter, microscope, balance, multimeter and oscilloscope
- 21 Perform statistical pH analysis on data, including determination of mean, median, mode, standard deviation and standard error presenting conclusions derived from analysis appropriately
- 22 Construct a standard concentration curve and use the curve to determine unknown concentrations of solutions
- 23 Evaluate laboratory work considering planning, observations and time management.

## Assessment

### General Information

Details of FET assessment requirements are set out in [Assessment Guidelines for Providers](#).

All FET assessment is criterion referenced. Successful achievement of the award is based on learners attaining the required standards of knowledge, skill or competence.

The techniques set out below are considered the optimum approach to assessment for this component. In exceptional circumstances providers may identify alternative assessment techniques through the provider's application for programme validation which are **reliable** and **valid** but which are more appropriate to their context.

Assessment of a number of components may be integrated across programmes for delivery, provided that the learning outcomes of each minor award are assessed.

Group or team work may form part of the assessment, provided each learner's achievement is separately assessed.

All providers are required to submit an assessment plan as part of their application for programme validation. Assessment Plans will include information relating to scheduling and integration of assessment. See current FET validation guidelines at [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie).

### Assessment Techniques

In order to demonstrate that they have reached the standards of knowledge, skill and competence identified in all the learning

outcomes, learners are required to complete the assessment(s) below.

The assessor is responsible for devising assessment instruments (e.g. project and assignment briefs, examination papers), assessment criteria and mark sheets, consistent with the techniques identified below and FETAC's assessment requirements.

Programme validation will require providers to map each learning outcome to its associated assessment technique. See current FET validation guidelines at [www.gqi.ie](http://www.gqi.ie).

All learning outcomes **must** be assessed and achieved

Project	40%
Skills Demonstration	40%
Learner Record	20%

## Description

### Project

*A project is a response to a brief devised by the assessor. A project is usually carried out over an extended period of time. Projects may involve research, require investigation of a topic, issue or problem or may involve process such as a design task, a performance or practical activity or production of an artefact or event.*

### Skills Demonstration

*A skills demonstration is used to assess a wide range of practical based learning outcomes including practical skills and knowledge. A skills demonstration will require the learner to complete a task or series of tasks that demonstrate a range of skills.*

### Learner Record

*A learner record is the learner's self-reported and self-reflective record in which he/she describes specific learning experiences, activities, responses and skills acquired.*

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Learners may be assessed on the basis of their prior knowledge and experience. Providers must be specifically quality assured to assess learners by this means. To do so they must complete B10, see Provider's Quality Assurance Guidelines and be

included on the Register of RPL approved providers. See RPL Guidelines at [www.fetac.ie](http://www.fetac.ie) for further information and registration details.

<b>Grading</b>	Pass	50% - 64%
	Merit	65% - 79%
	Distinction	80% - 100%

**Specific Validation Requirements**

The provider must have all of the following in place to offer this award: Access to a science laboratory meeting current Health and Safety standards.

**Supporting Documentation**

None

**Access**

To access programmes leading to this award the learner should have reached the standards of knowledge, skill and competence associated with the preceding level of the National Framework of Qualifications. This may have been achieved through a formal qualification or through relevant life and work experience.

**Transfer**

Successful completion of this component award enables the learner to transfer to programmes leading to other certificates where this component is a mandatory or an elective requirement.

**2. FET Award Standards**

QQI award standards are determined within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), <http://www.nfq-qqi.com>. QQI determines standards for the education and training awards that it makes itself and that are made by providers to whom it has delegated authority to make an award. Providers offering programmes leading to QQI awards **must** have their programme(s) validated in accordance with current validation policy (see [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie)).

Award standards are designed to be consistent with the NFQ's award classes i.e. major, special purpose, supplemental and minor awards. They are expressed in terms of **learning outcomes** i.e. concise statements of what the learner is expected to know or be able to do in order to achieve a particular award. Learning outcomes for FET awards are contained within the associated specifications:

AWARD CLASS	STANDARDS	AWARDS
Major Award	Certificate Specification	Certificate (Levels 1 to 5) Advanced Certificate (Level 6)
Supplemental Award	Supplemental Specification	Supplemental Certificate (Level 3 to 6)

Special Purpose	Specific Purpose Specification	Specific Purpose Certificate (Levels 3 to 6)
Minor Award	Component Specification	Component Certificate (Levels 1 to 6)

Award standards are thresholds, they describe standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by a learner before an award may be made.

Award standards will be reviewed from time to time as necessary. Minor changes may be made by the QQI executive outside the review cycle where necessary. Changes to standards are published on QQI's website. Providers with validated programmes and providers with delegated authority to make awards are responsible for monitoring relevant standards and making necessary responses to changes.

### 3. FET Credit

Every FET certificate and component specification includes an FET credit value (Table 1). FET credit is quantified in multiples of 5 FET credits (up to 50 hours of learner effort). Learner effort is based on the time taken by typical learners at the level of the award to achieve the learning outcomes for the award. It includes all learning time involved including: guided learning hours, self-directed learning and assessment.

**Table 1: FET Credit Values**

NFQ Level	Major Awards Credit Values	Default Credit Values Minor Awards	Other Permitted Minor Award Credit Values	Special Purpose and Supplemental Award Credit Value Ranges
1	20	5	10	
2	30	5	10	
3	60	10	5,20	>5 and <60
4	90	10	5,15,20	>5 and <90
5	120	15	5,10,30	>5 and <120
6	120	15	5,10,30	>5 and <120

### Guide to Level

Learning outcomes at this level include a broad range of skills that require some theoretical understanding. The outcomes may relate to engaging in a specific activity, with the capacity to use the instruments and techniques relating to an occupation. They are associated with work being undertaken independently, subject to general direction.

Strand	Sub-strand	Nature of learning
Knowledge	Breadth	Broad range of knowledge
	Kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas.
	Range	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools

Know How & Skill	Selectivity	Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems
Competence	Context	Act in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs; identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of contexts
	Role	Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
	Learning to Learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
	Insight	Assume full responsibility for consistency of self- understanding and behaviour

*Extract from 'Determinations for the Outline National Framework of Qualifications': NQAI*