



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

## Component Specification NFQ Level 5

### Organic Farming Principles 5N20423

#### 1. Component Details

<b>Title</b>	Organic Farming Principles
<b>Teideal as Gaeilge</b>	Prionsabail na Feirmeoireachta Orgánaí
<b>Award Type</b>	Minor
<b>Code</b>	5N20423
<b>Level</b>	5
<b>Credit Value</b>	5
<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of this award is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill and competence to apply organic farming principles to the production of organic produce, to meet market requirements and approved organic standards in compliance with European Union (EU) and Irish legislation.
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	Learners will be able to:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Outline the origin and development of the organic movement including the diversity of organic approaches and the range of certifying bodies</li><li>2 Explain the principles of organic production</li><li>3 Outline the procedures involved in converting from a non-organic to an organic production system</li><li>4 Describe organic soil fertility practices</li><li>5 Outline general standards for organic production</li><li>6 Describe weed, pest and disease control in organic crops</li></ol>

- 7 Plan a production programme to organic standards in accordance with conversion principles
- 8 Complete the documentation required for conversion to an organic production system
- 9 Describe soil amelioration techniques with organic production
- 10 Manage a crop using organic principles
- 11 Outline the key aspects of an organic production plan
- 12 Assess the economic viability and market opportunities for organic production including EU and national supports

## Assessment

### General Information

All assessment should be planned in accordance with the programme assessment strategy developed as part of the programme submission for validation. See **Policies and Criteria for Validation of Programmes**. Assessment should be undertaken consistently and reflect current assessment guidelines. See [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie).

All FET assessment is criterion referenced. Successful achievement of the award is based on learners attaining the required standards of knowledge, skill or competence consistent with the **minimum intended programme learning outcomes**.

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 QQI's assessment requirements.

Programme validation will require providers to map each learning outcome to its associated assessment technique. All learning outcomes **must** be assessed and achieved in accordance with the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** set out in the validated programme.

Examination - Theory	40%
Assignment	40%
Examination - Practical	20%

## Description

### Examination - Theory

*An examination provides a means of assessing a learner's ability to recall and apply knowledge, skills and understanding within a set period of time and under clearly specified conditions.*

*A theory-based examination assesses the ability to recall, apply and understand specific theory and knowledge.*

The assessor will devise a theory-based examination to assess learning outcomes 1 – 9.

### Assignment

*An assignment is an exercise carried out in response to a brief with specific guidelines as to what should be included. An assignment is usually of short duration and may be carried out over a specified period of time.*

The assessor will devise an assignment to assess learning outcomes 11 and 12.

### Examination - Practical

*An examination provides a means of assessing a learner's ability to recall and apply knowledge, skills and understanding within a set period of time and under clearly specified conditions.*

*A practical examination assesses specified practical skills demonstrated in a set period of time under restricted conditions.*

The assessor will devise a practical examination based on 4 practical tasks to assess learning outcome 10.

List of tasks:

1. Assessing weed infestation levels
2. Assessing crop performance
3. Identifying suitable management measures
4. Apply suitable management measures

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

To support the development and implementation of RPL with regard to access, granting credit/exemptions and achievement of awards/parts of awards, providers should refer to **QQI's Statutory Guidelines for Quality Assurance**, the **Policies and Criteria for Validation of Programmes** and the **Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning in Further and Higher Education and Training** available at [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie)

**Grading**

Pass	50% - 64%
Merit	65% - 79%
Distinction	80% - 100%

**Specific Validation Requirements**

There are no specific validation requirements

**Supporting Documentation**

1. Publications from: The Health and Safety Authority of Ireland
2. Publications from: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
3. Publications from: Teagasc, The Agriculture and Food Development Authority

**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.

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Sub-strand</b>	<b>Nature of learning</b>
Knowledge	Breadth	Broad range of knowledge
	Kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas.
Know How & Skill	Range	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools
	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*