

# NOA Pathway programmes overview



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# Introduction

The National Outsourcing Association (NOA) has established a series of programmes to support the development of professionals working in a sourcing role. The targeted roles (see table on page 2) are wide ranging and embrace both outsource service user organisations, service providers and also the advisor community.

The roles might include those who are engaged in strategic decisions concerning sourcing, people engaged in the process leading to parties agreeing to work together, the projects established to manage transition and change resulting from a strategic sourcing decision and also the many people involved in the ongoing operations and management of a sourcing arrangement.

The NOA Life Cycle provides a clear model that serves as a framework. The NOA development programmes are based on this Life Cycle model, and a clear understanding of the model is the focus of participants' learning.

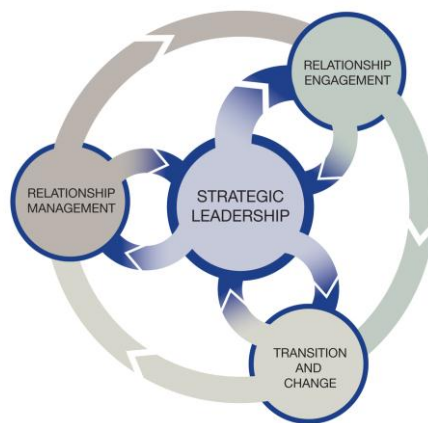
The NOA recognise that there are a variety of sourcing situations, and that whilst there are best practice approaches it is not the case that there is one right way of approaching sourcing challenges. As a result the NOA programmes are not designed as prescriptive, standards led programmes. They

provide models of best practice and encourage participants to consider their own approaches and experiences in the light of these models – the NOA Life Cycle is one such model.

The philosophy ensures that everyone attending the programmes is able to gain from the programmes, either by establishing new ways of doing things or by validating current approaches.

The programmes also offer university accredited qualifications which ensure formal recognition for those who

choose to follow the qualifications route. Indeed for those who do want to explore advanced study the Pathway programmes provide a route to a university masters degree.



## Further information

This brief document provides a simple overview of the programmes. To discuss your needs in more detail call 0845 130 5500 and speak to the NOA Pathway team.

The programme design does allow for considerable customisation to fit with the particular needs of any one organisation. Please do contact us to discuss how we might develop tailored in-house programmes to meet the needs of your organisation.

# Programmes summary

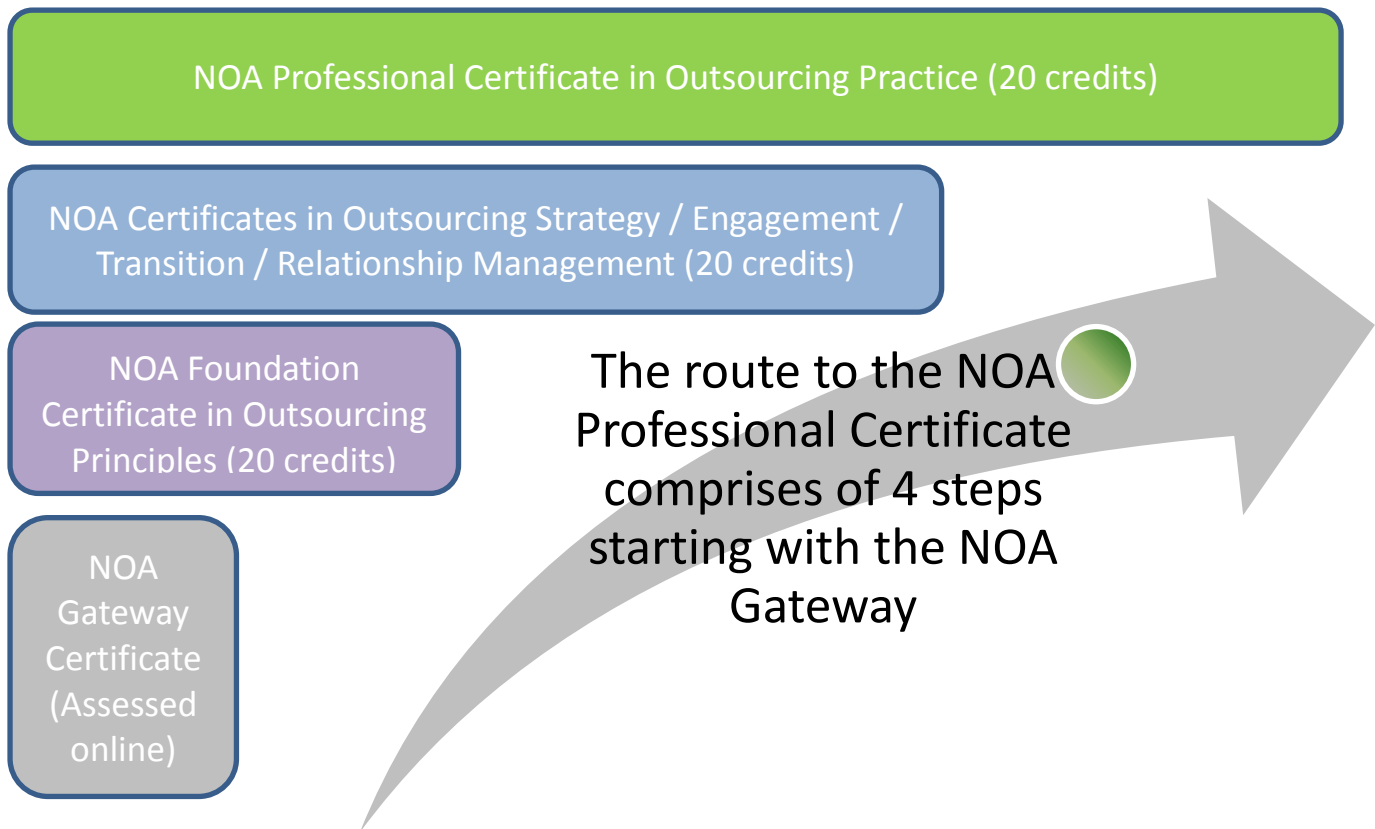
NOA Programme	Who should register		What does it cover?	Awards
	Roles	Functional responsibilities		
<b>Gateway Certificate (Online)</b>	Anyone new to an outsourcing role or a role that is impacted by outsourcing in some way Anyone who wants to undertake the Foundation Certificate	Contributing to Supplier / Client relationships; Contributing to transitioning of outsourcing; business development; financial control; HR and training; IT; Communications	*An overview of key terms and concepts used in outsourcing / shared services. *Key principles of outsource contracts *Introduction to the outsourcing Life Cycle	NOA Gateway Certificate (not university accredited)
<b>Foundation Certificate</b>	Individuals whose roles are in an outsourcing / shared services context or are impacted by outsourcing / shared services activity	Contributing to Supplier / Client relationships; Contributing to transitioning of outsourcing; business development; financial control; HR and training; IT; Communications	*NOA Life Cycle: outsourcing relationship management; strategic leadership; relationship engagement; transition and change *Choosing sourcing strategies *Relationship management	NOA Foundation Certificate in Outsourcing accredited at 20 learning credits at level 4
<b>Specialist Certificates</b>	Individuals whose roles are in an outsourcing / shared services context or are impacted significantly by outsourcing / shared services activity	Significant contribution to Supplier / Client relationships; transitioning of outsourcing; business development; financial control; HR and training; IT; Communications	Participants are able to choose the programme that best fits their functional specialism: - Strategic Leadership - Relationship Engagement - Transition and Change - Relationship Management	NOA Certificate in Outsourcing accredited at 40 learning credits at level 4 (includes 20 credits from the Foundation Certificate)
<b>Professional Certificate</b>	Individuals whose roles are in an outsourcing / shared services context	Leading contribution to / management of: Supplier / Client relationships; transitioning of outsourcing; business development; financial control; HR and training; IT; Communications	Participants undertake a work based project that will demonstrate their outsourcing ability.	NOA Professional Certificate in Outsourcing Practice (CertNOA) accredited at 60 learning credits at level 4 (including credits from Foundation and Certificate courses)
<b>Diploma in Strategic Global Outsourcing</b>	Anyone in a leadership or management role operating in an outsourcing context Will include: Directors and Heads of operational functions; Business Development managers / executives; Programme managers; Account executives	Leadership / Development of outsourcing strategy from either provider or user perspective Management of supplier selection process; business development Management of transitioning / change process Supplier / Client Relationship Management	Using the NOA Life Cycle participants review their own current outsourcing practice and undertake to research into areas of their own choosing that are relevant to their own outsourcing / shared services practice	NOA Diploma in Strategic Global Outsourcing (DipNOA) accredited at 60 level 7 credits
<p><b>Learning Credits</b></p> <p><b>Level 7</b> is post graduate level. At Middlesex a masters degree requires a minimum of 150 credits at level 7 plus 30 credits at level 6. <b>Level 4</b> is an undergraduate degree level. Typically a Middlesex University honours degree requires at least 140 level 4 credits plus 100 credits at level 5 and 120 credits at level 6 (360 credits in total)</p>				

# The NOA Professional Certificate route

We recognise that individuals will have many different development needs. For many the need is only to develop a high level understanding of the broad concepts of outsourcing, some of the key issues and challenges and the terminology. This will often be to enable them to appreciate how their role is effected by or indeed contributes to an outsourcing arrangement. For others their roles may be much more central to an outsourcing arrangement and as such they need to explore the subject in more depth.

To accommodate these various needs we have created a certificate pathway which allows individuals to progress only as far as is appropriate to them. The first step is the Gateway Certificate which costs only £150 (+VAT) and is completed entirely online. There are then 3 further modules, each one building on the last which can be undertaken should it be relevant to a particular learner.

The structure of the NOA Professional Certificate programme is illustrated below.



**Figure 1: NOA Professional Certificate pathway**

## Element 1: The Gateway

The first element is the online Gateway, which will ensure that everyone has a common understanding of basic generic concepts and terms. The Gateway provides a very simple overview of key terms and is of particular value to those who have little or no experience of sourcing.

The Gateway is divided into 6 sections:

- The Sourcing Trilogy (incl. what is outsourcing, shoring, shared services)
- History and Trends
- Decision making
- Contracts
- NOA Life Cycle
- Sourcing Language

This online programme can be completed very quickly (perhaps in a couple of hours) by those who have considerable experience of sourcing and will serve as a confirmation of knowledge. For those who have less experience and choose to read in detail all the various materials that accompany the course much more time will be required to answer the multiple choice test questions the course requires to be completed. However, reading the material provides a sound introduction to the basic principles.

## Element 2: Foundation

This element will take a high level view of the sourcing life cycle, using the NOA Life Cycle as the model. The NOA Life Cycle comprises four elements:

- Strategic Leadership
- Relationship Engagement

- Transition and Change
- Relationship Management

The high level learning goal is to develop a clear appreciation of the Life Cycle, and in particular how it is a 'joined up' process where one element will have an impact on other elements. Each element will be explored and risks and opportunities identified and analysed. The overriding focus will be on the relevance and application to the Phoenix Group context and individual roles

Learners will be required to submit a written assignment of 4,000 words to a specific deadline for assessment by an NOA assessor.

## Element 3 –Certificate

Following successful completion of the Foundation Certificate (element 2) individuals will proceed onto a Certificate programme. There are four options, reflecting the four elements of the Life Cycle.

- Strategic Leadership
- Relationship Engagement
- Transition and Change
- Relationship Management

As with the Foundation Certificate participants will be required to submit a written assignment of 4,000 words to a specific deadline for assessment by an NOA assessor.

## Element 4 – Work based Project

The final element of the proposed programme is the completion of a work based project. The scope of the project will be focused on sourcing activity in the business, and the learner will need

to demonstrate that the project is relevant to their own professional development and will add value to the organisation. The project will need to be sponsored by someone in the organisation (often a line manager, but could be someone else).

The participant will prepare a project report of 4,000 words which will include: the problem that was addressed, the research undertaken into developing a solution, the action taken and the result of the action, the learning from the project and how it will impact on the individual's practice in the future.

### Assessment

NOA Pathway tutor assess against specific criteria designed to ensure the learner can demonstrate the following:

- Demonstrate a sound (accurate, complete, context sensitive) knowledge of material covered
- Successfully undertake defined key tasks in a considered way
- Use relevant resources effectively
- Understand and apply appropriate policies and procedures
- Analyse / synthesise relevant information / ideas, particularly in order to influence / suggest action
- Learn from the work they do and apply learning to develop their practice (approach)
- Plan actions to complete delegated tasks
- Communicate coherently and in an organised way
- Work autonomously in a familiar context, and work successfully with others and contribute to team working.

Successful completion of elements 2 – 4 will result in the award of the **NOA Professional Certificate in Outsourcing Practice**, which is accredited by Middlesex University at level 4 for 60 learning credits

### Costs

Currently the costs of the elements for NOA members are as follows:

<i>Gateway</i>	<i>£150</i>
<i>Foundation</i>	<i>£425</i>
<i>Certificate</i>	<i>£795</i>
<i>Project</i>	<i>£795</i>

All fees exclude VAT at the standard rate.

### Events

The NOA provide a number of events each year. Along with a variety of topical ad hoc events, NOA Masterclasses provide a short exploration of an element of the Life Cycle. These seminars are typically free to NOA members and are supported by NOA member organisations that provide case studies and views relevant to the Life Cycle element being discussed. The duration of Masterclasses is usually about 3 hours only.

To support the Pathway qualifications programmes one-day workshops are presented according to demand that explore each element of the Life Cycle in more depth than the Masterclasses. They are also linked to the workbooks that are the basis of the accredited programmes.

The Pathway workshops are typically one-day long and cost c£300 per person.

# NOA Diploma

The NOA Diploma offers experienced outsourcing professionals the opportunity to have their expertise endorsed by the leading outsourcing association and recognised by their customers, employers and business partners. Programme participants from CFS, National Grid, Logica and Capital One amongst others.

There are no examinations for the NOA Diploma, and learners are able to focus on their chosen areas of sourcing interest and submit written assignments that are tutor assessed.

To be accepted onto the NOA Diploma programme individuals do not need any previous academic qualifications. Learners need only to demonstrate that they are able to successfully complete the programme and have the level of experience that will allow them to contribute fully. Typically this will mean having held a leadership or management role in the sourcing sector for at least 5 years.

## Programme structure

The Diploma is organised into three modules, each taking about 3 months to complete. A one day workshop is arranged for each module to enable the group to learn with and from each other. Tutors also provide ad hoc phone based support for individuals on the programme and individuals will also form learning sets to provide each other with input and support throughout the programme.

The workshops are opportunities for the group to benefit from the input of a range of outsourcing experts and the tutor will look to accommodate

particular areas that the group feel is useful to them.

### Module 1 – The Life Cycle

The module focuses on the NOA Life Cycle model which learners are required to relate it to their own context, both as a means of developing their appreciation of the Life Cycle and also as a useful tool to identify key areas in their own context that they will go on to explore in modules 2 and 3.

### Modules 2 and 3 – Personal Focus: work based learning

Learners are required to define an outsourcing learning question of their own choosing. Each learning question must be:

- important to the learner’s own organisation
- integral to the learners own work agenda
- agreed by the learners tutor and with their organisation sponsor
- relevant to outsourcing professionals and help to add to the knowledge of outsourcing and to the quality of outsourcing activities.

Outsourcing learning questions enable individuals to explore their own challenges, often resulting in considerable added value to their own organisation. This will often ensure that learners are able to more easily blend their learning with their work schedules and use work that they have carried out in their role to contribute to the work they submit for assessment.

The work submitted by learners is typically of high quality, benefiting as it does from the rigour of a post graduate learning programme, and may be of

publishable standard. Papers are automatically considered for the **NOA's Academic Achievement Award**, which is presented annually at NOA Awards in London. Learners will own the copyright of work they produce and they may choose to publish the work through their own organisations, as thought leadership papers for example.

Learners will be allocated a programme tutor who will support them throughout the programme. They will also contribute to a learning set, and will benefit from learning with and from others. Other NOA faculty members and subject matter experts will contribute to the programme according to the particular requirements of the learning group. For each outsourcing learning question learners will submit a clear terms of reference. They will then

research, develop and submit a learning report of c.4,000 words. This learning report will be assessed against the formal learning criteria for the programme.

### How much does it cost?

The discounted fee for the 3 modules is £3,600 (+VAT) for learners whose organisation is a member of the NOA. Further discounts are available when more than one place is reserved.

The cost, will include for each module attendance at a workshop; online tutorial support; action learning set support, access to support materials and all **university accreditation** fees. Learners will also have **access to** a substantial online research dBases provided through Middlesex University

# In-house Programmes and Short Courses

For many organisations there are enough people to warrant setting up workshops / programmes in-house. The NOA programmes have the flexibility to be adapted to meet a wide range of specific needs both in terms of content and also programmes format. NOA Pathway designed and delivered an in-house Professional Certificate programme for supplier managers at Co-operative Financial Services (CFS) delivering a series of workshops and phone based tutorials over a 12 month period to fit with the particular demands of the group.

NOA Pathway is also able to work with organisations that have their own in-house programmes to design frameworks that ensure the in-house designed and delivered programmes can be accredited at a range of levels up to and including university post graduate standard.

## *Short Courses*

NOA Pathway is also able to deliver short courses leading to the Gateway Certificate, and example of which is given below. These programmes are particular suitable to bring together groups to validate current knowledge, to share knowledge and learning with each other and to identify further development needs. Whilst of course the entire group may then go on to register for others courses it may be that only a selected group will need to do so.

### Foundations of Outsourcing 1: One Day Workshop

#### Programme

- What is outsourcing, and why do organisations outsource?
- Concepts and terminology including the various types of sourcing arrangements, offshoring, contractual terms, Exit, novation, TUPE.
- The NOA Life Cycle:
  - strategic leadership;
  - relationship engagement;
  - transition and change;
  - relationship management
- Risks and challenges of outsourcing
- Review of participants own outsourcing context.

#### Course format and duration

The course typically runs from 9:30 am – 5pm, with breaks for lunch and refreshments. Participants will have access online to a range of material to support the programme, including a copy of the NOA Life Cycle. The workshop will be facilitated by experienced outsourcing and learning professionals.

#### Cost

In-house programmes typically cost £1,650 (+VAT and facilitator expenses) for a maximum of 12 people. Each person attending the workshop will be able to complete the online Gateway multiple choice test at no extra cost (usual cost £150 +VAT). Successful completion will lead to the award of the NOA Gateway Certificate.

## Appendix A: About NOA Pathway

The National Outsourcing Association (NOA) was established in 1987 to promote and share best practice in outsourcing. Its membership comprises of hundreds of UK and international companies involved in outsourcing. This includes service users, suppliers and those who provide support services to parties engaged in outsourcing.

Premier members of the NOA include:

- IBM
- KPMG
- HP
- Fujitsu
- Steria
- Convergys

Currently, the NOA has affiliate organisations in Austria, France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. (see <http://www.e-oa.net>) which together forms the European Outsourcing Association and has relationships with agencies globally who regularly engage in the activities of the NOA.

Over the past 20 years outsourcing activity has increased dramatically becoming an accepted and common strategy within organisations throughout the world. In that time outsourcing has also developed into a defined, recognisable area of professional expertise in its own right. For some time now members of the NOA and others have been frustrated by the lack of externally accredited programmes either in the UK or internationally and have been calling for accredited professional development programmes to be available that will validate and acknowledge outsourcing expertise.

The NOA has established **NOA Pathway** as its professional development arm, to provide a range of programmes for outsourcing professionals. True North ( [www.truenorthgb.com](http://www.truenorthgb.com) ), an established training provider, is the NOA's outsourcing provider responsible for the management and delivery of NOA Pathway programmes. The programmes lead to qualifications accredited by Middlesex University, a leader in the provision of work based learning programmes and awards.

Currently the NOA Pathway comprises 2 core programmes:

- Professional Certificate in Outsourcing Practice
- Diploma in Strategic Global Outsourcing

Each programme conforms to the standards defined in the Qualifications and Credit Framework through the accreditation agreement with Middlesex University.

### Goals for the NOA Pathway

1. To provide an industry wide benchmark for quality and professionalism in outsourcing.
2. To promote best practice throughout the outsourcing and shared services industry.
3. To provide outsourcing professionals with recognised qualifications that acknowledges their knowledge and expertise.

4. To provide organisations with accredited programmes that helps them to develop their people to achieve their individual and organisational goals.
5. To confirm outsourcing as a recognised profession.

### Key features of the programmes

- To accommodate the needs of learners with different levels of experience there are two entry points onto the Pathway – Professional Certificate or Diploma level.
- At Diploma level there is considerable scope for learners to tailor their learning to precisely fit the needs of their role and the needs of the organisation – this is particularly suited to those who have considerable business and outsourcing experience and knowledge.
- There are no examinations for any of the accredited programmes – learners submit written work, which is assessed by qualified assessors against a rigorous standard.

- Industry recognised experts provide support to the learners.
- Flexibility – web based materials can be downloaded and worked on by learners anywhere and anytime they choose.
- Pragmatic – the final module of each accredited programme is a work-based project that will demonstrate that the learner not only ‘knows’ but is also able to ‘do’.
- The programmes focus on generic best practice – providing a framework for professionals to more effectively use their organisation’s own methodologies or to develop their own.

Workshops are provided for learners to engage and network with other professionals and so learn with and from each other – this is considered to be a powerful aspect of the programme. Workshops are supported by highly experienced facilitators

## Appendix B: Our approach

We adopt an approach to our programmes based on the principles of work based action learning. We have developed a number of process / methods which facilitate business improvement and personal learning and which have been recognised and proven by organisations and academic institutions.

### Work Based Learning

Our approach to personal development is to provide a structure and process which enables people in the business to learn by tackling real work based challenges. These challenges are notionally framed as questions (known as Outsourcing Questions or OQs), and selected examples of OQ areas drawn from the NOA Outsourcing Question Bank are shown as Appendix A.

### Critical Reflection

We encourage critical reflection on experience which is an aspect of the learning process often neglected in the highly action oriented outsourcing business environment. Individuals and project groups are encouraged to reflect on their professional and personal learning and to share this with others. The value of this is to highlight and capture learning in the workplace (which is where most learning actually happens) for it to be applied in the future. Anchoring this learning process established a powerful engine for continuous improvement of individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole.

### Collaborative Learning

Our approach is based on the fact that professionals tackling real work based challenges learn effectively by collaboration with others and with facilitated learning support. This enables them to research effectively so that ‘theory follows the action’. We encourage collaboration and mutual support in learning rather than a competitive approach and we realise this requires structure and process.

### Multi level learning

Participants learn on a number of different levels and we seek to address learning at all levels shown in the model of work based learning shown below. Participants will acquire knowledge, develop skills, demonstrate motivation to develop and change and will take focused action in the workplace.



### Cumulative learning

When delivering a session we have in mind not only the content of that session but that of previous and subsequent sessions. Imagine session three of a six session programme is ostensibly on ‘planning and prioritising’ but other sessions have or will focus on coaching and building relationships. We might then design an aspect of session three that has delegates working in groups of three and coaching each other to

understand how they currently plan and prioritise and then reflect and feedback on how they interrelated during the discussion and understand what they learnt about building rapport.

This approach ensures that a programme of development has flow and continuity and does not compartmentalise the different skills people need in their roles but helps them develop natural capabilities that they learn to apply appropriately and without conscious thought.

## Return on Investment

We believe that addressing real business issues and learning are inextricably linked. We see it as the responsibility of the participants on programmes to demonstrate a return on the investment (ROI) in their professional development, with support from facilitators and other learners. Criteria for measuring ROI may be more qualitative (e.g. improved staff motivation or customer satisfaction) or quantitative (e.g. reduced costs, improved profit contribution).

NOA Pathway is the professional development initiative of the National Outsourcing Association (NOA). True North are the outsource provider to the NOA for the management of all the NOA Pathway programmes and activities.

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