

VCSE



Level 1 / Level 2 VCSE

Sport, Leisure and Recreation

Teaching from September 2027

Quick Guide



Please note that all information included in our Quick Guides is subject to approval from Qualifications Wales.

Made for Wales.
Ready for the world.

Empowering learners, supporting teachers

As Wales' largest awarding body, we have over 75 years of experience in delivering trusted, high-quality qualifications that support learners, educators, and employers across Wales.

We provide a wide range of bilingual qualifications that are accessible, engaging, and designed to meet the needs of today's learners.

Our qualifications are backed by expert subject teams, high quality resources, and responsive, specialist support. Our work is guided and shaped through close collaboration with schools, colleges, regional consortia, sector experts and Qualifications Wales.

As the only awarding body offering qualifications in every suite of the 14-16 National Qualifications offer, we are proud to play a key role in supporting the Welsh Government's ambition to make education in Wales a source of national pride, and we remain committed to helping every learner achieve their potential and progress with confidence.



VCSEs: Engaging, practical, and built for progression

Our Level 1/2 Vocational Certificate of Secondary Education (VCSE) qualifications are designed to inspire and support learners aged 14-16, offering a two-year programme that is accessible, engaging, and rooted in real-world learning. With a strong emphasis on practical activities and hands-on experience, these qualifications help learners build confidence, develop essential skills, and achieve meaningful success.

VCSEs are unitised, allowing learners to complete some assessments in Year 10 and others in Year 11. This flexible approach supports steady progress, reduces assessment pressure, and enables learners to demonstrate achievement throughout the course.

For our VCSEs, external assessments, normally worth 40% of the overall qualification, are designed to assess foundational knowledge and can be completed near the start of the course, giving learners more time to focus on developing higher-level skills. This structure adds rigour and credibility to the qualification while helping to reduce teacher workload.

The compensatory nature of our VCSEs recognises learners' strengths across different units. High achievement in one area can offset lower performance in another, promoting a more inclusive and supportive assessment experience.

With content that is relevant, motivating, and tailored to learners' needs, WJEC VCSEs provide a solid foundation for progression to further study at Levels 1 to 3. Whether learners continue in the subject or not, they will gain valuable knowledge, practical skills, and a sense of accomplishment that prepares them for life, learning, and work.

See our full range of VCSEs: www.wjec.co.uk/wave3

About the VCSE in Sport, Leisure and Recreation

Sport, leisure, and recreation play a vital role in Welsh society, promoting health, wellbeing, inclusion, and community engagement while offering diverse career opportunities.

This qualification supports learners to explore the sector, investigate career pathways, understand how initiatives promote participation and wellbeing, and develop practical skills in performance, leadership and coaching.

Learners complete assessments that demonstrate their practical skills and readiness for further learning or work. Through these experiences, they develop a deeper understanding of the sector, building confidence and proficiency as they prepare for further study or careers in sport, leisure and recreation.

Who is this qualification for?

Our Level 1/2 VCSE Sport, Leisure and Recreation qualification is designed to sit alongside GCSEs, offering a hands-on vocational experience that broadens learning for 14 to 16-year-old learners in schools.

It suits those interested in understanding how the sector promotes health, wellbeing and community participation, and who want to explore related careers. Learners develop skills in performance, leadership or coaching and complete activities or projects that support progression to further study or employment.

What does the qualification cover?

Unit	Focus
1. Introduction to the sport, leisure and recreation sector	<p>In this unit, learners will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• key characteristics of sport, leisure and recreation• sector frameworks and how organisations operate• how sport, leisure and recreation work together to support wellbeing• roles, careers and progression pathways• the essential skills needed to work in the sector• the sector's importance to individuals, communities and the Welsh economy.
2. Promoting Health, Fitness and Wellbeing through Sport, Leisure and Recreation	<p>In this unit, learners will learn about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• health, fitness and wellbeing and how they interconnect• the benefits of sport, leisure and recreation for physical, mental and social wellbeing• life-stage influences and risks of sedentary behaviour• barriers to participation and how sectors address them• strategies to increase participation and evaluate their impact.

Unit	Focus
<p>3. Developing Personal Performance in Sport, Leisure and Recreation (optional)</p>	<p>In this unit, learners will explore physiological, psychological, technical, tactical and lifestyle factors influencing performance, and develop the skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measure and analyse performance using fitness tests, observations, interviews and data • apply strategies, training principles and goal setting to improve performance • record progress and evaluate training programmes • create development plans to support continued improvement.
<p>4. Leadership and Coaching in Sport, Leisure and Recreation (optional)</p>	<p>In this unit, learners will learn about the skills, responsibilities, and qualities required to be an effective leader and coach, and develop the skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply leadership and coaching styles to meet participant needs • plan, deliver, and adapt activity sessions safely and inclusively • evaluate sessions using feedback and data • create development plans to improve leadership, coaching, and participant engagement.

Summary of Assessment

Unit	Type
1	<p>WJEC marked Sector Test</p> <p>1 hour - 50 marks - 20% of Qualification</p> <p>The test has two sections of 25 marks each.</p> <p>Section A includes a range of objective question types, such as multiple choice, multiple response, fill-in-the-blank, drag-and-drop, and hot spot questions.</p> <p>Section B includes a range of short answer question types.</p> <p>Centres can choose to enter candidates for an on-screen or paper version.</p>
2	<p>WJEC marked non-examination assessment</p> <p>6 hours - 50 marks - 20% of Qualification</p> <p>Learners will complete tasks demonstrating their ability to analyse health and wellbeing needs, plan a sport, leisure or recreation initiative, and evaluate its potential impact.</p> <p>A scenario will be released each year. The scenarios will remain current for two years, allowing centres to timetable the assessment flexibly across Years 10 and 11.</p>

Unit	Type
3	<p>Centre marked non-examination assessment</p> <p>7 hours - 90 marks - 60% of Qualification</p> <p>Learners will complete tasks demonstrating their ability to analyse their own performance or participation, plan and carry out a personal improvement programme, and review their progress.</p> <p>Learners will select one sport, leisure or recreational activity and design a 6-week programme to improve their performance.</p> <p>Assessment will be based on a static scenario, allowing centres to deliver and timetable the assessment flexibly.</p>
4	<p>Centre marked non-examination assessment</p> <p>7 hours - 90 marks - 60% of Qualification</p> <p>Learners will complete tasks demonstrating their ability to plan, deliver, and review activity sessions in a sport, leisure, or recreation setting.</p> <p>They will select a target group and design sessions that are inclusive, safe, and engaging, applying leadership or coaching skills.</p> <p>Assessment will include planning sessions, leading them, and evaluating personal performance, with opportunities to reflect on outcomes and set development goals.</p> <p>The assessment is based on a static scenario, enabling flexible delivery and timetabling by centres.</p>

“Our VCSE qualifications bring learning to life. Through practical, real-world experiences and flexible, inclusive assessment, they empower young people to build confidence, develop essential skills and achieve success — laying strong foundations for progression, future learning and the world of work.

Our dedicated subject teams are here to guide you every step of the way, supported by tailored resources and professional learning opportunities, empowering you to confidently deliver these exciting new qualifications.”

Sarah Harris

Assistant Director
(Vocational Qualifications)



Need more support?

Our Regional Representative **Sophie Dobbs** is available to support your centre to deliver these exciting new qualifications:

“ I work closely with schools and colleges across Wales, helping them understand the new Wave 3 qualifications that are coming as part of National 14-16 Qualifications reform in September 2027.

I'm here to support centres at every stage of the journey — from early conversations and planning, right through to delivery.

Before starting at WJEC I spent 17 years in secondary education. Having that experience, and a clear understanding of the practical challenges senior leaders face around staffing, timetabling, resources and budgets, means I'm well placed to support centres strategically and practically through the Wave 3 transition.”

Get in touch with Sophie:

wave3@wjec.co.uk



The final wave of new National 14-16 Qualifications for Wales is almost here, with first teaching beginning September 2027.

We're building upon everything we've learned from co-creating our Made-for-Wales GCSEs, engaging with over 100 centres and 60+ employers to develop an inclusive, broad and balanced range of new qualifications that will enable different ways of learning and skills development.

Discover a range of inclusive new qualifications with WJEC, Wales' most established exam board:

- **Personal Project**
- **Skills Suite (Skills for Life and Skills for Work)**
- **Foundation (General and Work Related)**
- **VCSE (Vocational Certificate of Secondary Education)**

Learn more: www.wjec.co.uk/wave3



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