

VCSE



Level 1 / Level 2 VCSE

# Engineering

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](http://www.wjec.co.uk/wave3)

# About the VCSE in Engineering

Engineering is a key driver of Wales' economy, supporting industries such as manufacturing, transport, energy, and construction, and creating high-value, skilled employment.

This qualification introduces learners to the sector through practical activities, including technical drawing, understanding materials, planning tasks, and producing components.

Assessments showcase learners' skills and deepen their understanding of the sector, building confidence and proficiency as they prepare for further study, apprenticeships or careers in an essential, innovative industry that shapes everyday life.

## Who is this qualification for?

Our Level 1/2 VCSE Engineering 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 practical, skills-based subjects and potential careers in construction, building design, heritage restoration, or trades such as brickwork, plumbing, electrical work, and woodwork, as well as roles in planning, surveying, and site management.

# What does the qualification cover?

Unit	Focus
<b>1. Introduction to the Engineering Sector (24 GLH)</b>	<p>In this unit, learners will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• various engineering sectors, from aerospace to sustainable energy production, and their significance in Wales</li><li>• the main engineering sectors operating in Wales and factors influencing the location of engineering activities</li><li>• the benefits of engineering projects, and the challenges they face.</li></ul>
<b>2. Applying Engineering Processes (72 GLH)</b>	<p>In this unit, learners will develop the skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• interpret and use technical engineering drawings</li><li>• plan and organise engineering activities</li><li>• carry out risk assessments to ensure safe working practices</li><li>• produce or manufacture components</li><li>• evaluate the accuracy of completed work.</li></ul>

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Focus</b>
<b>3. Engineering Principles (24 GLH)</b>	<p>In this unit, learners will learn about the core principles that underpin engineering, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the principles of engineering</li><li>• technical drawing in engineering</li><li>• materials used in engineering and their properties</li><li>• mathematics used in engineering.</li></ul>

# Summary of Assessment

Unit	Type
1	<p><b>Non-examination assessment, marked by centre, moderated by WJEC</b></p> <p><b>8 hours - 40 marks - 20% of Qualification</b></p> <p>Learners will complete a series of tasks focused on a distinct branch of the engineering sector selected from a choice of three released annually by WJEC.</p>
2	<p><b>Non-examination assessment, marked by WJEC</b></p> <p><b>32 hours - 150 marks - 60% of Qualification</b></p> <p>Learners will complete tasks demonstrating their practical skills, including hand fitting, machining, and other engineering processes. A selection of briefs will be released each year from which learners will select two.</p> <p>The briefs will remain current for two years, allowing centres to timetable the assessment across Years 10 and 11.</p>
3	<p><b>Written external examination</b></p> <p><b>1 hour - 60 marks - 20% of Qualification</b></p> <p>Learners will sit an external examination, available in January or June each year.</p> <p>The exam will assess knowledge of engineering principles, technical drawing, materials, and mathematics used in engineering.</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](mailto: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](http://www.wjec.co.uk/wave3)



Made for Wales.  
Ready for the world.