

# National Clinical Coding Qualification (UK)

## Paper 2 - Theory Technical Changes 2022

Published May 2022

**Improving lives with  
data and technology**

## Overview

The NCCQ(UK) Examination Quality Assurance Board have approved the following changes to the examination framework:

- Paper 2 Theory Exam - Choice of questions removed in Sections D1, D2, D3 and D4
- Paper 2 Theory Exam - Change to percentage weighting, grade boundaries, examination content and overall pass mark

These changes will be effective from **1st April 2022** and be formally introduced in the **September 2022 NCCQ(UK)** examinations.

### There are no changes to Paper 1 – Practical Exam

The information below shows the major syllabus focus of each section. However, clinical coders will be expected to draw on knowledge, skills and understanding from across the syllabus when answering questions.

### Section C - General short theory questions on ICD-10 and OPCS-4

The major focus of this section will be on the following syllabus components:

- Describe the contents and structure of ICD-10, WHO Volumes 1, 2 and 3
- Indicate in-depth understanding of the rules and conventions in ICD-10
- Describe the contents and structure of OPCS-4.9 Alphabetical Index and Tabular List
- Indicate in-depth understanding of the features of OPCS-4.9

The National Clinical Coding Standards for ICD-10 and OPCS-4 (reference books) are essential resources for clinical coders revising for the exams including the Introduction, Data Quality, Rules and Conventions, General Coding Standards (prefixed with **DGCS** or **PGCS**), Chapter Standards and Guidance (prefixed with **DChS** or **PChS**).

### Section D[1] - Longer general questions on ICD-10

Candidates will no longer be offered a choice of questions (i.e. Part A or Part B), instead there will be a single set of questions that all candidates must answer.

The major focus of this section will be on the following syllabus components:

- Describe the contents and structure of ICD-10, WHO Volumes 1, 2 and 3
- Indicate in-depth understanding of the rules and conventions in ICD-10.

### Section D[2] - Longer general questions on OPCS-4

Candidates will no longer be offered a choice of questions (i.e. Part A or Part B), instead there will be a single set of questions that all candidates must answer.

The major focus of this section will be on the following syllabus components:

- Describe the contents and structure of OPCS-4.9 Alphabetical Index and Tabular List
- Indicate in-depth understanding of the features of OPCS-4.9.

## Section D[3] – SNOMED CT

Candidates will no longer be offered a choice of questions (i.e. Part A or Part B), instead there will be a single set of questions that all candidates must answer.

The major focus of this section will be on the following syllabus components:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits of SNOMED CT in an Electronic Patient Record (EPR)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and content of SNOMED CT and how this differs from a classification
- Demonstrate an understanding of how a terminology and classification fulfil different purposes
- Demonstrate an understanding of the link between SNOMED CT and the ICD-10 and OPCS-4 classification maps.

The [SNOMED CT awareness for clinical coders presentation](#) is an essential resource for clinical coders preparing for the qualification and will be the single source for all SNOMED CT questions featured in the NCCQ(UK) exam. This presentation is listed in the bibliography.

## Section D[4] - Miscellaneous general questions on Data quality, Clinical Coding Audit, HRGs and other issues related to clinical coding

Candidates will no longer be offered a choice of questions (i.e. Part A or Part B), instead there will be a single set of questions that all candidates must answer.

The major focus of this section will be on the following syllabus components:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and users of coded clinical data
- Demonstrate the ability to define what constitutes a classification and a terminology (nomenclature)
- Provide examples of supplementary ICD-10 classifications in use within the NHS (specialty adaptations e.g. Mental Health, Oncology)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the National Clinical Coding Query Support Process
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of clinical coding audit and quality assurance
- Outline methods to improve data quality
- Describe the three components of Terminology, Classification and Casemix Grouping and demonstrate an understanding of how each stage inter-relates with the others.

The National Clinical Coding Standards for ICD-10 and OPCS-4 (reference books) are essential resources for clinical coders revising for the exams, including the sections 'Introduction' and 'Data Quality'.

## Section E[1] – Anatomy & Physiology

No changes

## Section E[2] – Medical Terminology

No changes

## Section E[3] – Anatomy Diagrams

No changes

## Paper 2 – Theory Changes to percentage weighting and grade boundaries

To ensure that all sections of the examination are answered by candidates and to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding of the whole syllabus, changes have been made to the section weightings and overall pass mark applied to Paper 2 (theory exam). These are outlined as follows:

Section	Old Weighting	New Weighting	Change
Section C	20%	20%	-
Section D1	15%	15%	-
Section D2	15%	15%	-
Section D3	10%	15%	↑ 5%
Section D4	5%	10%	↑ 5%
Section E (includes E1, E2 & E3)	35%	25%	↓ 10%

## Paper 2 – Overall pass mark

In addition, to these changes, the overall pass mark will be raised from 60% to **70%** and the distinction pass mark will be raised from 80% to **85%**. This is to ensure that candidates are demonstrating the required level of knowledge across all areas of the syllabus and that attainment of the qualification better reflects this.

The following publications have been released on the [National Clinical Coding Qualification \(NCCQ\(UK\)\)](#) page on Delen:

- [NCCQ\(UK\) Syllabus, Framework and Bibliography 2022-23](#)
- [NCCQ \(UK\) Self-Directed Learning Framework 2022-23](#)