

Smart Awards Level 2 SA026 Working on Joint User Poles Qualification Specification

SMART AWARDS
Awarding Platform for Smart Qualifications

Version Number	Date	Purpose of Change	Classification	Sign Off
V1.0	24/07/26	New qualification release	Public	Marc Henson

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Introduction

This qualification provides learners with the knowledge and skills needed to work safely on Joint User Poles (JUPs) within a telecommunications environment. It supports learners in understanding the hazards, risks, and compliance requirements associated with carrying out work on poles that are shared with Distribution Network Operators.

The qualification tests learners' knowledge, skills, and understanding of the dangers associated with Joint User Pole work, including electrical hazards, pole condition, minimum approach distances, and the safety precautions required when working on DNO-owned or jointly owned infrastructure.

This qualification is delivered through five modules and ensures that learners carrying out work on Joint User Poles are suitably trained and aware of the legal, technical, and operational standards that apply. It is aimed at those who install, maintain, or inspect telecommunications equipment on JUPs.

Key Information	
Name	Smart Awards Level 2 SA026 Working on Joint User Poles
Accreditation	This qualification is approved by: • Ofqual: Qualification number: 610/7754/9 • Industry accreditation: SA026
Level	2
Duration	2 days
Guided Learning Hours (Ofqual)	15 hours
Ofqual Total Qualification Time	16 hours
RQF - Ofqual Credit - Credit value represents the size of a unit which is determined by the learning time. One credit = 10 hours of notional learning.	2
Age	16 Plus
Qualification Type	Vocationally Related Qualification
Smart Awards Product Area	Safety and Craft Qualification
Sector Subject Area	5.2 - Building and construction
Certification	This qualification is valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of certificate issue. To remain compliant and eligible to work on telecommunications networks, individuals must renew their qualification before the expiry date.
Network Operative Passport Scheme (NOPS)	This qualification is fully aligned with the requirements of the Network Operative Passport Scheme (NOPS). Successful completion of this qualification is recorded within the NOPS system, ensuring operatives are

	visible and verifiable to employers and site access systems across the industry.
Prerequisites and Entry Requirements	Learners are required to hold the Smart Awards SA001: Overhead Safety qualification prior to undertaking this qualification. Smart Awards will not restrict access on the grounds of prior academic attainment, employment, geographic location, or any other characteristic. There are no barriers that restrict access or progression, thereby promoting equality of opportunity. Approved centres are responsible for verifying that learners meet all formal qualification prerequisites prior to registration and assessment. Learners who do not hold the required prerequisite qualifications must not be enrolled until those conditions have been met. **Please note:** The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) require at least one person on site to hold a Street Works card to work on the highway. This Smart Awards accreditation is based on a pre-requisite that any work on the highway requires appropriate Street Works accreditation to be held by an individual working on site, and that this individual is qualified to check that the planned provision of footways, traffic lanes and safety zones determined by the site survey meets with the requirements of the site location and approved procedures and practices required by the NRSWA 1991. Some companies' policies may vary where more than one person on site is required to hold a valid Street Works card.
Mandatory units and optional routes to completion.	Learners must complete the Working on Joint User Poles unit in full to achieve this qualification. No optional units or routes are available.
Additional requirements to achieve this qualification.	None
Methods of Assessment	This qualification will be assessed through a practical and theory test. The aim of the assessment is to ensure successful learners have adequate knowledge and understanding of Working on Joint User Poles. Assessment guidance, assessor requirements and additional qualification documentation is supplied to approved Smart Awards centres via Quartz.
Theory test	Learners are required to pass a 20-question multiple-choice test, with questions randomly selected from a secure question bank to ensure comprehensive coverage of all assessment criteria. The test is timed, and learners will have 30 minutes to complete it. All multiple-choice tests are conducted online via the Smart Awards online assessment platform.
Practical assessment	Learners will be required to demonstrate their practical skills through a series of tasks set by Smart Awards. These will be assessed by direct observation of the learner performing the task under assessment conditions. The assessment area must be equipped sufficiently so that the learner can be assessed in their competencies safely and without anyone providing guidance to help the learner.

	Assessor Role: To observe, record performance, question learners where clarification is needed, and verify competence against set criteria. Assessors should evaluate learners against the following categories: • Learners must be assessed individually, even in a team simulation. • Use Smart Awards standardised observation checklist for consistency. • Ensure opportunities for questioning are built into the simulation, particularly regarding reasoning behind technique and decision-making. • In cases of unsupervised elements, probe for ownership of work through reflective questioning. • Provide a brief debriefing session after the assessment to give feedback and confirm understanding. The learner will have 3 hours to complete the practical assessment

Grading	Learners will be graded (Fail or Pass) on an achievement or non-achievement basis.
	
	The final grade will be determined by collective performance in the two assessment tools (theory and practical).
	Learners are required to achieve both the theory and practical assessments to achieve the qualification.
	
	• Theory - To achieve a pass, 80% or more is required.
	• Practical - If one major fault is given the learner will automatically fail.
	  ○ If 6 or more minor faults are given the learner will fail.
	  ○ The learner needs to achieve 5 or less minor faults to pass.
	If there are major health and safety failures due to learners' actions or understanding, the assessment MUST be stopped. The learner should be taken to a suitable area to explain the reason for stopping the assessment and that their assessment is deemed as failed.
	Guidance on the major failures that should result in stopping the assessment is provided in the practical assessment.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations	Smart Awards approved centres that have learners with specific requirements should refer to the Smart Awards Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and Procedure. This document outlines the support available to ensure fair access to assessments. It can be found on the Smart Awards website at www.smartawards.co.uk
Recognition of Prior Learning	Smart Awards is committed to supporting Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and has established a dedicated policy and set of procedures to guide and assist approved centres in its implementation. The full policy is available on the Smart Awards website at www.smartawards.co.uk
Required resources and site requirements for delivering this Qualification	The following equipment must be available and in safe working condition for the practical assessment. Use of the specific tools and equipment issued by the learner's employer or utility is encouraged and may be required, depending on operational policy: A suitable training and assessment area must be available that allows for the safe delivery of Joint User Pole activities. This must include: • Safe, stable ground suitable for ladder positioning • A structure suitable for ladder placement (minimum height 4.5 metres)

	• A Joint User Pole or simulated Joint User Pole suitable for climbing and installation activities • Adequate space to carry out cable installation and routing to a designated termination point • The ability to simulate real-world Joint User Pole conditions, including the presence of other services (For example low voltage overhead cables) • The ability to present typical conditions or issues that may be encountered during Joint User Pole work Practical Equipment • Top and bottom-end ladder stability devices • Ladders suitable for Joint User Pole access • Ladder securing equipment • Gate guards and work area protection equipment • Pole testing equipment • Measuring equipment (For example measuring rods) • Ladder fall arrest system where applicable • Equipment required for installing attachments and fixtures • Cable and associated components for installation and routing tasks • Equipment to simulate other services where applicable (For example low voltage overhead cables) • Equipment or materials to represent typical conditions or issues encountered during Joint User Pole work

Qualification Structure

The Level 2 Award in Working on Joint User Poles qualification consists of one mandatory unit, which learners must complete to achieve the qualification. Attainment at Level 2 demonstrates the learner's ability to apply relevant knowledge, skills, and procedures to carry out clearly defined tasks and resolve straightforward problems with appropriate direction or supervision.

SMART AWARDS Level 2 Award in Working on Joint User Poles								
Minimum TQT for this pathway = 16 Minimum number of credits = 1 Minimum number of units = 1				Minimum number of GLH = 15 Minimum number of assessment time = 4 Other learning time = 1				
Unit Number	Unit title	Level	M/O	GLH	ASS	OTHER LEARNING	TQT	CREDITS
A/652/2642	Working on Joint User Poles	2	M	15	4	1	16	1

Learner Support and Assessment Conditions

Learners will have access to support throughout the training period via their trainer. Trainers are responsible for ensuring that each learner is adequately prepared and competent before presenting them for assessment.

No support or assistance may be given to the learner during either the theory or practical assessments, to maintain the integrity and validity of the qualification.

Qualification objectives and requirements

This qualification confirms that the learner has demonstrated the required competence to work on Joint User Poles. To successfully obtain this qualification, the learners will need to demonstrate the knowledge and ability requirements set out in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Unit Title:	Smart Awards Working on Joint User Poles
Unit Reference Number:	A/652/2642

Learning outcomes	**Assessment criteria**
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Be able to apply safe working practices on Joint User Poles.	1.1. Follow safe access and climbing procedures when working on Joint User Poles. 1.2. Apply lone-working restrictions in accordance with organisational procedures. 1.3. Select and use the required PPE and equipment for safe work on Joint User Poles. 1.4. Carry out site safety checks prior to starting work. 1.5. Follow emergency procedures relevant to the work activity and location. 1.6. Maintain safe working practices throughout Joint User Pole activities.
2. Be able to carry out pole inspections and use approved testing methods on a Joint User Pole.	2.1. Carry out pre-climb visual checks of a Joint User Pole. 2.2. Use approved testing methods to assess the condition of a pole. 2.3. Identify signs of defective or unsafe poles during inspection. 2.4. Make stop/no-go decisions in accordance with organisational procedures. 2.5. Report inspection findings using the required reporting process.
3. Be able to install attachments, fixtures, and cables on Joint User Poles.	3.1. Position and secure cables with correct spacing and clearances on Joint User Poles. 3.2. Install attachments and fixtures to the required tolerances. 3.3. Apply cable management methods to protect and support cables. 3.4. Select and use the correct tools and components for Joint User Pole installation tasks. 3.5. Install and route a cable from a Joint User Pole to a designated termination point. 3.6. Maintain safe separation distances from other services when installing cables.
4. Be able to check own work to maintain technical quality and workmanship.	4.1. Check completed work against technical and safety requirements. 4.2. Identify defects or errors in installation work. 4.3. Rectify issues that can be safely corrected without affecting service.

	4.4. Report issues that cannot be safely rectified using the required process.
5. Be able to work safely by identifying hazards and applying control measures on Joint User Poles.	5.1. Identify hazards associated with work on Joint User Poles. 5.2. Maintain minimum safety distances in accordance with site rules and standards. 5.3. Apply appropriate control measures to reduce identified risks. 5.4. Review and adjust control measures in response to changing site conditions. 5.5. Maintain a safe working area to protect operatives and the public.
6. Be able to communicate and coordinate effectively when working on Joint User Poles.	6.1. Communicate work intentions clearly to relevant personnel on site. 6.2. Follow agreed coordination processes when working on Joint User Poles. 6.3. Complete required documentation for Joint User Pole activities. 6.4. Report issues or disagreements using the correct escalation process. 6.5. Work cooperatively with others when operating on shared-use poles.
7. Know the roles and responsibilities of engineers, DNOs, and telecom providers on Joint User Poles.	7.1. State the responsibilities of telecom engineers when working on Joint User Poles. 7.2. Describe the responsibilities of Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) in relation to Joint User Pole ownership and safety. 7.3. Outline the obligations of telecom organisations under Joint User Pole agreements.
8. Know the standards and escalation processes that apply to Joint User Poles.	8.1. Identify the main standards that apply to Joint User Pole work, including EBTP-4. 8.2. State when escalation is required during Joint User Pole activities. 8.3. Describe how to follow the required escalation process.
9. Know how to recognise pole defects, hazards, and public safety risks on Joint User Poles.	9.1. Identify common defects found on Joint User Poles. 9.2. Identify hazards that may affect Joint User Pole safety. 9.3. State the reporting procedures for unsafe poles and public safety risks.
10. Know typical DNO equipment found on Joint User Poles and the associated risks.	10.1. Identify typical DNO equipment found on Joint User Poles. 10.2. State the risks associated with DNO equipment. 10.3. Describe how these risks affect telecom work on Joint User Poles.
11. Know common workmanship errors on Joint User Pole installations and how to avoid them.	11.1. Identify common workmanship errors on Joint User Pole installations. 11.2. State how to avoid errors during installation work. 11.3. Describe how to check installation work for compliance with standards.

12. Know how to follow reporting, record-keeping, and communication standards for Joint User Pole work.	12.1. Identify the documentation required for Joint User Pole work. 12.2. State the information that must be recorded. 12.3. Describe how to communicate work details accurately.