

How to use this leaflet:

This leaflet provides information that allows you to look at the ways qualifications are organised in Ireland and the UK. On one side of the table you will find the main stages of education or employment - you can find where you are in these stages. The next column shows the qualifications framework for your country. To the right of this you can see the nearest levels and similar kinds of qualifications that are used in the other countries. This makes it possible to draw broad comparisons between qualifications and their levels, rather than direct equivalences, for each country.

Qualifications are different in different countries. However, they are remarkably similar in what they tell someone about the person who has achieved them, for example that he or she is ready for a college/higher education course, or for a first skilled job. This is because there are some clear stages people move through in education, training and work that are common to most countries. Primary education is followed by secondary education and initial entry into employment and/or further and higher education or training. Some people move on to more skilled employment. Some choose to go into higher education and many take part in specialist training in their work place. People graduating from a higher education institution may enter employment and those who complete professional or postgraduate education may also enter employment.

The table gives an indication of how you can compare qualifications across national boundaries. Examples of major qualifications at each level are provided. For more detail of the qualifications in another country, you will need to consult the website given at the head of each column. All these frameworks of qualifications change from time to time and you need to check these websites for the latest versions. Entry requirements for jobs and courses often vary within a country. This means you will need to check specific requirements with the employer or institution for the job or course that you are interested in. This leaflet will provide you with some information to help you begin this process, for example, by telling you what similar qualifications to yours, or qualifications you are interested in studying, are broadly comparable to in other countries.

Thinking of working or studying in Ireland or the UK? – you may be interested in the answer to one or more of these questions.

What do they call their nearest qualification to mine?
Will my qualification get me into college or a job?
Will I get some recognition for the qualifications I have?
What kind of job or course can I apply for with my current qualification?

Recruiting people from another country in Ireland and the UK? – you may be interested in the answer to these questions.

How do I know what a qualification from another country means in terms of level?
Which national qualification should I compare this qualification to?
Who do I go to for more detailed advice about the content and level of qualifications?

This leaflet helps you explore these questions.

Qualifications can cross boundaries - a rough guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland

 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education	 The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework	 National Framework of Qualifications Creadtairne Náisiúnta na gCállochtai
 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority	 AWDURDOD CYHWYSTERAU, CWRICWLWM AC ASESU CYMRU QUALIFICATIONS, CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY FOR WALES	 Rewarding Learning
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 83 Piccadilly London W1J 8QA	ACCAC Castle Buildings Womanby Street Cardiff CF10 1SX	CCEA 29 Clarendon Road Clarendon Dock Belfast BT1 3BG
Tel 020 7509 5555 Minicom 020 7509 6546 Email info@qca.org.uk www.qca.org.uk	Tel 029 2037 5400 Email info@accac.org.uk www.accac.org.uk	Tel 028 9026 1200 Email info@ccea.org.uk www.ccea.org.uk



Main stages of education / employment

Qualifications can be taken at any age in order to continue or return to education or training

Secondary education
Initial entry into employment or further education

Continuation of secondary education

Progression to skilled employment

Completion of secondary education

Entry to higher education

Qualified/Skilled worker

Specialised education and training

Entry to professional graduate employment

Intermediate / higher education
Advanced skills training

Professional or postgraduate education or employment

England, Wales & Northern Ireland National Qualifications Framework

www.qca.org.uk/qualifications
www.accac.org.uk
www.qca.org.uk/openquals
www.ccea.org.uk

Entry level

Entry Level Certificate(NQF)

Level 1

NVQ Level 1, Level 1 Certificate, GCSEs at grade D-G

Level 2

NVQ Level 2, Level 2 Certificate, Level 2 Diploma, GCSEs at grade A*- C

Level 3

NVQ Level 3, A' Levels, Level 3 Certificate, Level 3 Diploma

Level 4

NVQs, Level 4 Certificate, Level 4 Diploma

Level 5

NVQs, Level 5 Certificate, Level 5 Diploma, Higher National Diploma

Level 6

NVQs, Level 6 Certificate, Level 6 Diploma

Level 7

NVQs, Level 7 Diploma, Level 7 Fellowship, Level 7 Advanced Professional Certificate

Level 8

Highly specialist Diploma from a professional body

National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland

www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/TheFramework

Level 1

Level 1 Certificate

Level 2

Level 2 Certificate

Level 3

Level 3 Certificate, Junior Certificate

Level 4

Level 4 Certificate, Leaving Certificate

Level 5

Level 5 Certificate, Leaving Certificate

Level 6

Advanced Certificate, Higher Certificate

Level 7

Ordinary Bachelor Degree

Level 8

Honours Bachelor Degree, Higher Diploma

Level 9

Masters Degree, Post-graduate Diploma

Level 10

Doctoral Degree

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

www.scqf.org.uk

Access level 1

Access level 2

Access level 3

Foundation Standard Grade

Level 4

Intermediate 1, General Standard Grade, SVQ 1

Level 5

Intermediate 2, Credit Standard Grade, SVQ 2

Level 6

Higher, SVQ 3

Level 7

Advanced Higher, Higher National Certificate, Certificate of Higher Education

Level 8

Higher National Diploma, Diploma in Higher Education, SVQ 4

Levels 9

Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma/Certificate

Level 10

Honours degree, Graduate Diploma/Certificate

Level 11

Masters, SVQ 5

Level 12

Doctorates



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England, Wales and Northern Ireland framework for higher education qualifications: FHEQ

www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq

Level C

Certificates of Higher Education

Level I

Ordinary bachelor's degree, Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of higher education and other higher diplomas

Level H

Bachelor's degrees with honours, Graduate certificates and diplomas

Level M

Master's degree, postgraduate diplomas, postgraduate certificates

Level D

Doctoral degree