

## 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 the stages of education or employment?  
Will my qualification be recognised?  
Will I get some recognition for my previous education or employment?  
What kind of job or course will I be able to do with my qualification?

**Recruiting people from Ireland and the UK?** – you may be interested in the answer to the following questions.

How do I know what a qualification means in terms of level?  
Which national qualification is most similar to the one I am interested in?  
Who do I go to for more information about the content and level of qualifications?

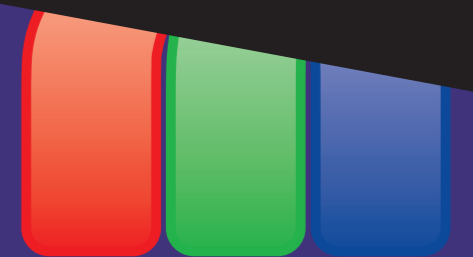
**This leaflet helps you to:**

**Qualifications can cross boundaries - a rough guide to comparing qualifications**



National Qualifications Authority  
Jervis House  
Jervis Street  
Dublin 1  
Telephone (353) 1 887 1500

Email: [info@nqai.ie](mailto:info@nqai.ie)  
[www.nqai.ie](http://www.nqai.ie)



**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

**National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland**

[www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/TheFramework](http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/TheFramework)

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| 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](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

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| 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  |

**England, Wales & Northern Ireland National Qualifications Framework**

[www.qca.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications)  
[www.accac.org.uk](http://www.accac.org.uk)  
[www.qca.org.uk/openquals](http://www.qca.org.uk/openquals)  
[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

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| 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                                   |



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

June 2005

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| <b>England, Wales and Northern Ireland framework for higher education qualifications: FHEQ</b>           |
| <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq">www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq</a> |
| 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  |