

Main stages of education/employment

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

Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

www.qaa.ac.uk

LEVEL

8	Doctoral Degrees
7	Master's Degrees, Integrated Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Postgraduate Certificates
6	Bachelor's Degrees with Honours, Bachelor's Degrees, Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates
5	Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE), Higher National Diplomas (HND)
4	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)

3 Access to HE Diploma*

*The Access to HE Diploma is regulated by QAA but is not part of the FHEQ

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 that are current at the time of publication in each country, you will need to consult the website given at the head of each column.

This leaflet is designed to give some information to help you begin this process, for example, by telling you what your qualification, or qualifications you are interested in studying, are broadly comparable to in other countries.

Regulated Qualifications Framework for England and Northern Ireland

www.ofqual.gov.uk
www.ccea.org.uk

LEVEL

8	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 8
7	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 7
6	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 6
5	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 5, Higher National Diplomas (HND)
4	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 4, Higher National Certificates (HNC)
3	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 3, GCE AS and A Levels
2	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 2. GCSEs at grade A* - C and from 2017 grade 4-9 (England). Functional Skills Level 2 (England). Essential Skills Qualifications (NI)
1	Technical/Vocational Qualifications Level 1. GCSEs at grade D-G and from 2017 grade 3-1 (England). Functional Skills Level 1 (England). Essential Skills Qualifications (NI)

Entry Level Entry Level Certificates (sub levels 1-3), functional skills Entry Level (England) (English, Mathematics & ICT), Essential Skills Qualifications (NI)

Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales

www.cqfw.net

LEVEL

8	Doctoral Degrees, Industry Qualifications, for example, Chartered Accountant
7	Master's Degrees, Vocational Qualifications, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Apprenticeships
6	Honours Degrees, Vocational Qualifications, Professional Certificates in Education, Apprenticeships
5	Foundation Degrees, Vocational Qualifications, Higher National Diplomas (HND), Apprenticeships
4	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE), Vocational Qualifications, Apprenticeships
3	Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced, Vocational Qualifications, AS and A Level, Access to HE, Apprenticeships
2	Welsh Baccalaureate National, Vocational Qualifications, Essential Skills, GCSEs grades A*-C, Apprenticeships
1	Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation, Vocational Qualifications, Essential Skills, GCSEs at grade D-G

Entry Level Entry Level Qualifications

National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland

www.qqi.ie

LEVEL

10	Doctoral Degrees, Higher Doctorates
9	Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas
8	Honours Bachelor Degrees, Higher Diplomas
7	Ordinary Bachelor Degrees
6	Advanced Certificate, Higher Certificate
5	Level 5 Certificate, Leaving Certificate
4	Level 4 Certificate, Leaving Certificate
3	Level 3 Certificate, Junior Certificates
2	Level 2 Certificate
1	Level 1 Certificate

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

www.scqf.org.uk

LEVEL

12	Doctoral Degrees, Professional Apprenticeships, Professional Development Awards (PDA), Award
11	Master's Degrees, Integrated Master's Degrees, Professional Apprenticeships, SVQ, PDA, Postgraduate Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificates, Award
10	Bachelor's Degrees with Honours, Professional Apprenticeships, SVQ, PDA, Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates, Award
9	Bachelor's/Ordinary Degrees, Technical Apprenticeships, PDA, SVQ, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificates, Award
8	Higher National Diplomas (HND), Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE), Technical Apprenticeship, PDA, SVQ, Award
7	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Modern Apprenticeships, PDA, SVQ, Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE), Scottish Baccalaureate, Advanced Higher, Award
6	Higher, Modern Apprenticeships, SVQ, PDA, National Progression Award (NPA), National Certificate, Award
5	National 5, Modern Apprenticeships, SVQ, NPA, National Certificate, Award
4	National 4, SVQ, NPA, National Certificate, Award
3	National 3, NPA, National Certificate, Award
2	National 2, NPA, National Certificate, Award
1	National 1, Award

Qualifications can cross boundaries

- a guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland, March 2017

