

UK Qualification Comparison Chart*

| Main Stages of education / employment | Qualifications and Credit Framework/National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland www.ofqual.gov.uk | | Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales www.cqfw.net | | National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland www.nfq.ie | | The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework www.scfq.org.uk | | Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| | Level | | Level | | Level | | Level | | Level | |
| Professional or postgraduate education, research or employment | 8 | Vocational Qualifications Level 8 | 8 | Doctoral Degrees | 10 | Doctoral Degree Higher Doctorate | 12 | Professional Development Awards Doctoral Degrees | 8 | Doctoral Degrees |
| Higher education Advanced skills training | 7 | Fellowships NVQ Level 5 Vocational Qualifications Level 7 | 7 | Master's Degrees Integrated Master's Degrees Postgraduate Diplomas Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Postgraduate Certificates | 9 | Master's Degree Postgraduate Diploma | 11 | SVQ Level 5 Professional Development Awards Postgraduate Diplomas Master's Degrees Integrated Master's Degrees Postgraduate Certificates | 7 | Master's Degrees Integrated Master's Degrees Postgraduate Diplomas Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Postgraduate Certificates |
| | 6 | Vocational Qualifications Level 6 | 6 | Bachelor's Degree with Honours Bachelor's Degrees Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Graduate Diplomas Graduate Certificates | 8 | Honours Bachelor Degree Higher Diploma | 10 | Bachelor's Degrees with Honours Professional Development Awards Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificates | 6 | Bachelor's Degrees with Honours Bachelor's Degrees Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Graduate Diplomas Graduate Certificates |
| Entry to professional graduate employment | 5 | NVQ Level 4 Higher National Diplomas (HND) Higher National Certificates (HNC) Vocational Qualifications Level 5 | 5 | Foundation Degrees Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) Higher National Diplomas (HND) | 7 | Ordinary Bachelor Degree | 9 | Bachelor's/Ordinary Degrees Professional Development Awards SVQ Level 4 Graduate Diplomas Graduate Certificates | 5 | Foundation Degrees Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) Higher National Diplomas (HND) |
| Specialised education and training | | | | | 6 | Advanced Certificate Higher Certificate | 8 | Higher National Diplomas (HND) SVQ Level 4 Professional Development Awards Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) | | |
| Qualified/Skilled worker Entry to higher education Completion of secondary education | 4 | Vocational Qualifications Level 4 | 4 | Higher National Certificates (HNC) Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) | 5 | Level 5 Certificate Leaving Certificate | 7 | Professional Development Awards Higher National Certificates (HNC) Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) SVQ Level 3 Advanced Highers | 4 | Higher National Certificates (HNC) Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) |
| | 3 | NVQ Level 3 Vocational Qualifications Level 3 GCSE AS and A Level Advanced Diplomas | 3 | NVQ Level 3 Vocational Qualifications Level 3 GCSE AS and A Level Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Advanced | | | 6 | Highers SVQ Level 3 Professional Development Awards National Progression Awards National Certificates | | |
| Progression to skilled employment Continuation of secondary education | 2 | NVQ Level 2 Vocational Qualifications Level 2 GCSEs at grade A* - C ESOL skills for life Higher Diplomas Functional Skills Level 2 (English, mathematics & ICT) | 2 | NVQ Level 2 Vocational Qualifications Level 2 Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Intermediate GCSEs grade A* - C | 4 | Level 4 Certificate Leaving Certificate | 5 | Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade SVQ 2 National Progression Awards National Certificates | 4 | Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) 1 National Progression Awards National Certificates |
| | | | | | 3 | Level 3 Certificate Junior Certificate | | | | |
| Secondary education initial entry into employment or further education | 1 | NVQ Level 1 Vocational Qualifications Level 1 GCSEs at grade D - G ESOL skills for life Foundation Diplomas Functional Skills Level 1 (English, mathematics & ICT) | 1 | NVQ Level 1 Vocational Qualifications Level 1 GCSEs at grade D-G Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Foundation | 2 | Level 2 Certificate | 3 | Access 3 Foundation Standard Grades National Progression Awards National Certificates | 4 | Access 2 National Progression Awards National Certificates |
| | Entry Level | Entry Level Certificates (sub levels 1 - 3) ESOL skills for life Functional Skills Entry Level (English, mathematics & ICT) | Entry Level | Entry Level Certificate (sub levels 1 - 3) | | | | | | |
| Qualifications can be taken at any age in order to continue or return to training | | | | | 1 | Level 1 Certificate | 1 | Access 1 | | |

* Adapted from a table produced by Ofqual, OAA, SCOF, CCEA, CQFW and The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.