



# QQI and SOLAS are consulting on a proposed new award standard for the Advanced Certificate Craft - Plumbing

## Introduction

SOLAS, Ireland's Training and Employment Authority, has statutory responsibility for the organisation and control of designated apprenticeships under the Industrial Training Act 1967 and the Labour Services Act 1987.

QQI is the state agency responsible, among other things, for the development of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and for quality assuring providers of both further and higher education and training. QQI is also responsible for determining the awards standards for the awards it makes.

The first five apprenticeships are being reviewed by a process outlined as follows:

1. SOLAS conducts a curriculum review in consultation with stakeholders following which it proposes a revised standard of knowledge, skill and competence to be achieved by the apprentice before the education and training award is made (i.e. an award standard).
2. SOLAS commissions an external evaluation of the proposed award standard review by a panel agreed and under terms of reference agreed with QQI. The external evaluation report is sent to QQI.
3. QQI prepares a draft standard for consultation with stakeholders and publishes it along with the external evaluation report.
4. Following consideration of the outcomes of the process QQI determines new a new award standard.

QQI has been developing the way it uses the Common Awards System to help meet the goals of the national Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019. QQI is currently exploring with SOLAS the possibility of regulating craft awards standards in a more general way through NFQ Award-type descriptors rather than through QQI standards for specific crafts. Under this arrangement SOLAS will develop specific craft award standards to be consistent with one of the applicable NFQ award-type descriptors. This specific standard will then be confirmed by QQI when the apprenticeship programme is validated. More details about this arrangement and the proposed new award-type descriptors will be published in October 2014.

## Revision of Apprenticeship Programme Curricula

In 2012 the NAAC initiated a review (NAAC review) of the Apprenticeship Programme (including all the individual apprenticeship programmes). The NAAC review is still in progress. It aims to ensure that the Apprenticeship Programme (and each of the individual craft apprenticeship programmes) are up-to-date, relevant, and capable of meeting the needs of learners, the workplace and the economy.

Curricula for all the individual apprenticeship programmes will be revised within the parameters of the National Apprenticeship Review Committee (confirm title) NARC reports, pedagogical design needs, and QQI's quality assurance, programme validation and awards standards criteria. Each craft is being examined by the NAAC review. Currently, three of these crafts have reached the stage where an external evaluation can be sought.

This external evaluation will serve two purposes it will provide objective interface to the NAAC review and it will inform the formal QQI awards standards determination process. Here it should be understood that, in the future, each apprenticeship programme will have to undergo independent validation by QQI against QQI's validation criteria including the yet to be determined awards standard for the relevant craft award.

## Standards Determination by QQI

As the body responsible for making craft awards QQI is required to determine the applicable awards standards. This means to determine the standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by a learner before an award may be made by QQI or by a provider to which, under section 53 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, authority to make an award has been delegated.

To help inform its determinations the QQI requested SOLAS to establish independent External Review Groups to evaluate the ***minimum intended apprenticeship programme learning outcomes*** proposed by the NAAC reviews for each of the three crafts listed earlier in this document.

The membership and composition of External Review Group for **Plumbing** agreed with QQI comprised:

- Dr. Anne Walsh (Chair), Academic Co-ordinator of the Open Learning Centre, NUI Galway
- Stephen McManus (Secretary), Former Registrar Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Trevor Clark, International Qualifications Framework Expert, UK
- Liz Hyslop, Accreditation Manager SQA, Education and training specialist with expertise in apprenticeship
- Pat O'Riordan, Trade Union Representative, Technical Expert
- Ciaran O'Neill Trade Union Representative, Technical Expert
- Ciaran Coady, Learner Representative
- Simon Watson, H.A.O'Neill, Employer representative

The review panel met with participating training providers, participating employers, learners who are involved in the current Craft apprenticeship programme, SOLAS and QQI (on qualifications and quality assurance matters).

## Consultation

QQI and SOLAS would like to consult with stakeholders on the proposed new award standard:

### **Advanced Certificate Craft – Plumbing (Major Award at NFQ Level 6)**

The **Report of the External Review Group on the Award Standards for the SOLAS Plumbing Apprenticeship Programme** is published in support of this proposal.

### How to respond to this consultation document.

QQI invites interested persons or organisations to make written observations on the proposed standard.

Prompts for feedback on the award standard:

- **Clarity:** Overall is the expected knowledge, skill and competence sufficiently clear?
- **Alignment:** Do you think that the expected learning outcomes align well, in terms of knowledge, skill and competence with NFQ Level 6 indicators and descriptors?
- **Amendment:** Would you like to suggest amendments?
- **Comparability:** How does the standard compare with the expectations of other relevant qualifications with which you are familiar?
- Is there anything else that should be considered?

Submissions should be made by email to [consultation@qqi.ie](mailto:consultation@qqi.ie) not later **Friday 14 November 2014**.



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

## CERTIFICATE DETAILS

**Title: Advanced Certificate Craft – Plumbing**

Award Class: Major

Level: 6

Credit Value: 240 FET Credits

# Title: Advanced Certificate Craft – Plumbing

## Purpose

The purpose of this award is to enable the learner to attain the standard required to achieve the Advanced Certificate craft through the knowledge, skill and competence essential in all plumbing system design, installation, diagnostics, maintenance, commissioning and repair in accordance with national standards

The plumbing craft addresses:

- Central Heating
- Domestic Biomass
- Domestic Heat Pumps
- Domestic Solar Thermal
- Gas Services
- Oil Services
- Piping Systems
- Plant and Process Systems
- Thermal Processes Plumbing
- Water Services Component

Learners should be able to:		NFQ Level Indicators	
1	Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance procedures used in the trade of plumbing.	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Breadth</b> Specialised knowledge of a broad area
2	Evaluate key theoretical concepts used in the planning, design, installation and diagnostics of water and heating systems pertinent to domestic and industrial environments		<b>Kind</b> Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas
3	Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised plumbing skills using all commonly used plumbing hand and power tools in compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and best practice	<b>Know-how and skill</b>	<b>Range</b> Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools
4	Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, diagnostics and delivering all services, installations and maintenance processes relating to the plumbing trade		<b>Selectivity</b> Formulate responses to well-defined abstract problems
5	Transfer and apply theoretical understanding and technical know-how to inspect, diagnose faults, maintain and repair piping systems in a wide variety of domestic and industrial contexts	<b>Competence - context</b>	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts

## Title: Advanced Certificate Craft – Plumbing

6	Exercise substantial independence in the workplace, taking responsibility for plumbing duties performed by others and interacting with a variety of individuals and groups to include customers, colleagues and suppliers	<b>Competence- Role</b>	Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for the allocation of resources; form, and function within, multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
7	Take initiative to identify and address self-development and training needs in both an employment and structured training environment	<b>Competence- Learning to learn</b>	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
9	Determine the function and role of the plumber in society to include an awareness of energy conservation and other relevant ecological concerns	<b>Competence- Insight</b>	Express an internalised, personal world view, reflecting engagement with others

### Certificate Requirements

To be awarded this certificate the learner must have achieved the expected Learning Outcomes set out above and the following components. The total credit requirement for this Advanced Certificate is **240 FET Credits** including the credit for the following components

#### All of the following component(s)

	Code	Title	Level	Credit Value
	6N1950	Communications	6	15
	6N1948	Team Leadership	6	15

### Assessment Technique(s) including weighting(s)

The Advanced Craft Certificate grade is based on a weighted average of all Phase result grades. All components are integrated and assessed throughout the programme alternating between On-the-job phases and Off the job phases. To attain the required standard, a minimum of a pass grade must be achieved in all assessments prescribed in the apprenticeship programme specification. The apprenticeship programme assessment specification maps the component outcomes across assessment instruments in all phases of the apprenticeship

Pass - Is awarded when the cumulative assessment results achieved in all phases of the Apprenticeship programme aggregate between 50% and 64% of the total marks available.

Merit - Is awarded when the cumulative assessment results achieved in all phases of the apprenticeship programme aggregate between 65% and 79% of the total marks available

Distinction – Is awarded when the cumulative assessment results achieved in all phases of the apprenticeship programme is 80% or above of the total marks available

## Title: **Advanced Certificate Craft – Plumbing**

### **Specific Validation Requirements**

All tools and equipment comply with safety requirements. The assessment area must be safe following an appropriate risk assessment in accordance with health and safety legislation

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### **Access Requirements**

To access the programme leading to this Major award the learner must comply with all current apprenticeship entry requirements.

### **Supporting Documentation**

Current HSA statutory regulations and codes of practice  
Manufacture's equipment/machine operating procedures  
Manufacture's technical/hazardous material Information  
Current Apprenticeship Rules

