



Dearbhú Cáilíochta
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and
Qualifications Ireland

QQI AWARDS STANDARDS.

Citizenship
Core Competence

December 2023



Foreword

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012 requires QQI 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 the Authority’. QQI award standards are based on the level indicators and award type descriptors of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and are governed by QQI Policy for the Determination of Award Standards.

Based on systematic engagement with subject matter expertise and public consultation, award standards for certain broad fields of learning were developed for QQI awards at level 1-4 on the NFQ. These standards represent an elaboration of the generic descriptors of the NFQ. They should facilitate experts in particular fields of learning to create the link between their programmes’ intended learning outcomes and the NFQ. Each award standard is cumulative, the statements of knowledge, skill and competence at NFQ levels 2, 3 and 4, build on the attainment of standards at lower levels, which are not necessarily reproduced at the higher level(s). The implementation and use of these standards is subject to QQI Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes and QQI Policy for the Making of Awards. Whenever an award standard changes, programmes must be updated and validated against the new standards.

These standards are not programme specifications. It is through these, however, that the relationship between a programme, its component parts and the NFQ should be evident. The standards are a reference point and a point of comparison against which individual programmes may be justified.

They are intended to provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with a particular field of learning. In designing programmes, providers must take cognisance of the standards for specific fields of learning where they generally relate to the programme being developed. It is, however, recognised that there is a significant growth in multi-disciplinary/inter-disciplinary programmes; there are emerging fields of learning; and in addition, within each field there is the vast spectrum of programmes possible based on a wide range of purpose. In this context, it is not possible to have a standard, or multiple standards, that cater for the complete range of programmes possible. It is therefore expected that the standards for specific fields of learning will be used as reference points for the design of programmes. In designing programmes, providers can draw from more than one standard.

In drafting the standards every effort has been made to ensure that they will provide for flexibility and variety in the design of programmes and therefore encourage innovation within an overall agreed framework. It

is not expected that all programmes will include every learning outcome identified in a standard. It is, however, expected that many programmes will include learning outcomes that are not included in the relevant standard.

When designing a programme, each learning outcome in the standard should be considered. Where departure from these is necessary, it should be justified in the context of the specific orientation of the programme and other facts pertaining to it. Each programme provider should be able to demonstrate how the design and content of its own programmes has been informed by the standard.

The level descriptors of the Framework, the award type descriptors and consequently the standards for the specific fields of learning are divided into three different types of learning outcomes - knowledge, skill and competence. These strands are further subdivided into eight sub-strands. Each strand/sub-strand is important. The relative weighting of each strand in a programme will vary from programme to programme. The weighting will be determined by many factors, including for example, the practical nature of a programme, or otherwise.

Each strand/sub-strand should be addressed appropriately in every programme. Where a programme is multidisciplinary or inter-disciplinary in nature, the use of more than one standard may be necessary. In such cases, the scope, depth and balance of knowledge, skill and competence should be attended to.

The titles of awards made by QQI on foot of these award standards shall be consistent with QQI Policy on the Making of Awards with an exception in the case of major awards where the named award stem shall have the following form: 'Level X Certificate in Lifelong Learning in' [specialisation].

These standards are determined by QQI under section 49(1) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012.



AWARD STANDARDS – ADMINISTRATION AT NFQ LEVELS 3 TO 4

Purpose	<p>The purpose of this broad award standard is to help design programmes that equip learners with citizenship knowledge, skill and competence.</p> <p>‘Citizenship competence is the ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability.’*</p>
Context	<p>This standard is aligned to the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. This particular competence relates specifically to the ‘Core Competence in Citizenship’ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Key competences for lifelong learning, Publications Office, 2019, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/291008</p> <p>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence*</p> <p>‘Citizenship competence is based on knowledge of basic concepts and phenomena relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, society, economy and culture. This involves an understanding of the European common values, as expressed in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as a critical understanding of the main developments in national, European and world history. In addition, it includes an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements, as well as of sustainable systems, in particular climate and demographic change at the global level and their underlying causes. Knowledge of European integration as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe and the world is essential. This includes an understanding of the multi-cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of European societies, and how national cultural identity contributes to the European identity.</p>



Skills for citizenship competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest, including the sustainable development of society. This involves critical thinking and integrated problem-solving skills, as well as skills to develop arguments and constructive participation in community activities, as well as in decision-making at all levels, from local and national to the European and international level. This also involves the ability to access, have a critical understanding of, and interact with both traditional and new forms of media and understand the role and functions of media in democratic societies.

Respect for human rights as a basis for democracy lays the foundations for a responsible and constructive attitude. Constructive participation involves willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels and civic activities. It includes support for social and cultural diversity, gender equality and social cohesion, sustainable lifestyles, promotion of culture of peace and non-violence, a readiness to respect the privacy of others, and to take responsibility for the environment. Interest in political and socioeconomic developments, humanities and intercultural communication is needed to be prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise where necessary and to ensure social justice and fairness.’

*EU Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, Official Journal of the European Union, 2018.

References

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Note: The indicators at each level build on the skills from the previous one.

The outcomes at each NFQ level include those of all the lower levels in the same sub-strand unless stated otherwise.



NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Knowledge breadth	Elementary knowledge	Knowledge that is narrow in range	Knowledge moderately broad in range	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge kind	Demonstrate by recognition or recall	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension	Mainly concrete in reference and with some comprehension of relationship between knowledge elements	Mainly concrete in reference and with some elements of abstraction or theory
Human and civil rights and democratic societies	Awareness of the rights of individuals and groups.	Knowledge of basic concepts of human and civil rights, democracy, justice, equality, and citizenship.	Knowledge of the relationships between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human and civil rights • democracy • justice • equality • citizenship. Knowledge of the constitution of the home country.	Being able to express these and have some theoretical understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human and civil rights • democracy • justice • equality • citizenship • selected international declarations. Knowledge of the constitution of the home country and the role of government.
Cultural diversity	Awareness of social and cultural difference within the learner's community.	Basic knowledge of social and cultural difference within wider society.	Knowledge of the differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups.	Knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the differences and similarities between value systems across religious or ethnic groups • European integration and relevant EU structures.



Institutions	Awareness of local bodies for civic life.	Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of local bodies for civic life.	Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of local, regional and national bodies for civic life.	Knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the roles, responsibilities and influences of local, regional, national and international bodies for civic life opportunities for citizens to take part in institutions for civic life.
History, politics and current affairs	Awareness of key figures in local and national government.	Basic knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> key figures in national government the political parties the democratic systems. 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> key figures in local and national government the main events in national and European history. 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> key figures in local and national government, political parties and their main ideas modern and historical national, European and world events.
Media in democratic societies	Awareness of the roles and functions of the media in democratic societies.	Basic knowledge of the roles and functions of the media in democratic societies.	Knowledge of the roles and functions of the media in democratic societies.	Knowledge and understanding of the roles, functions and influences of the media in democratic societies.
Local and global sustainability	Awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the main significant climate and changes in population the importance of sustainability. 	Basic knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic connections between humans and the environment how complex sustainability problems are. 	Knowledge of the most common sustainability issues at local and global level.	Knowledge and understanding of sustainability issues and challenges, including causes, consequences and solutions.



NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Know-how and skill range	Demonstrate basic practical skills and carry out directed activity using basic tools	Demonstrate limited range of basic practical skills, including the use of relevant tools	Demonstrate a limited range of practical and cognitive skills and tools	Demonstrate a moderate range of practical and cognitive skills and tools
Know-how and skill selectivity	Perform processes that are repetitive and predictable	Perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction	Select from a limited range of varied procedures and apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems	Select from a range of procedures and apply known solutions to a variety of predictable problems
Participate in democratic processes	Take part in community and neighbourhood activities in a positive way.	Take part in democratic decision-making processes in a positive way, particularly by voting in elections.	Take part in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> democratic decision-making processes at local and national level public debate, making simple political arguments and choices. 	Take part in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> democratic decision-making processes at local, national, European and international level thinking about the democratic process, decisions and choices.
Engage with civic institutions	Engage with familiar civic institutions as a citizen in defined and structured settings.	Engage with a limited range of civic settings and situations.	Engage with a range of civic settings and situations. Take up opportunities given by the home country.	Engage with a wide range of civic settings and situations. Take up opportunities given by the home country and international programmes.



Engage with others in the public domain	Communicate with others in limited familiar settings.	Communicate confidently with others in their community, work and, or in a learning setting.	Communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none">effectively and confidently with others in a range of settingswith people from different cultures.	Communicate effectively and confidently: <ul style="list-style-type: none">with others in a broad range of settingswith people from different cultures.
Media in democratic societies		Access and connect with both traditional and new forms of media in very familiar settings.	Access and connect with both traditional and new forms of media in familiar and unfamiliar settings.	Access and connect with both traditional and new forms of media in a variety of settings.
Help solve problems in the community		Take direction in helping to solve problems that affect the local and wider community in familiar settings.	Communicate in an effective way with others in the public domain. Under supervision but with some independence, get involved in plans to solve problems that affect the local community.	Use initiative and get involved in plans to solve problems affecting the local and wider community. Take part in attempts to resolve some conflicts in line with the principles of democratic law in a variety of contexts.



NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence Context	Act in closely defined and highly structured contexts	Act in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts	Act within a limited range of contexts	Act in familiar and unfamiliar contexts
Competence Role	Act in a limited range of roles	Act in a range of roles under direction	Act under direction with limited autonomy; function within familiar, homogenous groups	Act with considerable amount of responsibility and autonomy
Competence Learning to Learn	Learn to sequence learning tasks; learn to access and use a range of learning resources	Learn to learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment	Learn to learn within a managed environment	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a supervised environment
Competence Insight	Begin to demonstrate awareness of independent role for self	Demonstrate awareness of independent role for self	Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour	Assume partial responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour
Sense of belonging	The learner should act with a sense of belonging to their locality.	The learner should act with a sense of belonging to their locality and country.	The learner should act with a sense of belonging to their locality, country and Europe.	The learner should act with a sense of belonging to and contribute to their locality, country and Europe.
Willingness to participate	Be willing to take part in highly very familiar and fully supported civic activities.	Under direction and with support, show a willingness to take part in civic activities.	Under direction and with support, show a willingness to take part in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> democratic decision-making at all levels civic activities. Be willing to support social diversity and social cohesion within familiar, same-type groups.	Be confident and willing to take part in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> democratic decision-making at all levels civic activities. Be willing to support social diversity and social cohesion.



Act with respect for others	Respect the values and privacy of others.	Be confident and show respect for cultural and social difference in familiar settings.	The learner should be confident and show respect for cultural and social differences and reflect on its effect for them and others. Show awareness of codes of conduct and socio-cultural norms and values.	The learner should be confident and show respect for cultural and social difference and reflect on its effect for them and others in a wider societal situation. Act in the interest of fairness and social justice.
Adopt sustainable behaviours	Show curiosity and willingness to act in line with sustainability values.	Show active interest and willingness to act in line with sustainability values.	Show active interest in working with local communities and society to make a positive difference. Learn to adopt sustainability values and act as a national and global citizen in ethical and sustainable ways.	The learner should take personal responsibility for their effect on the environment by choosing sustainable lifestyle choices. Show willingness to give back to the community and nature.



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