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1. Context

QQI has a legislative responsibility to develop, maintain and promote the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The NFQ and its associated policies and procedures, relating to quality and qualifications, provide a substantive infrastructure to further develop and promote transparency, trust, credibility and consistency of outcomes across the entire education and training system.

The framework is defined as:

“The single, nationally and internationally accepted entity, through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards.”¹

QQI’s Policy on Determining Award Standards² and Policy and Criteria on Making Awards outline the range of approaches used by QQI in the development and determination of award standards. It describes the FET Common Awards System (CAS) and allows for its evolutionary development. It also refers to non-CAS qualifications such as those achieved through apprenticeships.

QQI is also an awarding body for further and higher education and training providers who do not have their own awarding powers. In this context, QQI’s role is to develop and review award standards to facilitate relevant providers to develop programmes that lead to a qualification on the NFQ. Education and training providers play a key role in facilitating individuals to achieve their full potential by developing relevant and challenging programmes that are responsive to the needs of learners, society and the economy.

As an awarding body QQI wishes to ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate award standards available to meet the expectations of stakeholders. QQI also wishes to explore new qualification models including the use of broad standards. In this context QQI published Professional Award Type Descriptors (PATDs) at levels 5-9. They are currently being piloted in apprenticeships.

Safeguarding standards is critical to building trust and confidence across the qualifications system. In this context, QQI wishes to ensure appropriate supports, including relevant guidelines, are in place. This may include general or field/subject specific guidelines to support providers when developing programmes.

Future economic and social development is dependent on a fully functioning and unified qualifications system that enables learners to continually upgrade and develop their knowledge and skills.

The *National Skills Strategy (NSS)* to 2025 sets an ambitious trajectory for the next 10 years and provides significant challenges and opportunities for the qualifications system. The priorities include improving the educational attainment of the low skilled. Research shows that low-skilled and older workers are less likely to be offered, or to seek, upskilling from employers, but these workers are also the most vulnerable to ongoing changes within the workplace, particularly as technologies evolve.

Europe’s social agenda promotes education and training as a pragmatic way of tackling Europe’s social and employment challenges. Many low-skilled jobs now require higher information processing skills and more demanding non-routine tasks. The ‘New Skills Agenda for Europe’³ includes specific actions to ensure that the right training, skills and support are available to people across Europe. It aims to make better use of the skills that are available and to equip people with the new skills that will be necessary to obtain quality jobs and improve their life chances.

Qualifications at levels 1-3 offer potential learners, including those with no previous education qualifications, the opportunity to engage and/or re-engage with the system in a flexible and supported way to achieve qualifications.

¹ [Determinations for the Outline National Framework of Qualifications](#)

² [Policy for Determining Award Standards and Policy and Criteria for Making Awards](#)

³ [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#)

2. Qualifications and Quality Assurance

The NFQ and associated awards were established in 2003. In the intervening period the landscape of education and training in Ireland has changed radically. QQI has supported these changes through its focus on having a quality assured qualifications system. QQI's current strategic approach to qualifications is to:

- Research and review new qualification models/approaches for both the further and higher education and training sectors
- Maintain award standards that are appropriate and relevant to meet the needs of learners, employers and providers while considering new ways forward

The approach relies on strong stakeholder engagement including effective and innovative education-employer collaboration and partnerships. The measure of success is that national qualifications are fit for purpose, meet individual and national expectations and promote lifelong learning.

Since 2015 a range of activities and external influences have impacted and continue to impact award standards. In that period, QQI:

- carried out an impact analysis of the National Framework of Qualifications⁴
- commissioned research into trends and developments in FET qualifications internationally
- is developing a Green paper on the future of qualifications
- carried out research and consultation on its proposed approach to the review of FET and HET standards across levels 1-9 and [published feedback received](#).
- published and applied the [Professional Award Type Descriptors](#) levels 5-9 to the development of new apprenticeship programmes.
- published a suite of QQI [quality assurance guidelines](#) for relevant providers
- published and implemented its new [Policies and Criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training](#)
- launched its web based [Infographics](#) facility
- has taken cognisance of a range of national policy initiatives including: the National Skill Strategy 2025⁵, Action Plan for Education, the STEM Education Policy, the FET Strategy 2014-2019,
- taken cognisance of the European Commission's New Skills Agenda⁶ including the Digital Competency Framework and the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework.
- consulted on and made a submission on the review of the 2006 Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning⁷

3. Levels 1-3 Awards Standards

The detailed award specifications for major awards and associated component specifications can be found online in QQI's [awards information section](#). A synopsis of learning outcomes at each level are provided in Appendix 1 and a profile of provision at levels 1-3 is outlined in Appendix 2.

⁴ [Policy Impact Assessment of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications](#)

⁵ Ireland's National Skills Strategy - www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/education/initiatives/key-competences-framework-review-2017_en

4. Approach to Review

In 2015 QQI commenced a review of QQI award standards at levels 1-3 and established a Reference Group (Appendix 3) to advise on the development of an approach to the review of awards at levels 1-3. The members of the group have experience of managing or delivering programmes of education and training at these levels.

The objectives of the review were to:

- consider the suitability of the currently active award standards at NFQ levels 1-3, how they were used, by whom and for what purposes
- recommend amendments to existing award standards and/or develop completely new award standards
- consider the progression pathways within levels 1- 3 and access from these levels to higher NFQ levels
- identify which Common Awards System (CAS) specifications should be retained, retired and/or replaced
- estimate the difference between actual average learner effort and credit rating for the most popular awards
- given the *'Further Education Strategy 2014-19'*⁸, establish a systematic suite of major and minor awards across levels 1-3 to include functional numeracy, functional literacy, adult learning competence
- consider the impact on levels 1-3 of changes in the education and training provider landscape

It became clear following the first phase of activity that more time was needed. The Reference Group met on three occasions in 2015-2016. Whilst part of the activity focused on Common Awards System standards, a parallel activity commenced to consider the development of non-CAS standards modelled on the knowledge, skills and competence sub strands of the NFQ and on the EU Key Competences Framework.

5. Consultation and Feedback

A colloquium was held in June 2015, attended by a range of stakeholders with knowledge and experience of delivering programmes at levels 1-3. Other participants were sectoral and employer representatives.

The purpose of the colloquium was to reflect on progress and consider how best to proceed. A spectrum of possible futures was outlined ranging from:

- refreshment of the existing CAS standards
- development of broad standards with associated guidelines which could lead to proposals for awards for a unique programme or for many programmes
- encouraging the growth of progression pathways
- awards and standards should be demand-led and respond to identified social, cultural or economic needs

The range of questions posed at the colloquium are found in Appendix 4.

⁸ Solas 'Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019' - www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/FETStrategy2014-2019.pdf

Feedback from the event included the following:

- Consistency across providers is essential
- Standards-related infrastructure is required including support on assessment
- There is a need to establish vocational qualifications at NFQ level 3 designed to prepare learners for elementary occupations (maybe even special purpose awards)
- Learners experiences need to be coherent rather than a collection of random minors
- Progression needs to be provided for
- The jump in standards between levels 1 and 2 is too narrow and between levels 2 and 3 too wide
- Communications and maths at levels 1 and 2 do not prepare for progression to level 3
- Funding structures restrict mobility
- Statistical data should be more easily accessible
- Introduction of grading at level 3 would prepare learners for progression
- Suitability of standards – changes in society’s needs since publication (e.g. digital literacy/skills)
- Enhancing flexibility – broader learning outcomes
- Lack of English as a Second Language modules at levels 1 and 2
- Lack of more specific work-related skills at levels 3
- Lack of modules related to digital literacy at levels 1-3

Other issues which have emerged from discussion with the Reference Group in 2016 include:

- Currently there is only one major award at level 2. This is an anomaly compared to other levels where multiple named awards are available
- Consider a more applied approach at level 2 e.g. applied communications
- The credit volume of components at level 2 is mainly 5 credits, the jump to 10 credits which is standard at level 3 is too great for learners
- Concern that standards are too high for some learners, therefore there is a risk of standards being diluted to allow learners pass.
- There is a need to recognise that some learners may not progress past level 2
- Other learners may legitimately use levels 1 and 2 as access points that help them build confidence in their own abilities as well as knowledge and skills in study and assessment techniques before progressing to higher levels.

In 2017, QQI published a discussion document on its approach to review awards standards at NFQ levels 1 – 9. A series of workshops were held for both FET and HET providers and stakeholders. The FET workshops included reference to the levels 1-3 activity. As well as the issues already identified, three other main issues arose specifically related to levels 1-3:

- a) the type of assessment used
- b) the gap between levels 3 and 4
- c) the use of mathematics at levels 1-3

Views expressed included concern that more variety of assessment is needed and about the amount of assessment. Feedback also indicated that the gap between levels 3 and 4 is large and level 3 learners need to be better prepared for it.

In relation to mathematics, a gap between level 2 and level 3 maths was noted and progression is an issue. Concern was expressed that learners are disadvantaged at level 3 where mathematics related components are mandatory. This may be seen as a barrier to achieving a full major award.

6. L1-3 Common Award Standards Consultation

Taking on board the issues identified with the Levels 1-3 CAS standards, specific questions are given below and are available in an online questionnaire <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CASStandards>.

Level 1 and 2 Common Awards Standards

1. What are your views/suggestions on the need for more numeracy components at levels 1 and 2?
2. If more 10 credit components were available at levels 1 and 2, what subjects should be prioritised?
3. The establishment of a new major award at level 2 has been recommended, in what field of learning should it be established?

Level 3 Common Award Standards

4. Would the introduction of more special purpose awards at level 3 be useful and if so in what subjects?
5. Would the availability of more 20 credit components at level 3 support learner progression and if so what subjects should be prioritised?
6. What are your views/suggestions on the need for more numeracy components at levels 3?

Assessment and Grading

7. Currently award standards at levels 1-3 provide guidance on the recommended assessment techniques to be used. If this information were removed and it was left to the provider to establish assessment through the programme validation process, how do you think this would affect the understanding and application of these national award standards?
8. What are your views on the introduction of grading of major and special purpose awards at level 3?

7. Next Steps for L1-3 CAS award standards

- Public consultation both online and in workshops.
- A L1-3 Review Group will be established, working to a terms of reference, to actively revise the CAS standards
- Feedback from this consultation will be considered by the Standards Review Group in the preparation of revised standards
- In accordance with QQI's governance procedures, proposed changes will be available for public consultation before finalisation
- Revised standards will be presented to QQI's Policy and Standards Committee for adoption
- When formally adopted and published, the standards will be available to providers to use in programme development. QQI's '[Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training](#)' (2016) will apply.
- Where applicable, a schedule for deactivation of existing awards will be determined when the revised standards are available.

8. Level 1- 3 New Development: Broad Standards

A separate part of the Levels 1-3 review activity explored the development of and issues concerning broad standards. The vision was to provide a range of approaches to broad standards so as to respond to demand-led proposals for awards and awards standards based on identified social, cultural or economic needs.

At one end of the spectrum, the CAS awards and specifications provide a structure for programme development and related learner achievement. At the other end of the spectrum, broad standards (supported by associated guidelines) could be used by providers to propose unique programmes and an associated award available to that provider only. This latter activity is new to the further education and training sector. It has been used so far in the development of new apprenticeships using the [Professional Award Type Descriptors](#) as a reference point for programme development.

To explore broad standards, nine vocationally oriented (i.e. field-specific) working groups were established:

Group 1: Core Competences

Group 2: Science, Horticulture and Agriculture

Group 3: Construction and Engineering

Group 4: Fine Arts, Crafts and Design

Group 5: Hospitality and Personal Services

Group 6: Language

Group 7 Retail, Administration and Office Work

Group 8: Care and Community Work

Group 9: ICT

Section 9 Broad Standards Core Competences below outlines the working drafts modelled on the knowledge, skills and competence sub strands of the NFQ and on the EU Key Competences Framework. Since that work commenced, the European Commission has undertaken a review of the competencies framework and the result of that activity is expected in mid-2018.

The Core Working Group were asked to consider core learning outcomes which were broadly defined as native language, communications, mathematics, digital media, employability and citizenship competences, critical thinking, problem solving and making arguments. The **core** competences were deemed applicable to levels 1, 2 and 3.

At level 3 only, it was considered that vocationally specific broad standards (as preparation for elementary occupations and for progression to higher levels) should be developed. These are set out in **Section 10 Vocational Standards for Level 3 below**.

9. Draft Broad Standards Core Competences

NFQ Substrands	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Knowledge–breadth	Elementary knowledge.	Knowledge that is narrow in range.	Knowledge moderately broad in range.
Knowledge–kind	Demonstrable by recognition or recall.	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension.	Mainly concrete in reference and with some comprehension of relationship between knowledge elements.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.

Broad standards for core areas: Working Draft Presented as level indicators for EU key competences for lifelong learning:		
Learners do not necessarily need to achieve all strands to progress to the next level		
However, to progress to level 2 in the strand/element the learner must be able to:	To progress to level 3 in the strand/element the learner must be able to:	To progress to level 4 in the strand/element the learner must be able to:
Key Competence: Communication in the mother tongue		
<i>Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts; in education and training, work, home and leisure.</i>		
Level 1 Core Indicators	Level 2 Core Indicators	Level 3 Core Indicators
Identify a limited range of texts produced in familiar personal and social contexts, describing text type, audience and purpose.	Identify a limited range of texts produced in familiar personal, civic, social and work contexts, describing text type, audience and purpose.	Identify a broad range of texts produced in personal, civic, social and work contexts, describing text type, audience and purpose.
Identify some key elements of texts used in familiar personal and social contexts to show an awareness of how organisation, design, language and text conventions is used to convey meaning.	Describe some key elements of texts used in personal, civic, social and work contexts to show an understanding of how organisation, design, language and text conventions is used to convey meaning.	Evaluate the suitability of organisational structures, design features and language and text conventions used to convey meaning in texts for different purposes (personal, civic, social and work).
Apply a small range of appropriate navigation and comprehension strategies to read and understand simple texts used in familiar personal and social contexts.	Apply a range of appropriate navigation, comprehension and critical reading strategies to read, understand and consider meaning in simple texts used in familiar personal, civic, social and work contexts.	Apply appropriate navigation, comprehension and critical reading strategies to read, understand and evaluate meaning in simple and complex texts used in familiar and unfamiliar situations/ personal, civic, social and work contexts.
Use a small range of well-known organisational patterns to create/produce texts for personal and social purposes showing some awareness of text conventions, design features and language appropriate to the intended audience and purpose.	Use familiar organisational patterns to plan and create/ produce texts for specific purposes using text conventions, design features and language appropriate to the intended audience and purpose.	Plan, organise and create/ produce a variety of texts for personal, civic, social and work contexts using organisational structures, text conventions, design features and language appropriate to the intended audience and purpose.
With support apply a limited range of self-monitoring strategies to review the effectiveness of reading and writing strategies used in familiar contexts.	Apply a limited range of self-monitoring strategies to review the effectiveness of reading and writing strategies used in familiar contexts.	Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of own reading and writing strategies used for particular purposes.
Listen to others and respond appropriately, both verbally and non-verbally.	Listen attentively and respond with increased confidence both verbally and non-verbally.	Demonstrate active listening by responding appropriately both verbally and non-verbally.

Speak clearly to express feelings and ideas on matters of personal interest or everyday topics (e.g., the weather).	Speak confidently and clearly to convey ideas and feelings on everyday topics or topics of interest.	Speak confidently, clearly and responsively in purposeful and imaginative ways to explore and share ideas and feelings.
Show some awareness of simple differences in the use of language and non-verbal features to suit situation and audience.	Begin to adapt speaking to varying situations and audiences (i.e., formal/Informal, vocabulary, tone of voice, relevance, etc.) Indicate awareness of turn-taking and how to open and close discussion.	Adapt language and non-verbal features to suit situation and audience. Understand how to initiate, close and allow discussion to flow.
With support and in familiar and personally relevant contexts.	With some support in some contexts.	With little support in most contexts.

Communication in foreign languages

Communication in foreign languages broadly shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests.

QQI has a project in train to see whether language standards can be expressed through references to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

A) Mathematical competence and basic competences – Working Draft

Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Building on a sound mastery of numeracy, the emphasis is on process and activity, as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves, to different degrees, the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs, charts).

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Locate, understand and use mathematical information given by numbers and symbols in simple graphical, numerical and written material.	Read and understand mathematical information given by numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts in graphical, numerical and written material.	Read and understand information given by numbers, symbols, diagrams and charts used for different purposes and in different ways in graphical, numerical and written material. Select and interpret mathematical information that may be partly embedded in a range of familiar, and some less familiar, tasks and texts.
Locate, understand and use mathematical information given by numbers and symbols in simple graphical, numerical and written material.	Read and understand mathematical information given by numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts in graphical, numerical and written material.	Read and understand information given by numbers, symbols, diagrams and charts used for different purposes and in different ways in graphical, numerical and written material. Select and interpret mathematical information that may be partly embedded in a range of familiar, and some less familiar, tasks and texts.
Use simple mathematical and personal problem-solving strategies in highly familiar contexts including given methods and given checking procedures appropriate to the specified purpose.	Specify and describe a practical problem or task using numbers, measures and simple shapes to record essential information. Select and use appropriate familiar mathematical problem-solving strategies to solve problems in familiar contexts.	Select from and use a variety of developing mathematical and problem-solving strategies in a range of familiar and some less familiar contexts. Specify and describe a practical problem or task using numbers, measures and diagrams to collect and record relevant information.
Generate results which make sense.	Generate results to a given level of accuracy using given methods and given checking procedures appropriate to the specified purpose.	Generate results to a given level of accuracy using given methods, measures and checking procedures appropriate to the specified purpose.
Broad standards for core areas: Working Draft.	Broad standards for core areas: Working Draft.	Broad standards for core areas: Working Draft.
Present and explain results which show an understanding of the intended purpose using appropriate numbers, measures, objects or pictures.	Present and explain results which meet the intended purpose using appropriate numbers, simple diagrams and symbols.	Present and explain results which meet the intended purpose using appropriate numbers, diagrams, charts and symbols.

Recognise and use basic numerical notation.	Work with basic numerical notation.	Work confidently with basic numerical notation.
Choose one numerical operation to carry out.	Select appropriate methods to be applied to particular tasks.	Select appropriate numerical methods to be applied.
Carry out very simple numerical calculations.	Carry out simple numerical calculations (add, subtract, multiple, divide).	Carry out a range of straightforward numerical calculations.
Make very simple comparisons	Draw simple conclusions from results produced	Draw straightforward conclusions from results
Read and use a simple numbered scale.	Read and use a simple numbered scale.	Read and use a straightforward scale.
Recognise and name common 2-D and 3-D shapes. Understand everyday positional vocabulary (e.g. between, inside or near to).	Recognise and name 2-D and 3-D shapes. Describe the properties of common 2-D and 3-D shapes. Use mathematical language of shape and space.	Sort 2-D and 3-D shapes to solve practical problems using properties (e.g. lines of symmetry, side length, angles).
Extract simple graphical information from a simple table or diagram.	Extract information from simple tables, graphs, charts, or diagrams. Collect simple numerical information.	Extract information from straightforward tables, graphs, charts, or diagrams.
Sort and classify objects using a single criterion.	Sort and classify objects using two criteria.	
	Represent information so that it makes sense to others (e.g. in lists, tables and diagrams).	Use appropriate graphical forms to convey particular types of information.
Construct simple representations or diagrams, using knowledge of numbers, measures or shape and space.	Make numerical comparisons from block graphs.	Make numerical comparisons from bar charts and pictograms.
Communicate in simple table or diagram.	Communicate information appropriately through simple tables, graphs, charts, or diagrams. Represent information so that it makes sense to others (e.g. in lists, tables and diagrams). Make numerical comparisons from block graphs.	Communicate information in straightforward tables, graphs, charts, or diagrams. Make observations and record numerical information using a tally. Organise and represent information in different ways so that it makes sense to others.

B) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology – Working Draft

Competence in science refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Competence in technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge and methodology in response to perceived human wants or needs. Competence in science and technology involves an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Make and record direct numerical observations and measurements (e.g. length, time, temperature, weight, volume) and report these using the appropriate terminology and language.	Make and accurately record numerical observations and measurements involving calculation (e.g. area of a rectangle) and report these using the appropriate terminology and language.	Make and accurately record indirect numerical observations and measurements using simple models to calculate results (e.g. area of triangle, speed of a car, using formulas to calculate volumes) and report these using appropriate terminology and language.
Give examples illustrating simple binary causal relationships and carry out simple tests to illustrate cause (e.g. spring stretches when a weight is attached at the end).	Give examples illustrating non-binary causal relationships and carry out simple tests to illustrate cause (e.g. more weight leads to greater extension of the spring).	Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of a scientific theory and some simple scientific laws and carry out experiments to test them (e.g. the formula relating weight to spring extension).
Give practical examples to demonstrate an understanding of causal relationships.	Give practical examples of the systematic application of an understanding of causal relationships and use of the related measurements.	Use simple models to predict outcomes in practical scenarios.
Demonstrate an awareness that scientific knowledge comes from human curiosity about the natural world.	Demonstrate an awareness that scientific knowledge comes from discoveries based on systematic objective observations of the natural world.	Demonstrate an understanding that scientific knowledge comes from discoveries based on systematic objective hypothesis-based observations of the natural world.
Give examples of how science and technology affect the world.	Explain, using examples, how science and technology affect the world, both positively and negatively.	Explain how science and technology affect sustainable living, both positively and negatively.
Demonstrate an understanding of simple physical concepts, tools and processes (e.g. time, length, weight, temperature, magnetic attraction, light-bulb electric circuit).	Demonstrate a qualitative understanding of key terms such as: force, acceleration, mass, density and why these are important and list tools for their measurement.	Carry out measurements and calculations using linear physical laws to solve practical problems (e.g. the law of the lever).
Demonstrate an awareness of chemical compounds and an understanding of familiar chemical reactions (e.g. solute, solvent, crystallisation; combustion and its products).	Demonstrate a qualitative understanding of key terms such as: element, compound, reaction, acid/base and why these are important.	Carry out experiments that demonstrate some basic chemical processes used to solve practical problems (e.g. distillation).

Demonstrate a qualitative understanding of some basic living processes (e.g. breathing and feeding) and list some simple tools for their investigation.	Demonstrate a qualitative understanding of key terms such as: plant and animal anatomy, digestion, reproduction, excretion, growth, cells and tissues, organisms, and why these are important and list tools for their investigation.	Carry out experiments that demonstrate some basic biological processes used to solve practical problems (e.g. fermentation).
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Digital Competence –Working Draft		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Demonstrate awareness of some essential information and communication technology devices or services and their operation and associated language and terminology.	Demonstrate basic understanding of some common information and communication technology devices or services and their operation and associated language and terminology.	Demonstrate moderate understanding of a range of common information and communication technology devices or services and their operation and associated language and terminology.
Demonstrate basic practical ICT skills, and safely carry out directed activity using basic ICT tools and simple processes (i.e. repetitive and predictable).	Demonstrate limited range of basic practical ICT skills, including the safe use of relevant ICT tools. Perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction.	Select and safely apply a limited range of practical and problem-solving skills and ICT tools to assist in everyday tasks.
Apply ICT knowledge and skills in closely defined and highly structured contexts with assistance and under supervision.	Apply ICT knowledge and skills in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts with some assistance and under supervision.	Apply ICT knowledge and skills within a limited range of contexts with some support.
	Demonstrate problem- solving.	Demonstrate problem- solving.

Learning to Learn		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
With support, recognise some personal learning strengths and weakness.	Identify a range of personal learning strengths and weakness.	Evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
With support, set a learning goal and the steps and supports needed to meet it.	Determine a learning goal and strategy including success criteria, barriers, actions and timeframe.	Identify and set learning goals and success criteria, devise a learning plan and prioritise actions.
	Make use of learning supports.	Identify possible difficulties/ obstacles and how to overcome them.

<p>With support, review plan and the target and adapt if necessary</p> <p>Draw on supports where necessary</p>	<p>Review progress and adapt plan and target accordingly</p> <p>Identify when support is needed</p>	<p>Take responsibility for following the plan, organising time and resources</p> <p>Reflect critically on progress and adapt/act accordingly</p> <p>Deal with setbacks or change, seek feedback and support, accept criticism and praise</p>
<p>With support, identify what they have learnt and how they learnt it</p>	<p>Identify what they have learned and how and why they did or didn't achieved a goal</p> <p>Reflect on learning strategies and consider alternatives</p>	<p>Reflect on whether learning goals have been met or not and why</p> <p>Evaluate the learning experience to improve/apply to future learning</p> <p>Select and present evidence of achieving learning goals</p>

Social and Civic Competences		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Awareness of responsibility for personal and social wellbeing</p> <p>Interact with support in familiar social contexts/ environments/ communities</p> <p>Identify examples of social and cultural diversity in familiar contexts</p> <p>Identify personally relevant situations that evidence empathy and tolerance for diversity</p> <p>Begin to recognise codes of conduct and/or socio-cultural norms in familiar and frequently occurring contexts</p>	<p>Begin to assume limited responsibility for personal and social wellbeing</p> <p>Interact with support in a range of social contexts/ environments/ communities (e.g. family, some working environments, education)</p> <p>Reflect on examples of social and cultural diversity within their own communities</p> <p>Act with empathy and respect for cultural or social diversity in familiar contexts</p> <p>Recognise codes of conduct and socio-cultural norms, and personal values</p>	<p>Assume limited responsibility for personal and social wellbeing</p> <p>Interact effectively and constructively in a range of social contexts/ environments /communities (e.g. family, some working environments, education)</p> <p>Reflect on their own personal experience in wider societal contexts</p> <p>Act with empathy and respect for cultural or social diversity and reflect on its implications for self and others</p> <p>Act with awareness of codes of conduct and socio-cultural norms and values</p>

<p>Identify some human rights and civic responsibilities</p> <p>Name some social or political groupings</p> <p>Identify some situations where human or civic rights may be contravened and identify supports e.g. right to minimum wage</p> <p>Identify examples of acting responsibly towards sustainable living</p>	<p>Basic knowledge of the key concepts underpinning human rights and citizenship</p> <p>Describe activities of some different social or political groupings</p> <p>Engage effectively with others to collectively identify a problem affecting the local community and possible solutions</p> <p>Some awareness of their responsibility to live sustainably</p> <p>Knowledge of reliable sources of information about rights and entitlements</p>	<p>Basic understanding of the concepts of democracy, equality, justice, citizenship, civil rights and responsibilities and the some of the relationships between them</p> <p>Awareness of aims and values of some different social or political groupings</p> <p>Engage effectively with others in the public domain and contribute to initiatives to solve problems affecting the local community</p> <p>Critical awareness of their responsibility to live sustainably</p>
		<p>Access sources of information about rights and entitlements and use this in everyday situations e.g. consumer rights or complaints procedures</p>

Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Use familiar resources and prescribed strategies to organise time and commitments and plan very familiar, routine tasks.</p>	<p>Effectively use some common devices and strategies for organising time and commitments and plan tasks with familiar goals and outcomes</p>	<p>Plan and organise routine commitments using a variety of strategies to order, sequence, prioritise or combine tasks within an achievable timeframe.</p>
<p>Demonstrate self-awareness by identifying personal skills, values, interests, preferences, past experiences.</p>	<p>Describe self, drawing on past experience and personal reflection,</p>	<p>Compile a personal profile that describes interests, skills, talents, personal qualities, characteristics, values.</p>
<p>Use a limited number of well-known and reliable sources to gather information, generate ideas and identify opportunities in a very familiar context.</p>	<p>Use a limited number of familiar sources to gather information, generate ideas and identify opportunities in a limited range of contexts, taking some account of reliability and accuracy.</p>	<p>Use a range of sources to gather and evaluate information, generate ideas and identify opportunities in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.</p>
<p>Use visible thinking skills and problem solving strategies to respond effectively in very familiar and routine situations.</p>	<p>Use visible thinking skills and problem solving strategies to respond effectively in familiar situations.</p>	<p>Use thinking skills and problem solving strategies to respond effectively in familiar and unfamiliar situations.</p>

Select a decision from a number of pre-determined options in routine situations and in a familiar role citing some personal factors influencing the choice.	Apply decision-making processes in a range of routine situations and in a familiar role taking into account some personal and situational factors that impact on a decision.	Apply decision-making processes in familiar and unfamiliar situations to outline decision, identify influencing factors, and evaluate choices based a set of criteria.
With support, take responsibility for some elements associated with achieving a routine and familiar goal, and review and learn from own performance.	Take some responsibility for elements associated with achieving a routine and familiar goal, review and learn from own performance in achieving a routine goal.	Take responsibility for and evaluate own role in achieving a desired goal using agreed performance criteria.

Cultural Awareness and Expression		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Identify a limited range of familiar cultural activities and/or forms of expression</p> <p>Recognise, with support, a limited range of personally relevant cultural traditions</p>	<p>Identify a range locally-based cultural activities and/or forms of expression.</p> <p>Identify and demonstrate limited understanding of a range of cultural traditions and examples of cultural heritage .</p>	<p>Express a basic understanding of their cultural identity.</p> <p>Recognise the variety and diversity of cultural activities and forms of expression; and explore their ethical, social and economic dimensions.</p> <p>Have a basic understanding of cultural heritage and traditions; and explore their ethical, social and economic dimensions.</p>
<p>Appreciate the value of participation in cultural activities for themselves</p>	<p>Appreciate the role and importance of cultural activities and forms of expression in their life and that of the local community.</p> <p>Describe and respond to a limited range of cultural activities and forms of expression (e.g. art forms, sport, traditions) present in daily life.</p> <p>Describe and respond to a limited range of cultural heritage and traditions present in daily life.</p>	<p>Appreciate the role and importance of cultural activities and forms of expression in their life and that of society.</p> <p>Express opinions, using appropriate language, on different cultural activities and forms of expression.</p>
<p>Participate in a cultural activity and/or engage in a form of cultural expression</p>	<p>Participate in a limited range of cultural activity and/or engage in a form of cultural expression</p> <p>Describe the personal meaning of cultural practices and forms of expression to others.</p>	<p>Participate in, and reflect on, a limited range of cultural activity and/or engage in a form of cultural expression.</p> <p>Explain the influence of culture on society and personal identity.</p>

10. Broad standards for Level 3 Vocational Areas: Working Draft

<p>Strand</p>	<p>Level 3 Broad standards.</p> <p>For the field (or where applicable a subfield).</p> <p>Learners do not necessarily need to achieve all strands to progress to the next level.</p> <p>To progress to level 4 in the strand/element the learner must be able to (or to demonstrate):</p>	<p>Level 3 Broad standards.</p> <p>Subfield 2 (where applicable).</p> <p>To progress to level 4 in the strand/element the learner must be able to (or to demonstrate):</p>
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WG2 Agriculture, Horticulture and Fisheries – Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Agriculture, Horticulture and Fisheries	
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>Qualify a person to perform a range of basic tasks safely under supervision in familiar contexts e.g. entry-level operative position in the industry.</p>	
<p>Knowledge</p>	<p>Knowledge of basic scientific concepts pertaining to the field and how they underpin practice at this level.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic practical concepts, equipment and processes of the field.</p> <p>Knowledge of the expected standard of work.</p> <p>Knowledge of the sources of information for the field.</p> <p>Appreciation of the scope of the field and how it interacts with related fields.</p> <p>Recognise the boundaries of own competence and when/where to seek guidance.</p> <p>Awareness of risks to health and safety and how to control them.</p>	

<p>Skill</p>	<p>Use initiative to select and safely use a range of familiar procedures.</p> <p>Select and safely use a limited range of equipment and tools, taking responsibility for their maintenance.</p> <p>Carry out specified tasks on time and to the required standard.</p> <p>Record, quantify and document activity and observations.</p> <p>Recognise and troubleshoot a range of predictable problems.</p>	
<p>Context</p>	<p>Act within a limited range of familiar contexts.</p>	
<p>Role</p>	<p>Act under direction with limited autonomy;</p> <p>Function within a team taking due responsibility for their own contribution (e.g. productivity, communication, timeliness, demeanour, preparation).</p> <p>Recognise and act safely and effectively within the scope of given role and competence, seeking direction where necessary.</p> <p>Report back appropriately to a supervisor.</p>	
<p>L2L</p>	<p>Learn to learn within a managed environment.</p> <p>Recognise own achievements and potential.</p> <p>Seek guidance to set learning targets and act to achieve them.</p>	
<p>Insight</p>	<p>Engage effectively with others (e.g. colleagues, clients and members of the public) in the work context; for example:</p> <p>Demonstrate respect for other people.</p> <p>Use language appropriate to the situation.</p>	

WG2 Construction and Engineering –Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Construction (Construction here means construction and maintenance of the built environment).	Engineering (Engineering here concerns the transformation of materials into useful products (e.g. metalwork, manufacturing, machinery production or maintenance).
Purpose	Qualify a person to perform a range of basic tasks safely under supervision in familiar contexts e.g. entry-level operative position in the industry.	Qualify a person to perform a range of basic tasks safely under supervision in familiar engineering contexts e.g. entry-level operative position in the industry.
Knowledge	<p>Knowledge of the scope and work practices of the construction industry.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic materials' science and technology pertaining to the vocational area and how they underpin practice at this level.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic practical concepts, equipment, commonly used products, materials, methods, and processes of the vocational area.</p> <p>Knowledge of the expected standard of their work and the concept of construction quality.</p> <p>Knowledge, of the language, terminology (e.g. measurement units) and communications conventions of the vocational area.</p> <p>Knowledge of the sources of information for the vocational area.</p> <p>Awareness of the scope of the vocational area and how it interacts with related vocational areas.</p> <p>Awareness of the boundaries of own competence and when/ where to seek guidance.</p> <p>Awareness of risks to health and safety and how to control them.</p>	<p>Knowledge of the scope and work practices of the industry.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic physical sciences and technology (including materials' science) pertaining to engineering and how they underpin practice at this level.</p> <p>Knowledge of basic practical concepts, equipment, machinery, materials, methods, and processes of engineering.</p> <p>Knowledge of the expected standard of their work and the concept of engineering quality.</p> <p>Knowledge, of the language, terminology (e.g. measurement units) and communications conventions of engineering.</p> <p>Knowledge of the sources of information for engineering</p> <p>Awareness of the scope and application of engineering and how it interacts with related fields.</p> <p>Awareness of the boundaries of own competence and when/ where to seek guidance.</p> <p>Awareness of risks to health and safety and how to control them.</p>

<p>Skill</p>	<p>Use initiative to select and safely use a range of familiar procedures.</p> <p>Interpret basic elements of drawings (including units and scale) including Computer Aided Design (CAD) drawings.</p> <p>Select and safely use a limited range of materials, products, equipment and tools, taking due responsibility for their maintenance and safe storage.</p> <p>Carry out specified tasks safely, on time and to the required standard.</p> <p>Record, quantify, document and communicate activity and observations (e.g. incident report).</p> <p>Recognise and troubleshoot a range of predictable problems</p>	<p>Use initiative to select and safely use a range of familiar procedures.</p> <p>Interpret basic elements of drawings (including units and scale) including Computer Aided Design (CAD) drawings.</p> <p>Select and safely use a limited range of materials, products, machinery, equipment and tools, taking due responsibility for their maintenance and safe storage.</p> <p>Carry out specified tasks safely, on time and to the required standard.</p> <p>Record, quantify, document and communicate activity and observations.</p> <p>Recognise and troubleshoot a range of predictable problems</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>Act within a limited range of familiar contexts.</p>	<p>Act within a limited range of familiar contexts.</p>
<p>Role</p>	<p>Act under direction with limited autonomy.</p> <p>Function within a team taking due responsibility for own contribution (e.g. productivity, communication, timeliness, demeanour, preparation).</p> <p>Act safely within the scope of their role and competence seeking direction where necessary.</p> <p>Report back where necessary to their supervisor.</p>	<p>Act under direction with limited autonomy.</p> <p>Function within a team taking due responsibility for own contribution (e.g. productivity, communication, timeliness, demeanour, preparation).</p> <p>Act safely within the scope of their role and competence seeking direction where necessary.</p> <p>Report back where necessary to their supervisor.</p>
<p>L2L</p>	<p>Learn to learn within a managed environment.</p> <p>Recognise own achievements and potential.</p> <p>Seek guidance to set learning targets and act to achieve them.</p>	<p>Learn to learn within a managed environment.</p> <p>Recognise own achievements and potential.</p> <p>Seek guidance to set learning targets and act to achieve them.</p>

Insight	Engage effectively and responsibly with others (e.g. colleagues, clients and members of the public) in the work context; for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate respect for other people and their roles • Use language appropriate to the situation 	Engage effectively and responsibly with others (e.g. colleagues, clients and members of the public) in the work context; for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate respect for other people and their roles • Use language appropriate to the situation
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WG2 Fine Art, Craft and Design – Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Fine Art, Craft and Design	
Purpose	<p>This is a generalised award standard for vocational qualifications in visual arts, craft and design at level 3 of the NFQ.</p> <p>Qualifications relate to the performance of relatively simple visual arts, craft and design work.</p>	
Knowledge	<p>Using familiar examples, demonstrate awareness of the influence of visual arts, craft and design in societies and how visual art, craft and design is influenced by societies.</p> <p>Demonstrate awareness of the rudiments of relevant key enabling scientific and technological underpinnings.</p> <p>Demonstrate awareness of the origins, technology, materials, media and process for a range of visual arts, craft and design.</p> <p>Demonstrate basic understanding of the economic, social and employment infrastructure for visual art, design and craft practice and practitioners.</p> <p>Demonstrate familiarity with the language and terminology of visual arts, craft and design.</p>	

<p>Skill</p>	<p>Using imagination, memory, experience, experimentation and direct observation, develop and implement personal methods to create visual art, craft and design items from given stimuli.</p> <p>(Question: Do we expect people to specialise at this level?).</p> <p>Use the principles and elements of visual art, craft and design to investigate and develop insights and solutions.</p> <p>Apply a limited range of processes, procedures and methods to predictable visual art, craft and design problems.</p> <p>Evaluate the quality of craftsmanship; artistic impact; design functionality and form; and potential influence in own and others' work.</p> <p>Critique their own work and that of others.</p> <p>Store, present and display their work in line with conventions Observe good workshop practice.</p>	
<p>Context</p>	<p>Practise within a limited range of visual arts, craft and design contexts under direction.</p>	
<p>Role</p>	<p>Plan and implement, under direction, a project to create an artefact and present it with supporting information.</p>	
<p>L2L</p>	<p>Learn within a managed environment capitalising on personal curiosities and insights.</p>	
<p>Insight</p>	<p>Awareness of one's attitudes, preferred strategies and personal inclinations in different situations and its influence on visual arts, design and craft processes.</p> <p>Awareness of the role of visual arts, design and craft processes in own life and their potential to express personality and to influence others.</p>	

WG5 Hospitality and Personal Services – Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Hospitality and Catering	
Purpose	This is a generalised award standard preparing for entry-level jobs in the hospitality and catering industry and/or progression to qualifications at Level 4.	
Knowledge	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, cultural and social impact of the hospitality and catering industry within Ireland and of related roles and career paths.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of customer focussed work practices and key attributes and attitudes expected of employees.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of applied cost control, stock control, procurement and revenue generation principles and related systems.</p> <p>Demonstrate an awareness of the rudiments of relevant key enabling scientific and technological underpinnings.</p> <p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of FSAI Levels 1 and 2 guidelines and basic occupational health and safety requirements.</p> <p>Demonstrate a specialist knowledge of one entry-level role in the hospitality and catering industry e.g. Kitchen Porter, Conference Porter, Junior Receptionist, Junior Food/Bar Server, Accommodation Assistant, Trainee Chef...</p>	

<p>Skill</p>	<p>Use creativity, experience, practical skills, initiative and observation to provide a service meeting customers' needs complying with standard operating procedures.</p> <p>Apply a limited range of known processes, procedures, methods and equipment to frequently occurring tasks.</p> <p>Evaluate the quality of service and their own contribution to it.</p> <p>Communicate effectively (verbally and non-verbally) and appropriately (to the situation and context) with colleagues, suppliers and customers.</p> <p>Work with a positive attitude and demeanour, complying with workplace standards.</p> <p>Demonstrate specialist skill base for one (to complement the knowledge base) entry-level role in the hospitality and catering industry e.g. Kitchen Porter, Conference Porter, Junior Receptionist, Junior Food/Bar Server, Accommodation Assistant, Trainee Chef...</p>	
<p>Context</p>	<p>Function within a limited range of hospitality or catering contexts under direction.</p> <p>Large hotel, small restaurant, spa reception, bar, delicatessen, industrial catering.</p>	
<p>Role</p>	<p>Function effectively within heterogeneous teams and communities in familiar contexts.</p> <p>Act under direction with limited autonomy and responsibility e.g. Kitchen Porter, Conference Porter, Junior Receptionist, Junior Food/Bar Server, Accommodation Assistant, Trainee Chef...</p>	

<p>L2L</p>	<p>Seek out and embrace on-the-job learning and progression opportunities.</p> <p>Learn within a managed environment capitalising on personal curiosities and insights.</p>	
<p>Insight</p>	<p>Awareness of one's attitudes, preferred strategies and personal inclinations in different situations and how to manage them.</p> <p>Awareness that hospitality and catering events can have deep significance in other peoples' lives and the implications of this for their own role and actions.</p>	

<p>WG5 Retail, Administration and Office Work – Working Draft</p>		
<p>Subfield w/applicable</p>	<p>Retail, Administration and Office Work</p>	
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>This is a generalised award standard for vocational qualifications in retail, administrative and office work at level 3 of the NFQ. Qualifications relate to the ability to perform, under direction, basic (minimum requirements/standard) tasks in retail, administrative or office environments.</p>	
<p>Knowledge</p>	<p>Appreciate the importance of effective communication in contributing to successful engagement in the retail, administrative or office environments.</p> <p>Identify the elements of effective interaction with customers and service users in the retail, administrative or office environments.</p> <p>Familiarity with legal regulation applicable to initial employment role (under direction) in retail, administrative or office environments.</p>	

	<p>Understanding of product/ service to help customers choose / decide on purchases by demonstrating an ability to explain features of a range of everyday products / services in clear and accessible language.</p> <p>Recognise the value of effective design and visual displays (ergonomic) in both the retail and office environment to best support customer engagement.</p>	
<p>Skill</p>	<p>Demonstrate the minimum personal and self-efficacy skills required for initial employment (under direction) in retail, administrative or office environments such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core skills • Personal presentation/ deportment • Organisational • Time management • Observational • Creativity and initiative • Confidence and motivation <p>Demonstrate the minimum people skills required for initial employment (under direction) in retail, administrative or office environments such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core skills • Active listening and questioning • Communicating verbally and non-verbally • Negotiating • Team working • Recognising conflict and responding appropriately to it • Building customer rapport • Problem solving <p>Interpret and act in accordance with a range of standard operating procedures relevant to initial employment (under direction) in retail, administrative or office environments.</p>	

Context	Practise within a limited range of retail, administrative or office environments under direction: e.g. supermarket/office/warehouse.	
Role	Perform under direction and take limited responsibility in initial employment roles in retail, administrative or office environments; e.g. retail/office assistant.	
L2L	Learn within a supportive environment capitalising on personal strengths, curiosity, observations and insights.	
Insight	Demonstrate awareness of own and others' attitudes, inclinations and behaviour in response to different situations. Recognise the influence of attitudes, inclinations and behaviour on interactions, engagements and relationships with customers and colleagues.	

WG8 Care and Community Work – Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Care Work	Community Work
Purpose	This is a generalised award standard for qualifications for personal development to enhance family care and inclusion in the local community. It is not sufficient to qualify for an occupation in care or community work. Qualifications provide a basis for progression to higher NFQ level qualifications in these fields.	
Knowledge	Demonstrate an awareness of the basic concepts of care and how they impact on the individual and the community. Demonstrate awareness of the rudiments of relevant enabling scientific and technological underpinnings.	

	<p>Demonstrate practical awareness of the technology, materials and devices, resources (e.g. organisations), professional roles, and procedures involved in care of the individual or community.</p> <p>Understanding pharmacological and other prerequisites for the avoidance of harm.</p> <p>Understanding the regulatory environment and the limitations of own competence.</p> <p>Demonstrate an awareness of the social welfare system and how to access information on entitlements.</p> <p>Demonstrate familiarity with the language and terminology of care.</p>	
Skill	<p>Use direct observation and experience to develop and implement care plans for the individual or community.</p> <p>Apply a limited range of processes, procedures and methods to predictable caring situations.</p> <p>Use the basic principles of care to develop solutions to care-related problems.</p> <p>Evaluate the quality of own and others' care work.</p> <p>Critique own work and that of others.</p> <p>Record and maintain relevant information in a clear and understandable manner Observe good care practice.</p>	
Context	<p>Act in limited range of care contexts including care of family or in unregulated settings (normally under direction).</p>	

Role	Provide basic care in the family and/or in the community e.g. babysitting.	
L2L	Learn within a managed environment capitalising on personal curiosities and insight	
Insight	<p>Awareness of own attitudes, preferred strategies and personal inclinations in different situations and their influence on car</p> <p>Awareness of the role of care services in the wellbeing of individuals, communities and societ</p>	

WG9 ICT - Working Draft		
Subfield w/applicable	Care Work	Community Work
Purpose	Provides the learner with a foundation in (or introduction to) basic ICT skills for study at level 4 or for a range of employments where ICT is required to carry out the functions proper to the role rather than being the main focus of the role.	
Knowledge	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of the routine use and application of a broad range of information communication technology (ICT) tools and methods e.g. the range may include following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating systems • Using productivity applications • Hardware, devices and sensors • Cloud services • Internet • Networking • Social media • Security and privacy • File management • System maintenance <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the associated theory and concepts, including terminology.</p>	

Skill	<p>Apply a variety of familiar processes, methods, applications and technologies to complete frequently occurring tasks.</p> <p>Use problem-solving skills to solve predictable ICT problems</p> <p>Use creativity, experience, practical skills, initiative and observation to use ICT effectively in the work place, complying with acceptable work practices.</p>	
Context	Demonstrate an ability to apply ICT knowledge and skills within social, study or work contexts.	
Role	Apply a range of ICT skills with limited autonomy in familiar environments often under direction.	
L2L	<p>Learn within a managed learning environment, capitalising on personal curiosity and initiative.</p> <p>Identify knowledge and skills acquired.</p> <p>Reflect on learning.</p> <p>Reflect on the application of learning in a variety of roles and functions.</p>	
Insight	<p>Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and identifying future learning pathways.</p> <p>Demonstrate an appreciation of the far-reaching implications of ICT for society.</p>	

Sources Include:

EU Key Competences Framework 2006 (Revision commenced 2017)

PIAAC Conceptual Framework Nov 2009 Numeracy Expert Group

www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?doclanguage=en&cote=edu/wkp%282009%2914

England Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum

www.counton.org/resources/adultcc/pdfs/resource_130.pdf

Adult literacy core curriculum

rwp.excellencegateway.org.uk/resource/Adult+literacy+core+curriculum/pdf/

Scotland – Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework for Scotland

www.aloscotland.com/alo/files/ALNCurriculumFramework.pdf

USA Equipped for the Future eff.cls.utk.edu/

Australia Australian Core Skills Framework

www.industry.gov.au/skills/ForTrainingProviders/AustralianCoreSkillsFramework/Documents/ACSF_Document.pdf

11. Feedback on Broad Standards

The range of questions posed at the colloquium is found in Appendix 4. Feedback from the colloquium on broad standards included the following:

- Use the broad standards:
 - o as a starting point for the identification of competencies at each of the 3 levels when developing each standard
 - o to identify gaps in the current award stock. Conversely, current award stock may identify gaps in the broad standards draft
 - o as a benchmark for level when developing a programme
 - o as a starting point for the development of broad competencies
- Specify broad areas e.g. Retail, Agriculture etc. and tailor awards with transferable knowledge
- Define the vocational area and vocational pathways and establish vocational qualifications
- When using the broad learning outcomes, how will the knowledge, skill and competency of learners at levels 1 and 2 be recognised?
- Stress/highlight this consideration in future consultations to ensure smaller bundles of knowledge, skill and competencies are visible in process
- Vocational awards should be available at all levels
- Literacy and numeracy should be embedded in each of levels 1-3
- Where separate groups develop their own area, there is a need to ensure consistency of phraseology e.g. what is knowledge, insight or skills. Consistency of verbs needed
- To obtain full cooperation from all the different organisations, a greater breadth of input will be necessary
- Before consultation conduct a communication campaign to alert people to what is going on
- A roadshow helped to embed a strong sense of what the new modular system (i.e. CAS) means. More needs to be done to make this {broad standards} meaningful for users.
- When the CAS system was established many people were involved in module development. This knowledge [built up during migration] has now been lost.
- Support for FE is essential, just as there is support for Curriculum. Creative curriculum initiatives are needed.
- Questions were asked as to how QQI's most recent policies and processes (Validation and QA guidelines) will affect providers

In QQI's 2017 consultation on review of L1-L9 standards, the specific feedback received on L1-3 indicated that more information was needed as to how broad standards would be used and *'balance would be a concern'*, that they should not be too broad and should *'allow for transferability'*. There was a concern that the move to broad standards *'could have implications for FET learners'* and that they *'could make the objectives in the Action Plan for Education to 'upskill' and 'reskill' learners, difficult to achieve.'* The need for information and guidance on the use of broad standards will be crucial to their introduction in the FET sector.

12. Consultation on Broad Standards

Questions concerning on the draft broad standards at Level 1–3 are outlined below and are available in an online questionnaire <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BroadStandards>.

1. What are the main strengths of the introducing broad standards? For example:

- Relevance to level 1–3 education and training
- They allow flexibility in programme development
- Ease of use within Levels 1-3
- Sufficiently detailed to inform programme development

2. What are the main weaknesses of introducing broad standards? For example:

- Insufficient detail to inform programme development
- Difficulty of using within Levels 1-3
- Definitions not appropriate
- Narrow range of competences
- Too broad a range of competences
- Not relevant to education and training

3. What supports and guidance do you feel would be required to introduce broad standards at levels 1–3?

4. In what way could learners benefit from the move to broader standards?

13. Next Steps on Broad Standards

- Work on the broad standards at levels 1–3 is being treated as a parallel activity to CAS standards. The core competences will be re-drafted to reflect the revised EU Key Competences Framework.
- Use of broad standards has implications for the qualifications systems, programme development, provider operations, learner and other stakeholders understanding.
- Initial consultation will take place both online and in workshops.

The outcomes will be considered by the Standards Review Group with a view to recommending the next stage of work on the broad standards approach.

Appendix 1: This synopsis is useful in understanding the nature of the learning outcomes at levels 1-3.

Level 1

The learning outcomes relate to the performance of basic tasks in a controlled environment under supervision and the display of an ability to learn information and basic repetitive skills, as well as to sequence learning tasks. Literacy and numeracy achievements would correspond to those measured at the initial levels of international assessment systems.

Level 2

Key outcomes at this level are basic literacy and numeracy and the introduction to systematic learning. Learning outcomes relate to the ability to learn new skills and knowledge in a supervised environment and to carry out routine work under direction. Learning outcomes at this level are typically developmental rather than geared towards a specific occupation.

Level 3

Learning outcomes at this level relate to a low volume of practical capability and of knowledge of theory. The outcomes relate to the performance of relatively simple work and may be fairly quickly acquired. Outcomes at this level may also confer a minimum employability for low skilled occupations and include functional literacy and numeracy.

Source: [Outline National Framework of Qualifications - Determinations](#)

These broad statements are guides for learners, advisors, providers and where appropriate, employers in understanding what a person with a qualification at these levels has achieved. The levels are described in terms of general (i.e. non-subject specific) indicators of a person's knowledge, skill and competence (i.e. standards for their learning achievements).

Appendix 2: Profile of provision at levels 1-3

In broad terms, the purpose of qualifications at levels 1-3 is to assist and support learners from various backgrounds with no qualifications to return to the education and training environment to achieve certification at their own time and pace. In practice, levels 1 and 2 awards have been used to aid:

- learners with disabilities achieve recognition for their learning
- learners with low level knowledge and skills attainment get a step onto the ladder of qualifications and then progress from there.

Level 3 awards are linked not only to personal development but to the first rung on the vocational employment ladder.

Some features of provision at levels 1-3 are that providers include education and training boards (ETBs) special schools (DES-funded), providers of training for people with disabilities, and community/voluntary providers. Table 1 indicates certification data.

Table 1: Certification of major awards at levels 1-3

Level	Title	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
1	Communications	89	82	35	82	91	64	54	39	536
	General Learning	81	182	279	281	372	270	318	333	2116
2	General Learning	281	539	666	894	1253	1011	965	1130	6739
3	Employability Skills	-	14	326	1004	1427	1039	815	990	565
	General Learning	-	24	443	615	677	617	594	588	3558
	Information and Communication Technology	-	8	250	400	463	311	194	196	1822
	Science and Engineering Skills	-	-	3	4	25	9	1	3	45

Source: [QQI Infographics to Nov 2017](#)

Credit and Credit Accumulation

With the introduction of CAS, for the first time a consistent and structured credit system was developed across all FET provision. Credit helps define the volume of learning associated with an award. Major, special purpose and supplemental awards are structured in terms of an overall credit value. The metric is that 1 credit equates to up to 10 hours typical learner effort. Thus a major award ranges from 20 credits at level 1-120 credits at levels 5 and 6. Learners can accumulate credit, either through full time participation or part-time, by achieving the appropriate combination of components. Feedback on issues related to levels 1-3 indicate that learners find the volume of learning is challenging in both component and major awards as they progress.

Table 2: FET Credit Rules

Level	Major Awards Credit Values	Default Credit Values Minor Awards	Other Permitted Minor Award Credit Values	Special Purpose and Supplemental Award Credit Value Ranges
1	20	5	10	-
2	30	5	10	-
3	60	10	5,20	>5 and <60
4	90	10	5,15,20	>5 and <90
5	120	15	5,10,30	>5 and <120
6	120	15	5,10,30	>5 and <120

Source: QQI Policy on Determining Award Standards 2014.

Grading

Grading is not a feature of awards at levels 1-3. Following assessment, learner achievement is indicated as either 'Successful' or 'Referred'. 'Successful' indicates that the learner has achieved all the learning outcomes, within a narrow range of predictable and structured contexts. 'Referred' indicates more learning is required to enable satisfactory achievement of one or more learning outcomes.

Appendix 3: Level 1-3 Reference Group

Name	Organisation
Anne Walsh (Chair)	NUI Galway
Anne Higgins	Director, Airglorney Education Centre
Inez Bailey	NALA
Majella O'Shea,	Deputy CEO NCCA
Marian Lynch	SOLAS
Rosemarie McGill	ETBI Nominee - Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB
Finola Butler	Further Education Support Service
Phil O'Flaherty	DES
Bernie Brady	AONTAS
Helen Forde	Special Schools Principals Association
Siobhan Allen	Special Schools Principals Association
Geraldine Doyle	Prosper Fingal
John O'Doherty	Training & Occupational Support Services HSE
Martin Gormley	Donegal ETB
Liz O'Sullivan	CDET B
Siobhan McEntee	Cavan Monaghan ETB
Martina Needham	Donegal ETB
Denise Kelly	Education Officer, NCCA
Niamh O'Reilly	AONTAS
Terry Maguire	The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

Appendix 4: QQI Colloquium - review of QQI awards and standards at NFQ levels 1-3

Questions for Group Discussion

Q1. Suggest principles for using broad standards (being developed) to guide review and development activity considering how to use the broad standards:

- a) to condense and communicate a shared vision for these levels based on identified educational and training needs;
- b) to evaluate the suitability of the current stock of awards and standards;
- c) to develop more specific QQI awards standards where necessary;
- d) to develop programmes for validation directly against the broad standards;
- e) to quality assure the implementation of standards by providers of education and training programmes (note that they are responsible for assessment of learners)

Q2. Ideally, what standards-related infrastructure would you like to see established at levels 1-3?

You might consider:

- a) the need to ensure reasonable consistency within the qualifications system;
- b) the need for a sustainable distribution of responsibility for development activity;
- c) how infrastructure can facilitate necessary flexibility to adapt vocationally oriented programmes to varying situational needs;
- d) how to facilitate the development and maintenance of a system of responsive demand-led qualifications
- e) how to support progression pathways
- f) how to integrate with non-QQI qualifications whether or not these are recognised within the NFQ

Q3. Suggest some principles for

- a) systematically identifying knowledge, skill and competence needs and demands (including expressed social, cultural, economic needs);
- b) optimising bundles of learning outcomes to construct qualifications that efficiently respond to those demands directly and indirectly by creating conditions for the growth of progression pathways

Q4. Suggest ways in which QQI can apply its NFQ development, standards-determination and validation functions to help cultivate a qualifications environment that will encourage the growth of progression pathways?

Q5. Suggest principles for establishing vocational qualifications at NFQ level 3 designed to prepare for elementary occupations. Note: Such qualifications might be classed as 'special purpose' awards. Special purpose awards can be used as 'components' in major awards

Q6. Comment on the review methodology and the proposed next steps.

Q7. Suggest ways to capture expected transversal learning outcomes in the specification of modularised standards (i.e. when specifying minors) that support credit accumulation systems.

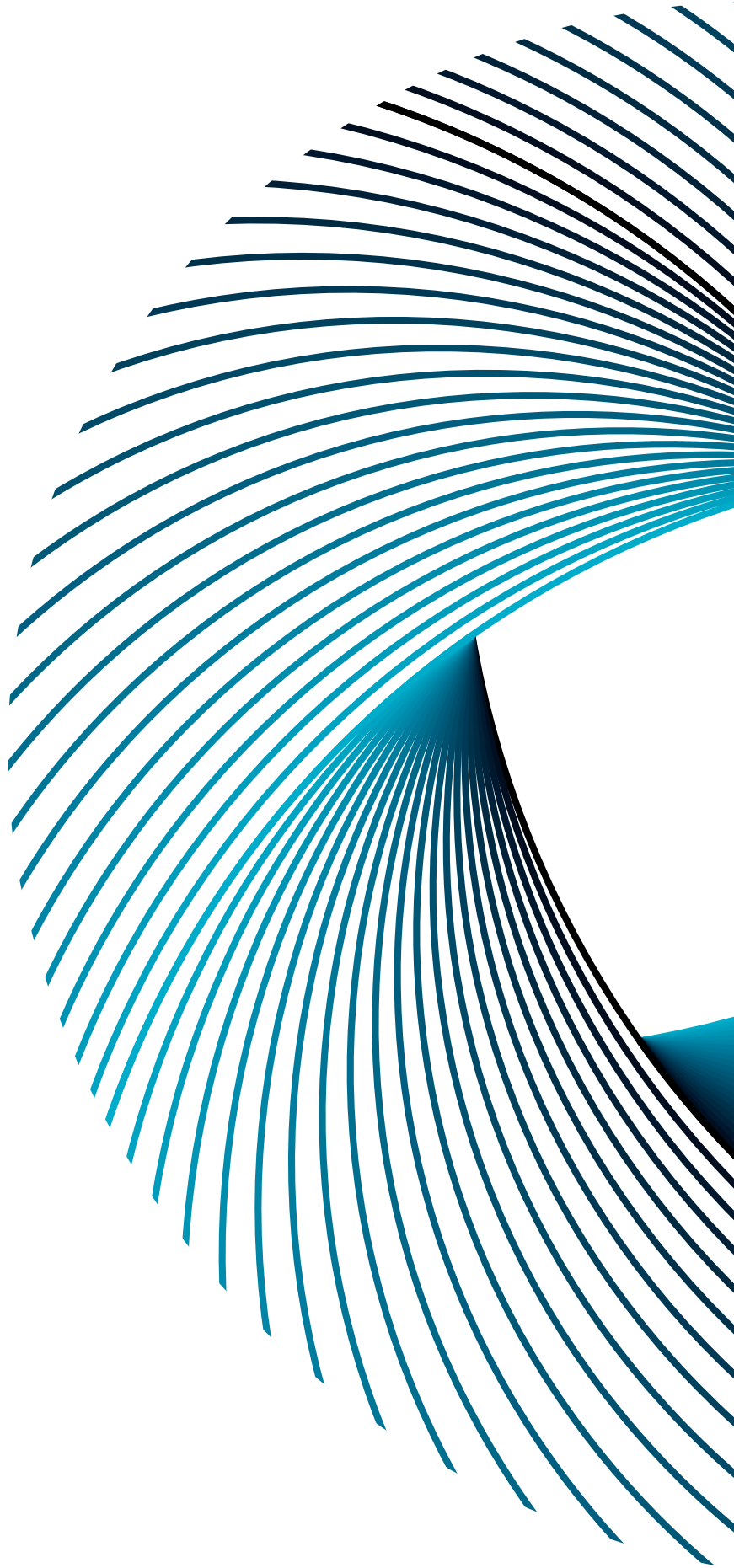
- Consider when the whole is less than that suggested by the sum of its parts.

Q8. Suggest how to consult stakeholders (especially providers, employers, workers and learners) on:

- a) the broad standards;
- b) the possible futures;
- c) the demand for qualifications.

Q9. Comment on the working draft versions of the broad standards under the headings:

- a) Level suitability;
- b) Content;
- c) Purpose;
- d) Consistency;
- e) Clarity (including for the purpose of consulting with employers, education and training providers, learner and employee representatives).





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