



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland

# QQI AWARDS STANDARDS.

Cultural Awareness and Expression  
Core Competence

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# 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 – CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION (CORE COMPETENCE) AT NFQ LEVELS 1 TO 4

<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of this broad award standard is to enable design of a variety of programmes enabling the learner to develop the relevant knowledge, skill and competence pertaining to cultural awareness and cultural expression.
<b>References</b>	<p><i>‘Competence in cultural awareness and expression involves having an understanding of and respect for how ideas and meaning are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms. It involves being engaged in understanding, developing and expressing one’s own ideas and sense of place or role in society in a variety of ways and contexts.’*</i></p> <p>Please note that this standard is aligned to the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. This particular competence relates specifically to the “Cultural Awareness and Expression” European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Key competences for lifelong learning, Publications Office, 2019, <a href="https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/291008">https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/291008</a></p> <p><b>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence*</b></p> <p><i>‘This competence requires knowledge of local, national, regional, European and global cultures and expressions, including their languages, heritage and traditions, and cultural products, and an understanding of how these expressions can influence each other as well as the ideas of the individual. It includes understanding the different ways of communicating ideas between creator, participant and audience within written, printed and digital texts, theatre, film, dance, games, art and design, music, rituals, and architecture, as well as hybrid forms. It requires an understanding of one’s own developing identity and cultural heritage within a world of cultural diversity and how arts and other cultural forms can be a way to both view and shape the world.</i></p> <p><i>Skills include the ability to express and interpret figurative and abstract ideas, experiences and emotions with empathy, and the ability to do so in a range of arts and other cultural forms. Skills also include the ability to identify and realise opportunities for personal, social or commercial value through the arts and other cultural forms and the ability to engage in creative processes, both as an individual and collectively.</i></p> <p><i>It is important to have an open attitude towards, and respect for, diversity of cultural expression together with an ethical and responsible approach to intellectual and cultural ownership. A positive attitude also includes a curiosity about the world, an openness to imagine new possibilities, and a willingness to participate in cultural experiences.’*</i></p> <p>*EU Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, Official Journal of the European Union, 2018. C_2018189EN.01000101.xml (europa.eu)</p>

**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.



## KNOWLEDGE

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	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	Mainly concrete in reference and with some elements of abstraction or theory
	The learner should be able to show the following:	The learner should be able to show the following:	The learner should be able to show the following:	The learner should be able to show the following:
<b>Understanding Cultural Awareness and Expression</b>	Basic knowledge of cultural awareness and expression, including their own culture and sense of identity.	General knowledge of cultural awareness and expression, including their own culture and sense of identity.	Moderately broad knowledge of cultural awareness and expression, including their own culture and sense of identity.	Broad knowledge of cultural awareness and expression, including their own culture and sense of identity.  Understanding of culture as a construct and its place for the individual, society and life.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	Basic knowledge of cultural heritage, for example music, art, architecture, archaeology, food, sport and language.	General knowledge of local, national and European cultural heritage and forms of expression.	Moderately broad knowledge of local, national and European cultural heritage and forms of expression.	Broad knowledge of local, national and European cultural heritage and forms of expression.
<b>Knowledge of cultural activities / cultural works</b>	Basic knowledge of cultural activities, forms of expression and major cultural works.	General knowledge of cultural activities, forms of expression and major cultural works.	Moderately broad knowledge of a limited range of major cultural works, including popular contemporary (modern) culture.	Understand the significance of a range of major cultural works, including popular contemporary (modern) culture.



<p><b>Understanding of the creative expression of ideas</b></p>	<p>Basic understanding of the creative expression of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas</li> <li>• experiences and</li> <li>• emotions</li> </ul> <p>in media, such as music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts.</p>	<p>Basic general knowledge of the creative expression of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas</li> <li>• experiences and</li> <li>• emotions</li> </ul> <p>in media, such as music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts.</p>	<p>Able to show awareness of how the creative expression of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas</li> <li>• experiences and</li> <li>• emotions</li> </ul> <p>in a range of media (including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts) contributes to and effects the world we live in.</p>	<p>Awareness and understanding of how the creative expression of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas</li> <li>• experiences and</li> <li>• emotions</li> </ul> <p>in a range of media (including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts) contributes to and effects the world we live in.</p>
<p><b>Cultural expression</b></p>	<p>Basic awareness of the familiar cultural forms of expression such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• speaking</li> <li>• writing</li> <li>• singing</li> <li>• painting</li> <li>• dancing</li> <li>• acting or</li> <li>• doing.</li> </ul>	<p>Awareness of the role and importance of cultural activities and forms of expression in life, including familiar cultural forms of expression.</p>	<p>Awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of different cultural activities</li> <li>• the role and importance of cultural activities and forms of expression in life and society.</li> </ul>	<p>Awareness and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the variety and differences of cultural activities</li> <li>• the role and importance of cultural activities and forms of expression in life and society</li> <li>• the relevance of cultural expression.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Understanding diversity</b></p>	<p>Basic knowledge of cultural differences.</p>	<p>General knowledge of cultural differences.</p>	<p>Understanding of the nature and value of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect for others</li> <li>• being open to cultural and language differences</li> <li>• different cultural expression, aesthetic (artistic) factors and cultures.</li> </ul>	<p>Understand and appreciate the nature and value of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect for others</li> <li>• being open to cultural and language differences</li> <li>• different cultural expression, aesthetic (artistic) factors and cultures</li> <li>• cultural and language differences in Europe and other regions of the world</li> <li>• how cultural differences enrich their own life and improves their communication with others.</li> </ul>



## KNOWLEDGE

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
<b>Appreciation of art, diversity and culture</b>	Able to recognise a small number of familiar works of art and cultural activities.	Able to appreciate a range of works of art and cultural activities.	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appreciate and compare works of art and cultural activities</li> <li>investigate cultural phenomena using individual, group and universal criteria.</li> </ul>	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appreciate and evaluate works of art and cultural activities</li> <li>interpret cultural phenomena using individual, group and universal criteria.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-expression and points of view</b>	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express feelings or ideas in different and inclusive ways (including everyone), for instance, speaking, writing, singing, painting, dancing, acting.</li> <li>identify their own creative and expressive points of view.</li> </ul>	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express feelings or ideas in different and inclusive ways</li> <li>recognise the role of cultural awareness and expression on their own point of view.</li> </ul>	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express feelings or ideas in different and inclusive ways</li> <li>identify cultural factors that affect how we express ourselves</li> <li>identify how their own and others' points of view/ perspectives are affected by cultural awareness and expression.</li> </ul>	Able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express feelings or ideas in different and inclusive ways</li> <li>recognise how ethical, social, cultural and economic dimensions effect how we express ourselves in different ways</li> <li>evaluate how their creative and expressive points of view relate to the opinions of others.</li> </ul>



<b>Creative skills</b>	<p>Show basic practical and creative skills.</p>	<p>Show a limited range of basic practical and creative skills which can be used in structured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal,</li> <li>• social and</li> <li>• learning settings.</li> </ul>	<p>Show a limited range of practical and creative skills which can be used in a variety of settings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal</li> <li>• social</li> <li>• community and</li> <li>• learning settings.</li> </ul>	<p>Show a broad range of practical and creative skills which can be used in a variety of settings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal</li> <li>• social</li> <li>• community</li> <li>• learning and work settings.</li> </ul>
<b>Engage in cultural activity and cultural expression</b>	<p>Take part in a cultural activity.</p> <p>Practise a form of cultural expression.</p> <p>Observe a limited range of cultural heritage and traditions in daily life.</p>	<p>Take part in a limited range of cultural activity.</p> <p>Practise in a form of cultural expression.</p> <p>Explore a limited range of cultural heritage and traditions in daily life.</p>	<p>Take part in, and reflect on, a limited range of cultural activity.</p> <p>Practise a form of cultural expression.</p> <p>Express opinions, using appropriate language, on different cultural activities and forms of expression.</p> <p>Identify a range of cultural phenomena.</p>	<p>Take part in, and reflect on, a wide range of cultural activities.</p> <p>Practise a form of cultural expression.</p> <p>Express opinions on a range of cultural heritage and traditions using appropriate language and forms of expression.</p> <p>Select and explain a cultural phenomenon.</p>
<b>Creativity through artistic self-expression</b>	<p>Express creativity by expressing myself in a creative way.</p>	<p>Express creativity by expressing myself in a creative way and by taking part in cultural life.</p>	<p>Express and reflect on creativity by expressing themselves in a creative way and taking part in cultural life.</p> <p>Act creatively in a range of different cultural contexts.</p>	<p>Express and reflect on creativity by expressing themselves in a creative way and taking part in cultural life.</p> <p>Develop their creative range (aesthetic capacity) through artistic self-expression and taking part in cultural life.</p>



## KNOWLEDGE

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
Context (including cultural expression)	Act creatively in a clearly defined cultural settings.	Act creatively in a clearly defined cultural setting.	Act creatively in different cultural settings.	Act creatively in a range of loosely defined and unpredictable cultural settings.

## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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
Formal / nonformal settings Inter-Cultural and Multicultural role	With support, show appropriate cultural awareness and expression within a formal education setting.	Show appropriate cultural awareness and expression within a formal education setting.	Show appropriate cultural awareness and expression in formal, non-formal and informal settings.  Act appropriately in inter-cultural and multicultural settings.  Participate with others to create own cultural identity.	Show appropriate cultural awareness and expression within formal, non-formal and informal settings.  Act appropriately in intercultural and multicultural settings.  Work with others to promote cultural awareness and expression.



### KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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
	Have a positive attitude to learning.	Have an open and positive attitude to learning.	With support, actively take up learning opportunities to increase knowledge about culture, difference and our multicultural world.	Take appropriate responsibility for your own learning and actively take up learning opportunities to increase knowledge about culture, differences and our multicultural world.

### KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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
Attitudes regarding cultural awareness and expression	Show a positive attitude and curiosity about the world.	Show a positive attitude and curiosity about culture and the role of cultural difference in the world.	Act with an open and positive attitude towards culture and different cultural expressions.	Show respect to differences in cultural expression, curiosity about the world and imagine new possibilities.



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