Understanding the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
# National Framework of Qualifications

## NFQ Diagram

### Using the NFQ
- Learners
- Advisors
- Employers and Recruiters
- Providers

### Understanding the NFQ
- Levels
- Major Awards
- Non-Major Awards
- Awarding Bodies

### Development of the NFQ
- The NFQ and Mobility
  - Meta-Frameworks
  - EQF
- EHEA - Bologna
- Europass
- Naric Ireland

### The NFQ and Quality Assurance
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland
- Further Information
NFQ Diagram
What is the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)?

» A framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications in Ireland

» One framework to encompass all awards for all aspects of education and training

» A simple, transparent frame of reference
Development of the NFQ

» Promote the transparency of Ireland’s qualifications system

» Need for a more flexible system of qualifications

» Need for portability of qualifications – into and out of country

» European policy trends and agreements – Lisbon, Copenhagen and Bologna, European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
USING THE NFQ

LEARNERS

ADVISORS

EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS

PROVIDERS
LEARNERS

» Help plan education and training and career progression

» Make informed choices, know progression routes available

» Qualifications in the NFQ are recognised nationally and internationally
Advisors

- Support learners to make their existing level knowledge, skill or competence visible and valuable
- Use the NFQ to explain Ireland’s system of national qualifications
- Assist learners to identify pathways toward the qualifications that they are interested in achieving
EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS

» Understand Ireland’s system of qualifications and how qualifications can be compared

» Use the NFQ to indicate qualifications requirements associated with work performance

» Provide fair recognition of qualifications and so improve the quality of recruitment processes
» Providers can use the NFQ to develop courses and qualifications that are nationally and internationally recognised

» Providers can use the NFQ to signal confidence in the quality of their courses and qualifications

» Providers can use the NFQ as a reference point for validating prior learning and achievement
UNDERSTANDING THE NFQ

LEVELS

MAJOR AWARDS

NON-MAJOR AWARDS

NAMED AWARDS

AWARDING BODIES

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION (SEC)

QUALITY AND QUALIFICATIONS IRELAND (QQI)

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY (IOTS)

UNIVERSITIES
NON-MAJOR AWARDS
NAMED AWARDS

» A ‘named award’ is what a learner receives

» A named award is for achievement in a specific field of learning – e.g. Honours Bachelor Degree in Electrical Engineering, or Level 5 Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Education

» A named award is associated with a level in the Framework through the award-type to which it belongs

» Named awards are developed by the awarding bodies
THE NFQ AND MOBILITY

META-FRAMEWORKS  EQF  EHEA

EUROPASS  NARIC IRELAND

www.QQI.ie  www.nfq.ie
META-FRAMEWORKS

» Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, the ‘Bologna Framework’
  » Verification of compatibility with the Irish national framework – completed November 2006

» European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)
  » Irish Referencing process completed in May 2009
EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA ‘BOLOGNA’ FRAMEWORK
EUROPASS
» The NFQ sets out trusted pathways through our national qualifications system.

» All qualifications included in the NFQ are underpinned by robust quality assurance arrangements.

» QQI quality assures providers of courses leading to NFQ awards.

» You can be sure that your NFQ award will be recognised at home and abroad.
» QQI is responsible for maintaining Ireland’s NFQ

» QQI is Ireland’s Designated National Coordination Point for the European Qualifications Framework

» QQI is Ireland’s National Europass Centre

» QQI is Ireland’s National Academic Recognition Information Centre providing advice on the recognition of foreign qualifications
Further Information

- www.nfq.ie
- www.europass.ie
- www.naric.ie
- www.QQI.ie