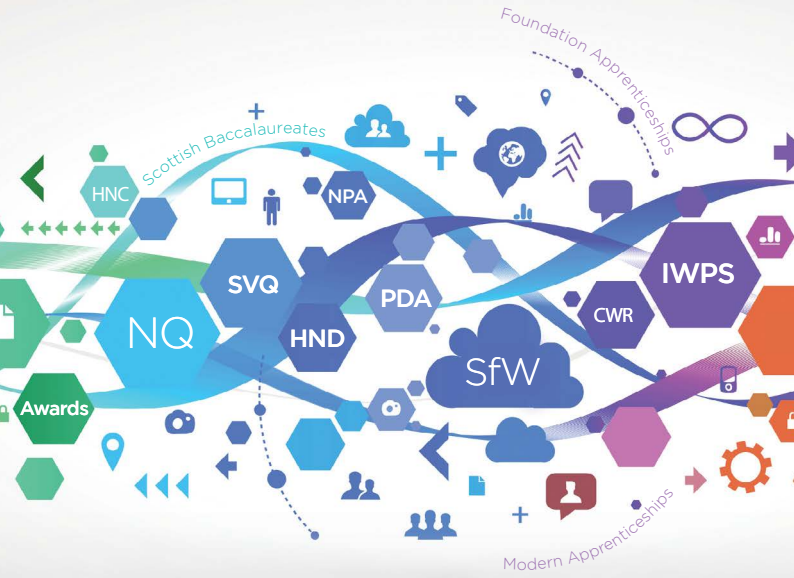
Guide to **Scottish Qualifications**



SQA

Scottish Qualifications explained

SQA qualifications are designed and structured to support people on their individual learning journeys, and give Scottish businesses a competitive advantage by enhancing the quality of the workforce.

At first sight, the Scottish qualifications system might seem complex, but it is really very straightforward. Qualifications sit at various levels allowing the learner to make strides from one qualification to the next, or to change paths at an equivalent level, which gives everyone the opportunity to achieve their full and true potential.

SQA has a wide range of robust, relevant and respected qualifications which are designed in partnership with industry experts to ensure learners gain the skills and experience needed in the workplace.

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk

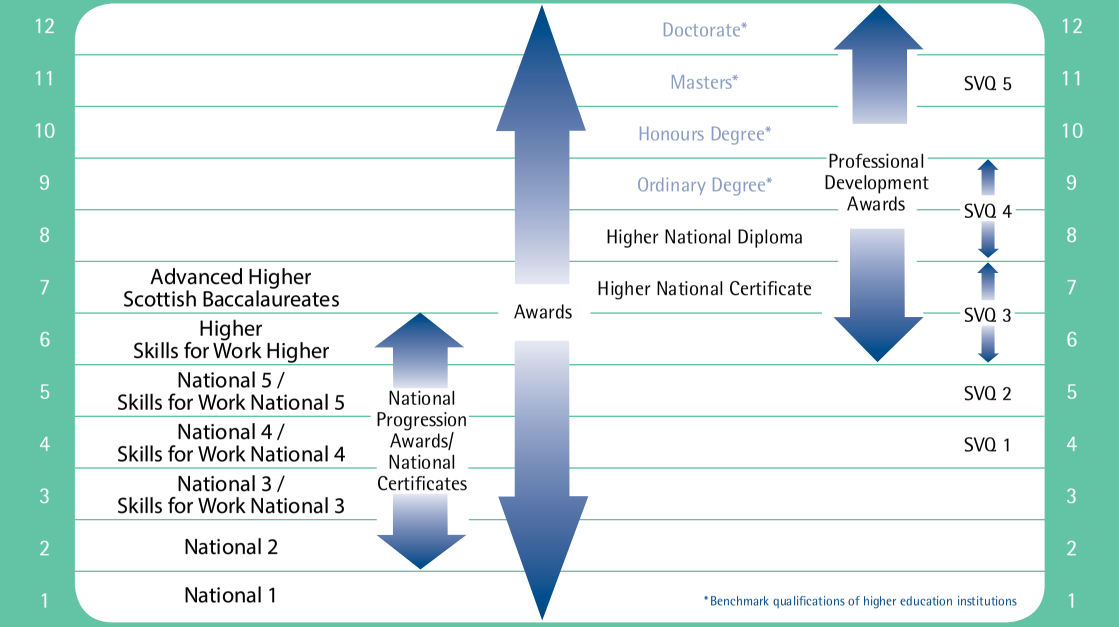
SCQF

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) helps to make the relationships between qualifications clearer. It covers achievements such as those from school, college, university, and many work-based qualifications. Qualifications in the SCQF are compared using two measures: level and credit. The level of a qualification shows how difficult the learning is, and the amount of credit shows the size of the qualification.

This ready reckoner shows SQA Qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

SQA Qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

scqf scottish credit and qualifications framework



Ready Reckoner for SQA Qualifications in the SCQF

Customer Contact Centre 0345 279 1000 customer@sqa.org.uk

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) helps people to understand and compare different qualifications in Scotland.

It does this by using two measures:

Levels (1–12) show how complex the learning of a qualification is.

Credit points indicate the volume of learning required to achieve a qualification.

One SCQF credit point represents 10 notional learning hours.

SQA qualifications are developed using SCQF level and credit points. This information is shown on the Scottish Qualifications Certificate. The Ready Reckoner shows the level and credit points for SQA Units, Courses and Group Awards.

scqf
scottish credit and qualifications framework

www.scqf.org.uk

Units

Type	SCQF credit points
Higher National Units SCQF levels 5-12	8
National Units SCQF level 7	8
National Units SCQF levels 1-6	6
SVQ Units SCQF levels 4-12	varies

National qualifications

	SCQF level	SCQF credit points
Advanced Higher	7	32
Higher	6	24
National 5	5	24
National 4	4	24
National 3	3	18
National 2	2	18
National 1	1	6

Scottish Baccalaureates

SCQF level	SCQF credit points
7	104

Group Awards

	SCQF level	SCQF credit points
Higher National Diploma	8	240
Higher National Certificate	7	96
National Certificate	4-6	72
National Certificate	2-3	54
Awards[1]	1-12	varies
ProfessionalDevelopmentAwards[1]	6-12	varies
National Progression Awards[1]	2-6	varies

Scottish Vocational Qualifications[2]

	SCQF level
SVQ 5	11
SVQ 4	8-9
SVQ 3	6-7
SVQ 2	5
SVQ 1	4

[1] These are flexible Group Awards. SCQF credit points will vary according to the number of credits that they are made up of.

[2] Please refer to SQA's website for information on SVQs. The allocation of SCQF credit points and levels to SVQs will be undertaken as and when they are revised.

More information on the SCQF, and SQA's interactive ready reckoner, can be found at **www.sqa.org.uk/scqf**

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National Qualifications

National Qualifications (NQs) are one of the most important types of qualification in Scotland. Almost everyone leaving school or college today has one or more NQ.

NQs are taken by students in secondary schools and colleges (and some training providers). They can also be taken by adult learners.

They cover subjects to suit everyone's interests and skills, from Chemistry to Construction, History to Hospitality, and Computing to Care.

Range of NQs available:

- **National Units**
- **National Courses**
- **Skills for Work Courses**
- **Scottish Baccalaureates**

National Qualifications (NQ)

National 1 units

National 1 units are assessed as pass or fail by a teacher or lecturer.

They could lead to:

- National 2 courses
- Awards at SCQF level 1 or 2

National 2 courses

National 2 courses are made up of units which are assessed as pass or fail by a teacher or lecturer.

Learners need to pass all units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to:

- National 3 courses
- Awards at SCQF level 2 or 3

National 3 courses

National 3 courses are made up of units which are assessed as pass or fail by a teacher or lecturer.

Learners need to pass all units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to:

- Related courses at National 4
- Awards at SCQF level 3 or 4
- National Certificates (NC) or National Progression Awards (NPA)
- Employment opportunities

National 4 courses

National 4 courses are made up of units, including an added value unit which assesses learners' performance across the course. These units are assessed as pass or fail by a teacher or lecturer and learners need to pass all units, including the added value unit, to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to:

- National 5 courses
- units or awards at SCQF level 4 or 5
- National Certificate (NC) or National Progression Award (NPA)
- Modern Apprenticeships or other employment opportunities

National 5 courses

National 5 courses are assessed through a question paper (exam) or coursework, or both — most of which will be marked by SQA. In some subjects, coursework is marked by a teacher or lecturer. The courses are graded A to D or 'no award'.

They could lead to:

- Higher courses
- units or awards at SCQF level 5 or 6
- National Certificate (NC) or National Progression Award (NPA)
- Foundation Apprenticeship
- Modern Apprenticeship at SCQF level 6

Higher Courses

Higher courses are made up of units* and a course assessment. The course assessment involves a question

paper (exam) or coursework, or both — most of which will be marked by SQA. In some subjects, coursework is marked by a teacher or lecturer.

The courses are graded A to D or 'no award' and learners need to pass all units plus the course assessment to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to:

- Advanced Higher courses
- units or awards at SCQF level 6 or 7
- National Certificate (NC) or National Progression Award (NPA)
- Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Undergraduate Degree
- Modern Apprenticeship at SCQF level 7

Advanced Higher courses

Advanced Higher courses are made up of units* and a course assessment. The course assessment involves a question paper (exam) or coursework, or both — most of which will be marked by SQA. In some subjects, coursework is marked by a teacher or lecturer.

The courses are graded A to D or 'no award' and learners need to pass all units plus the course assessment to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to:

- Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Undergraduate Degree
- Technical Apprenticeship at SCQF level 8

**Units will be removed from Higher courses from 2018-19 and Advanced Higher courses from 2019-20. For more information, visit www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges*

National Qualifications

Skills for Work Courses

Skills for Work courses are designed to introduce learners to the demands and expectations of the world of work.

They are available in a variety of areas such as construction, hairdressing and hospitality.

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk/skillsforwork

Scottish Baccalaureates

Scottish Baccalaureates are qualifications at SCQF level 7, and are available to learners in S5 and S6. There are Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science, and Social Sciences. They are awarded as a pass or distinction.

The Scottish Baccalaureate contains an Interdisciplinary Project which allows learners to develop and show evidence of initiative, responsibility, and independent working — skills of real value in the world of higher education.

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk/baccalaureates

Ushare — Join the community

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SQA

Qualifications for Work

Introduction to Work Place Skills

The Introduction to Work Place Skills (IWPS) is a qualification designed specifically for young people aged 16-19 that have a positive "can do" attitude and are preparing for the world of work, but need some support to develop their core skills and employability skills. Young people will get an employer assessed work experience placement of a minimum of 150 hours.

Successful completion of this qualification gives the young person evidence of their core skills and experience, from which they can progress on to the Certificate of Work Readiness, further training, education or employment.

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk/introtowork

Qualifications For Work

Certificate of Work Readiness (CWR)

The Certificate of Work Readiness is an award designed specifically for young people who are ready for their first experience of the world of work, but need some guided support. The certificate includes a unique employer assessed "real life" work experience placement, providing a meaningful qualification and a credible standard employers can recognise and trust.

Successful completion of this award offers the young person greatly improved job prospects and transferable skills in self evaluation, planning and goal setting that can be applied to any workplace.

This qualification is available through colleges and training providers working in partnership with employers.

Find out more at www.sqa.org.uk/workready

Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships are new, work-based learning qualifications for secondary school pupils and enable pupils in S4 to S6 to complete elements of a Modern Apprenticeship while still at school. Depending on the subject they choose, pupils will study towards Foundation Apprenticeships alongside their other subjects, but they'll also spend part of the school week at college or with a local employer. As well as working towards industry-recognised qualifications they will develop skills, experience and capability in a live business environment.

Find out more at www.apprenticeships.scot/foundation-apprenticeships

Modern Apprenticeships

Modern Apprenticeships offer anyone aged over 16 paid employment combined with the opportunity to train for jobs at craft, technician and management level. They are designed to help create a high-calibre workforce. They are supported by the Confederation of Business and Industry, the Trade Union Congress and a wide range of employers. All the Modern Apprenticeship frameworks are developed by the industry or sector in which they will be implemented.

An overview on Modern Apprenticeships is available on the SQA website (www.sqa.org.uk/modernapprenticeships) and specific information on individual Modern Apprenticeships can be found at www.apprenticeships.scot

Awards

SQA Awards are characterised by their flexible nature and are nationally recognised. These Awards are suitable for a wide range of people at different stages.

They provide learners with opportunities to acquire skills, recognise achievement and promote confidence through independent thinking and positive attitudes, while motivating learners to be successful and participate positively in the wider community.

The level of Award attained depends on the quality of response and the amount of support received by the learner.

Find out more about SQA s Awards at **www.sqa.org.uk/awards**

Wider Achievement

SQA Awards are designed to recognise Wider Achievement and the development of skills which will help learners to succeed in today's world. Wider Achievement recognises the life and work skills that come from a wide range of activities which can include sport, mentoring, voluntary work or fundraising activities whether they take place at school, college or elsewhere.

We have a number of SQA Awards from SCQF levels 1 to 6 — all suitable for a broad range of learners.

Find out more at
www.sqa.org.uk/widerachievement

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are based on national standards which are drawn up by people from industry, commerce and education. There are SVQs for nearly all occupations in Scotland, from forestry to IT, management to catering, journalism to construction.

Discover how you can gain paid employment combined with the opportunity to train for jobs at craft, technician and management level.

Find out more at **www.sqa.org.uk/svq**

Professional Development Awards

Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are aimed at developing the skills of those already in professional employment.

They are principally designed for those already in a career or vocation who wish to extend or broaden their skills base. They may also be embedded within another qualification such as HNC/HND.

Find out more at **www.sqa.org.uk/pda**

National Certificates and National Progression Awards

National Certificates (NCs) and National Progression Awards (NPAs) provide those preparing for work with opportunities to develop skills much sought after by employers.

National Certificates (NCs)

NCs are designed to prepare people for employment, career development or progression to more advanced study at HNC/HND level. They also aim to develop a range of transferable knowledge including Core Skills.

These certificates are aimed at 16-18 year olds or adults in education and are at SCQF Levels 2 to 6. Each one has specific aims relating to a subject or occupational area.

Find out more: **www.sqa.org.uk/nc**

National Progression Awards (NPAs)

NPAs are aimed at assessing a defined set of skills and knowledge in specialist vocational areas — linking to National Occupational Standards, which are the basis of SVQs.

Available at SCQF Levels 2 to 6, NPAs are successfully delivered in partnership between schools, colleges, employers and training providers in a variety of sectors.

Find out more at **www.sqa.org.uk/npa**

Higher National Qualifications

HNs are offered by colleges, universities and many other training centres. Higher National Certificates (HNCs), Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are specially designed to meet the needs of employers.

HN Qualifications can also give candidates access to the 2nd or 3rd year entry at University and membership to professional bodies.

Find out more at **www.sqa.org.uk/hn**

Working with SQA

SQA is committed to the future of education, skills and training. In an ever-changing learning and skills landscape, we value our strong relationships with employers and industry. Working together we can deliver the right skills for Scotland and change lives through learning.

Every business working with SQA has a dedicated Account Manager – one point of contact who will take the time to get to know you and how you work, and who understands the particular challenges in your area.

Get in touch, we're here to help.

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SQA

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SQA is committed to developing and maintaining qualifications that meet the needs of Scotland's learners, communities and economy.

Our aim is to make it easy for our customers to offer industry-leading, internationally-recognised qualifications by providing a level of service that works every step of the way.

Get in touch today.

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