

Progression Routes Guide

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About this guide

This guide helps potential users of SQA qualifications to identify routes towards the career path or job of their choice by selecting from the training and qualifications pathways available. It aims to provide detailed and accurate information about relationships and pathways between qualifications, jobs and careers.

The guide is also likely to be of interest to curriculum developers, for example in further education colleges. The comprehensive information it contains about current provision and pathways should be of help with decisions about what to offer and whether to develop new provision.

Some career areas, for example prison services, are not covered in detail because most or all of the provision in these areas is only suitable for people in employment. This also means that the layout for these areas does not follow the standard pattern. The first step for those interested in such careers would be to find out how to obtain employment in the sector, rather than to identify the qualifications which they might need to take once they had a job. There are more details in the guide.

The main user groups of this guide

This guide is intended to be immediately accessible to careers advisers, and college and school guidance staff. Prospective candidates are likely to need some help from their advisers in understanding and interpreting the diagrams, though we are assuming that they will have consulted one of the careers guidance packages available and will have at least a broad idea of their chosen career.

The people to whom the guide applies are likely to fall into three main categories: school leavers; adult returners (people considering a change of career due to redundancy, unemployment, or a break from paid employment); and candidates already undertaking further education courses.

The information should also be of interest to people in employment, but the guide has not been organised with their needs primarily in mind. There are a number of reasons for this: diagrams need to be kept as simple as possible if they are to be comprehensible; employees' options depend heavily on their employer's decisions about training; and part-time or distance learning options are likely to be of more interest to them than full-time routes.

Some pointers for users with different needs

Readers of the guide will be at different stages in their decision making about jobs and careers.

Those who have only a general idea of the job or career they are seeking (for example, 'I am interested in engineering') should begin by selecting a progression family and then looking at the career options within this.

Other readers with more definite ideas or a specific job in mind (for example, 'I want to be a motor mechanic' or 'I am interested in mechanical engineering') can go straight to that career area.

Readers who plan to undertake a specific qualification, for example, an HNC in Mechanical Engineering should locate the progression family to which the qualification belongs. This would enable them to find out more about the jobs, qualifications and further training to which it might lead.

People who want to establish where the qualifications that they already hold (eg an HNC) might lead them, should start by locating the progression family to which the qualification belongs. This would show the career area to which their qualification was relevant.

Main Section

The main section of the guide consists of diagrams, lists of qualifications, and limited amounts of text about pathways and the relationships between qualifications and jobs. These diagrams are grouped together in 'progression families'.

Progression families cover broad career areas and focus on (and highlight) links between qualifications, jobs and careers, and opportunities for progression in career areas. To clarify the main options and links, the progression families have been further broken down into career options representing different types of work. For example, the family of Care has been divided into health care, social care, and child care and education.

Since many candidates use SQA qualifications as a basis for gaining entry to degree programmes or professional training, other qualifications have also been included in the diagrams where they are relevant. These include qualifications from higher education and from professional bodies.

The progression families

Most of the progression families use similar sets of diagrams.

1. Career Options

The first diagram gives a broad overview of the different types of work available in the progression family. Information about jobs, qualifications, and pathways to jobs, careers and further training is organised according to these career options. Between them the career options cover all the major pathways to jobs and careers in the progression family.

2. Jobs and careers

This shows the main jobs for which SQA qualifications provide relevant training. As job titles often vary between different sectors of an industry (and even between companies) the ones given in the diagram illustrate the type and level of jobs available rather than covering all possibilities. Where an SQA qualification provides entry or credit towards professional training (for example, as a nurse or architect) these occupations have also been included in the diagram.

3. Qualifications and jobs

This diagram:

- ◆ Shows which qualifications are appropriate for particular jobs.
- ◆ Explains how qualifications in the area are related to each other in terms of level.

'Level' here means the academic level of qualifications, as well as the level and complexity of the skills and competence which the qualification programme develops.

4. Qualifications

This shows a full list of the relevant SQA qualifications that are available in each category in each career area in the progression family.

The lists include qualifications for which candidates can now register, as well as qualifications which have reached the end of their validation/accreditation period within the last two years. The lists also cover qualifications developed and offered by single centres, as well as those developed by a much larger group of centres.

Many colleges give their own titles to programmes of National Units. These have been left out of the lists to keep them to a manageable size. Information about this type of qualification may be found in college prospectuses.

5. Notes on entry to jobs and careers

These notes for each career area give advice on ways into jobs and careers for school leavers and adult returners, and give likely entry requirements. For example, they indicate whether or not there are likely to be opportunities for school-leavers to find employment direct from school, and whether they should be considering training opportunities in the FE and HE sectors. Opportunities for direct entry into employment for adult returners are also briefly considered, along with suggestions as to the most appropriate route for this group into further training or education.

Finally, information is provided about access to SVQs in the career area — whether they be accessed, for example, through college training programmes, or are only accessible to those in employment.

The example overleaf shows the relationships between qualifications and jobs in administration (which is the Business, Public Administration and Management family). For example, it shows that holders of either Courses or SGAs at Higher level might aim for employment as a trainee administrative officer. (It does not, of course, guarantee such a job!) The SVQ appropriate to a post as trainee administrative officer, after a period of work experience and in-service training, would be SVQ level 2 in Administration.

A cautionary note

Diagrams are useful for clarifying and presenting relationships and pathways but they do have some disadvantages — in particular they can over-simplify relationships and make pathways look straightforward and guaranteed.

Opportunities for progression are not guaranteed. Individual colleges and universities each have their own admissions policies and entry requirements for different courses. For example, one university may accept an HNC for entry to a degree programme, another may require that candidates achieve a certain number of HN Units with merit before offering a place. Entry is often competitive — meeting the minimum entry requirements may not be sufficient to guarantee a place.

In case of doubt, candidates or their advisers should always check with the educational institution before making firm plans.

Qualifications and Jobs

Where diagrams indicate that a qualification is appropriate for a particular job this does not mean that the holder will necessarily enter the workforce at this level (or, indeed, be successful in finding employment). A considerable amount of work experience and in-service training may also be necessary to obtain employment of this type. This is particularly true for those with the more academic type of qualifications, for example, school leavers with Highers or new graduates.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

The document *An Introduction to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework* (September 2001, AE1243) provides an overview of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and its main features. It also describes how the framework will help to address issues regarding lifelong learning and increasing participation in education.

Further information may also be obtained from the SCQF website: www.scqf.org.uk

3. Qualifications and jobs

School, Further Education and Higher Education awards

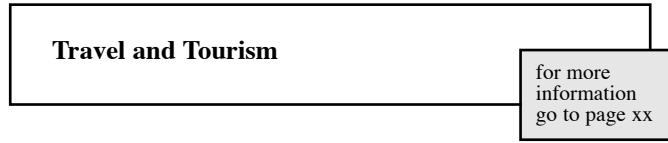
Workbased Award	Type of job		
SVQ 5 Management	Company Secretary Senior Officer (Public Sector) Senior Manager	Degree Business Administration Information Management Business Law Public Administration	Courses and SGAs at Advanced Higher
SVQ 4 Administration Management	Administrative Section Manager Administrative Team Supervisor Administrative Officer/ Assistant Personal Assistant	HND Administration and Information Management HND Administration and Information Management	Courses at Higher
SVQ 3 Administration Management	Trainee Administrative Officer	SGA at Higher Level	Courses at Int 2
SVQ 2 Administration	Administrative Assistant	SGA at Int 2 Level	Courses at Int 1
SVQ 1 Administration	Trainee Administrative Assistant/ Clerical Officer	SGA at Int 1 Level	Clusters at Acc 3
		Skillstart, Lifestart and Workstart and SGAs at Acc 2 & Acc 3	Clusters at Acc 2
		School and College programmes of National Units	Standard Grade Credit General Foundation

How to use this guide

Getting started

This guide is organised by broad career areas, eg Travel and Tourism. The contents page for each family tells you where to go to for more information on a particular area.

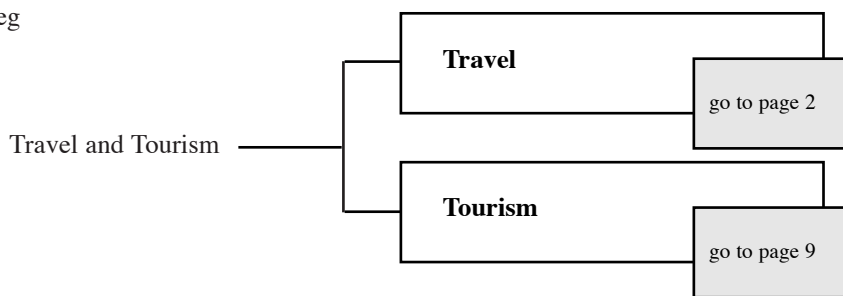
eg



1. Career Options

The first page for each broad career area gives the career options available and is called 1. career options.

eg

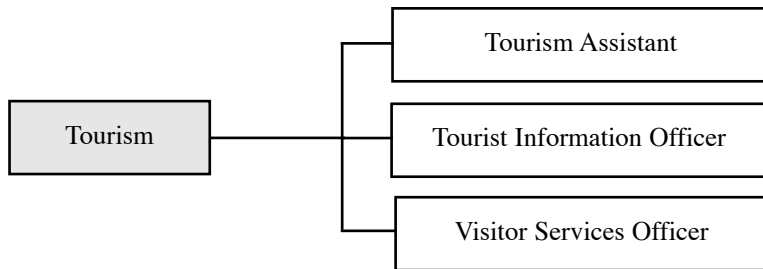


The box beside each career option tells you where to go for more information, eg Travel go to page 2 or Tourism go to page 9. For each career option there will be two diagrams (Sections 2 and 3 which are explained below).

2. Jobs and Careers

This diagram shows some of the jobs that are available for that career option. A brief explanation of the job is given.

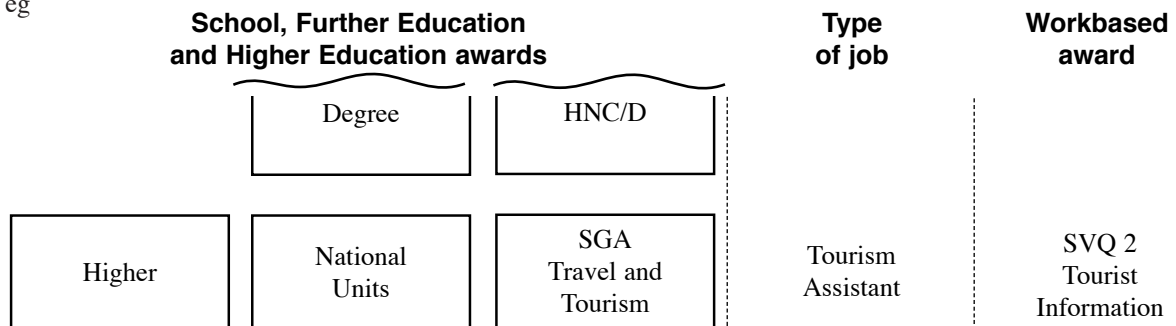
eg



3. Qualifications and jobs

This diagram shows the main qualifications available at school, college, and university, and in the workplace. Jobs are also included, so that you can see how they relate to different levels of qualification. When there are too many qualifications to fit on the diagram, they are included in a separate list.

eg



4: Qualifications

This list shows the main qualifications in each category in each career area in the progression family.

HND — Higher National Diploma
HNC — Higher National Certificate
PDA — Professional Development Award
SGA — Scottish Group Award
GSVQ — General Scottish Vocational Qualification
SVQ — Scottish Vocational Qualification
SPA — Scottish Progression Award

5: Notes on entry to jobs and careers

This section gives more detailed information about the main progression routes you might take. For the main qualifications, possible entry routes and an indication of other qualifications and jobs to which you might progress are given.

National Course — Advanced Higher, Intermediate 2, Intermediate 1, Access 3, Access 2, Access 1
Standard Grade — Credit, General, Foundation

Essential Background Reading and Reference Materials

Progression Options

Progression opportunities for school leavers include further education, higher education, Skillseekers, Modern Apprenticeships, SVQs, and training through employment. Opportunities for adult returners include Access programmes, other further education courses, Training for Work, New Deal and training via employment. Brief descriptions for these options are given below.

Further Education

Opportunities at colleges of further education would include:

- ◆ HNCs, HNDs, PDAs
- ◆ Scottish Group Awards
- ◆ National Courses
- ◆ Access programmes
- ◆ college programmes of National Units

Further information about the range of courses available can be found in college prospectuses.

Higher Education

Universities offer a range of degree programmes, HNCs and HNDs. Further information about the range of courses and application procedures can be found in university prospectuses.

Skillseekers

Skillseekers is a way for 16-18 year olds (and some 19 year olds) to train for vocational qualifications whilst in employment or in a work placement. This might involve time spent at college.

Modern Apprenticeships

Modern Apprenticeships are delivered through Skillseekers and offer training to SVQ level 3. Training is not based on time-serving but on achieving outcomes at a pace appropriate to the trainee. The young person should be employed, and will enter into an agreement with his or her employer. Modern Apprenticeships are open to 16-21 year olds.

Training for Work

Training for Work is a national initiative covering the whole of Scotland. It provides training opportunities for adults over the age of 18, mainly for people who have been out of work for over six months and are registered with the Employment Service. Adults interested in taking part in the programme should consult their local Job Centre for advice and for guidance on their suitability for the programme and on courses available.

New Deal

New Deal is a key component of the Government's Welfare to Work policy. The initiative aims to help 18-24 year-olds who have been unemployed for six months to get back into work.

New Deal also offers subsidies to employers to help them take on people aged 25 or over and who have been unemployed for two or more years. It also offers over-25s a chance to study full-time for up to a year while remaining on benefit.

Access programmes

In many areas Access (eg Access to Health Studies) programmes are available. The purpose of these is to enable candidates who lack formal academic qualifications to meet the entry requirements for a programme of advanced study. Access programmes normally consists of a year's full-time study which when successfully concluded guarantees the candidate a place on an HNC, HND or degree course depending on the individual programme.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

The document *An Introduction to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework* (September 2001, AE1243) provides an overview of the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and its main features. It also describes how the framework will help to address issues regarding lifelong learning and increasing participation in education.

Further information may also be obtained from the SCQF website: www.scqf.org.uk

Current SQA Qualifications

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

Mainstream Scottish qualifications are being brought into a single unified framework known as the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). It builds on a number of other developments and national agreements that have taken place over the last 20 years and brings together all the qualifications awarded and accredited by SQA and by Scottish degree awarding institutions. SQA qualifications will be allocated to a level in the Framework and given a credit value in SCOTCAT (Scottish Credit Accumulation and Transfer) points.

From September 2004, SCQF levels and SCOTCAT points will be recorded in all Unit specifications and will be used in SQA reporting and certification.

The document *An Introduction to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework* (September 2001, AE1243) provides an overview of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and its main features. It also describes how the framework will help to address issues regarding lifelong learning and increasing participation in education.

Further information may also be obtained from the SCQF website: www.scqf.org.uk

Higher National Certificates (HNCs) and Higher National Diplomas (HNDs)

HNCs and HNDs are qualifications covering broad occupational areas. They are offered by colleges and some universities, and are made up of Higher National Units. HN Units are assessed to national standards on the same principles as National Units, except candidates can gain pass or merit awards for individual Units.

Professional Development Awards (PDAs)

There are PDAs in a number of occupational areas. They can be used to help people develop their careers, change career and enhance and develop their skills and knowledge. PDAs can be based on Higher National Units or on National Units.

There are PDAs at Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Diploma, and Advanced Diploma Level. PDAs can be devised at either national or local level.

Scottish Group Awards

SGAs are coherent programmes of National Units and National Courses. Candidates can use them to follow a sustained programme of study that reflects their interests or furthers their intended career options. There is also an option for centres to devise their own SGA programmes, provided that these meet SQA's criteria for coherence and relevance, and are authorised in advance.

SGAs are made up of Courses and Units which fit together to make a balanced programme of study. They can be undertaken at each of the five levels. A Group Award can be gained in one year of full time study or built up over a longer period of time. A candidate's Standard Grade achievements can count towards a Scottish Group Award. There are general and more specialised SGAs which will be of use to candidates who wish to continue either general or more specialised study.

The main reason to do a Group Award is because it can lead in the broad general direction of a range of career opportunities and to more advanced or specialised programmes in colleges and to university. It also shows that a candidate can achieve across a range of relevant subjects, and has core skills at a level recognised as satisfactory by employers and other bodies interested in overall qualifications.

National Courses

At all levels except Access, National Courses are made up of three National Units (from a range specified by SQA) plus an external examination which covers the whole range of the Units and asks candidates to show that they have understood and can contextualise the course content. The examinations are marked and checked by professional examiners. There is no examination at Access level — the groupings of three Units at this level are called ‘National Clusters’.

Candidates are graded at A-C, partly on the basis of their examination results. Course work can also be taken into account for those who perform less well in the examination, and there is also the possibility of awarding candidates the course at the level below the one entered for — the award would be made at grade C.

Standard Grade

Standard Grade is usually taken in the fourth year of secondary school. Certificates are awarded on the basis of performance in an externally-assessed exam and an internally-assessed element involving course work and/or projects. Awards are made at Foundation, General and Credit levels.

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)

SVQs are available in a large number of areas (from care to catering, from manufacturing to management). They are available at five different levels, with level 1 being the basic level and level 5 being the most complex. SVQs are based on a set of nationally-agreed standards and are the equivalent of NVQs elsewhere in the UK. There are no specific requirements for entry to an SVQ. They are, first and foremost, workplace qualifications and to do an SVQ the candidate will need to be assessed in the workplace or workplace-like conditions.

Details of centres offering SVQs can be obtained from the Glasgow offices of the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

All SVQs that have been accredited by SQA are listed in the publication *SVQ Update*. As well as listing all the current SVQs, the *SVQ Update* gives the names and addresses of all the awarding bodies for SVQs, an explanation of the different levels of SVQs, and sources of further information.

Scottish Progression Awards (SPAs)

Scottish Progression Awards are about improving access to and encouraging people to progress to the full SVQs at level 2 by giving them a first target to work towards. At the moment there are Scottish Progression Awards in these six areas:

- ◆ Administration, Care, Catering and Hospitality, Children’s Care and Play, Construction and Retail.

These Scottish Progression Awards are made up of five SVQ Units. This means that candidates can get credit for these Units against the SVQ they are progressing towards.

Though a Scottish Progression Award is not a certificated qualification in its own right, all of the Units completed as part of the Scottish Progression Award will be listed on the candidate’s Record of Education and Training (RET) — SQA’s cumulative, Unit-based certificate. The RET will also have a special statement recognising completion of the Scottish Progression Award and its credit towards a full SVQ.

Qualifications which are being phased out

For qualifications which have been wholly replaced by National Qualifications — General Scottish Vocational Qualifications (GSVQs), Lifestart, Workstart and some former National Certificate Modules and Short Courses — the last certification for these qualifications will be in the year 2004.

Useful Information

Publications*

All SQA publications are available from SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 0845 279 1000;
e-mail: customer@sqa.org.uk. Selected publications are available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk

*there is a charge for some publications.

Customer Contact Centre:

0845 279 1000

Your first point of call for all SQA enquiries is the Customer Contact Centre. If you want some general information about SQA and its qualifications, or if you have a more complex query but are not sure who you should speak to, our staff are there to advise and assist. If they don't know the answer to your question, they will know someone who does.

