

EQF Implementation: 2010 -2011

The work to reference the UK Frameworks to the EQF has been completed and further projects will be undertaken during 2010 - 2011 to promote and use the EQF within the United Kingdom.

The UK report 'Referencing the Qualifications Frameworks of the United Kingdom to the European Qualifications Framework' can now be accessed on all NCP websites.

Coordinating the implementation of the EQF at UK and European level

The UK European Coordination Group for VET provides the forum at UK level to coordinate the implementation work on EQF. The UK is represented on the European Commission Advisory Group which co-ordinates the implementation of the EQF at the European level and is composed of representatives of member states, European social partners and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Find out more

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European Qualifications Framework



Recognising qualifications across Europe

What is The European Qualifications Framework?

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a reference framework that links the qualifications of different countries together. It acts as a translation device to make qualifications easier to understand across different countries and systems in Europe. This will help learners and workers who are moving between countries, from job to job and from one education or training institution to another. The aims of the EQF are to help develop a European-wide workforce that is mobile and flexible, and to aid lifelong learning.

Benefits of the EQF

For employers and learning providers, the EQF will make it easier to compare the level of qualifications from different national systems. This will support labour market mobility both between and within countries and sectors. It will also enable a much better match between supply and demand for knowledge, skills and competence.

How does it work?

The EQF has eight levels that are based on knowledge, skills and competence. Each of the eight levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to

qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications.

Each level should be achievable through a variety of education and career paths. The focus is on learning outcomes – what a person holding or studying a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do – rather than on inputs such as the length of study.

What is the scope of the EQF?

The EQF will relate different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers will be able to use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems.

The EQF will not:

- Replace existing national qualifications systems or require them to be adjusted in any way
- Include specific qualifications, describe specific qualifications or an individual's competence
- Reference individual qualifications – the levels of a country's qualifications framework are referenced to the EQF's levels

How is the UK involved in the EQF?

As the countries within the UK have different education systems and therefore different frameworks, three National Coordination Points (NCPs) have been established across the UK:

- The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) as the NCP for Scotland to reference the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) to the EQF;
- The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) as the NCP for Wales to reference the Credit and Qualifications framework for Wales (CQFW) to the EQF; and
- Ofqual (England) and CCEA (Northern Ireland) as the joint NCP for England and Northern Ireland to reference the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) to the EQF.

Levels Correspondences

The work to reference the UK Frameworks to the EQF has been completed. The referencing of the levels in the UK frameworks to EQF is illustrated in the following table:

Figure 1 Levels correspondences established between the UK qualifications frameworks and the European Qualifications Framework

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF)	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)	European Higher Education Area (EHEA - Bologna)
8	8	8	12	3rd Cycle
7	7	7	11	2nd Cycle
6	6	6	10/9	1st Cycle
5	5/4	5/4	8/7	Short Cycle
4	3	3	6	
3	2	2	5	
2	1	1	4	
1	E3	E3	3	
	E2	E2	2	
	E1	E1	1	

The EQF exists alongside the metaframework for higher education - the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA, or EHEA, also known as the Bologna Framework).

