The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
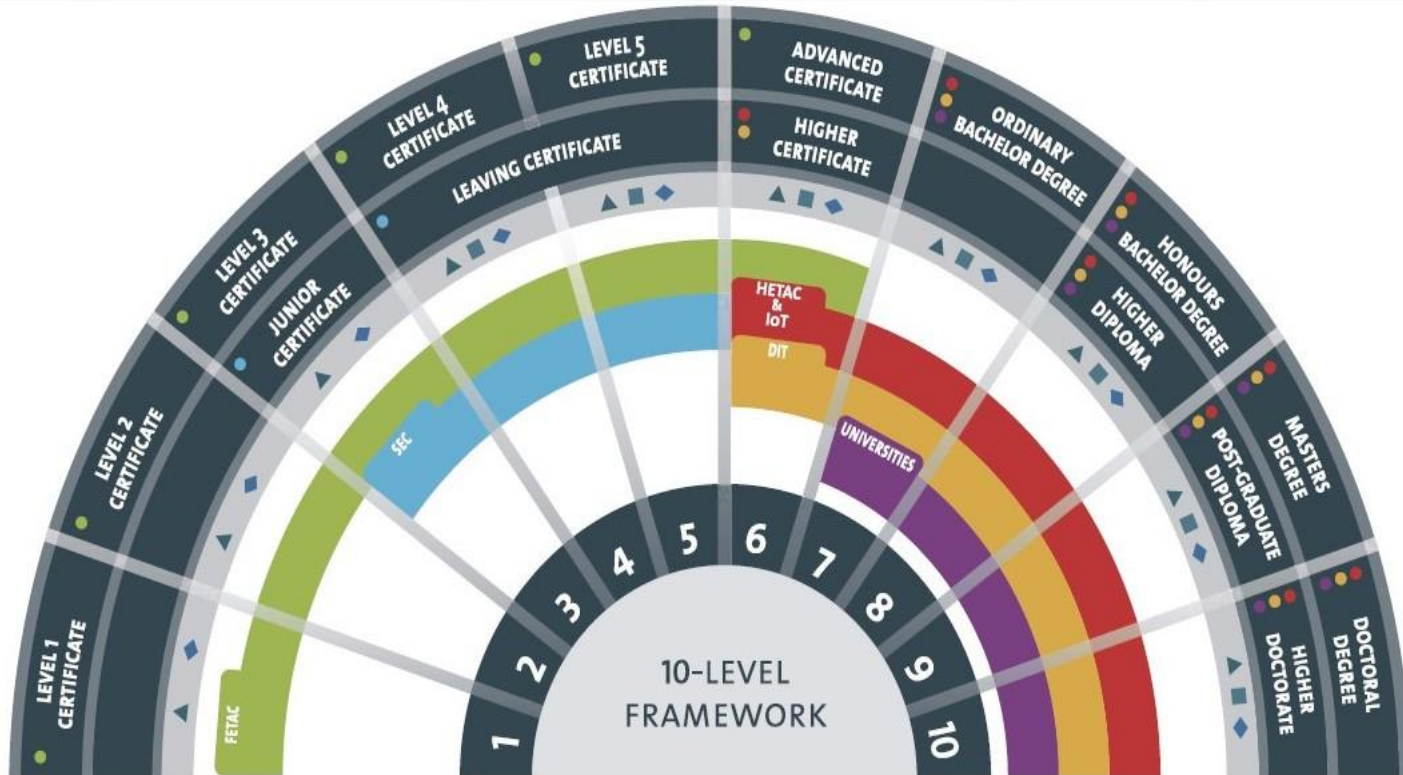# National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/about_NFQ/about_the_NFQ.html

Side A: Fan diagram with framework levels, award type and awarding body

AWARDING BODIES

- FETAC – Further Education and Training Awards Council
- SEC – State Examinations Commission *(Department of Education & Science)*
- HETAC – Higher Education and Training Awards Council
- IoT – Institutes of Technology *(make their own awards at specified levels under Delegated Authority from HETAC)*
- DIT – Dublin Institute of Technology
- Universities

AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK

There are four types of award in the National Framework of Qualifications:

- **Major Awards:** are the principal class of awards made at a level
- **Minor Awards:** are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award
- **Supplemental Awards:** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award
- **Special Purpose Awards:** are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement

National Framework *of* Qualifications

National Framework of Qualifications
Creatoibre Náisiúnta na gCáilíochtaí

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Knowledge *Breadth*	Elementary knowledge.	Knowledge that is narrow in range.	Knowledge moderately broad in range.	Broad range of knowledge.	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.	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas.
Know-How & 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.	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools.
Know-How & 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.	Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems.
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.	Act in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs; identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of contexts.
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.	Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups.
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.	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment.
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.	Assume full responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour.

This 10-Level grid of Level Indicators forms part of the determination of the National Framework of Qualifications under Section 7(a) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999

GRID OF LEVEL INDICATORS

National Framework of Qualifications
Creatoibre Náisiúnta na gCáilíochtaí

LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7	LEVEL 8	LEVEL 9	LEVEL 10	
Specialised knowledge of a broad area.	Specialised knowledge across a variety of areas.	An understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning.	A systematic understanding of knowledge, at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning.	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning.	**Knowledge** *Breadth*
Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant underpinning theory.	Recognition of limitations of current knowledge and familiarity with sources of new knowledge; integration of concepts across a variety of areas.	Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field(s).	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning.	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers.	**Knowledge** *Kind*
Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools.	Demonstrate specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills and tools across an area of study.	Demonstrate mastery of a complex and specialised area of skills and tools; use and modify advanced skills and tools to conduct closely guided research, professional or advanced technical activity.	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry.	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials.	**Know-How & Skill** *Range*
Formulate responses to well-defined abstract problems.	Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes.	Excercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing.	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques.	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge.	**Know-How & Skill** *Selectivity*
Act in a range of varied and specific contexts involving creative and non-routine activities; transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of contexts.	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts.	Use advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for all related decision making; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of contexts.	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts.	Excercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts.	**Competence** *Context*
Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for allocation of resources; form, and function within, multiple complex and heterogeneous groups.	Accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes; take significant or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work.	Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups.	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity.	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes.	**Competence** *Role*
Learn to evaluate own learning and identify needs within a structured learning environment; assist others in identifying learning needs.	Take initiative to identify and address learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group.	Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically.	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development.	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.	**Competence** *Learning to Learn*
Express an internalised, personal world view, reflecting engagement with others.	Express an internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others.	Express a comprehensive, internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others.	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationaships and act to change them.	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them.	**Competence** *Insight*

Note: The outcomes at each level include those of all the lower levels in the same sub-strand.