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Your guide to credits, levels
and qualifications

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Clarity approved by
Plain English Campaign



scqf

scottish credit and
qualifications framework



UNDERSTANDING CREDITS, LEVELS AND QUALIFICATIONS

You will get to know about the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) as it appears on your SQA Scottish Qualifications Certificate which is issued in August. This leaflet tells you about the SCQF and how you will benefit from it.

What is it?

The SCQF is a way of comparing Scottish qualifications. It covers the qualifications you will achieve at school, college and university, and many qualifications you may go on to achieve at work. It does this by giving each qualification a level and credit points.

The level of a qualification shows how difficult the learning is. For example, one person may study a course at Intermediate 1 and another at Higher. Both qualifications have 24 SCQF credit points but have different levels of difficulty. The credit points show how much you need to learn to achieve that qualification.

What is it for?

The SCQF makes it easier to describe, compare and understand qualifications. Before the SCQF, there was no easy way to compare different qualifications. Now it is easy to see that, for example, an Intermediate 2 is at the same level as a Credit Standard Grade. Most Scottish universities and colleges now use SCQF levels and credit points to describe their courses.

The SCQF can:

- help you make the right learning choices and understand qualifications you are not familiar with;
- help employers understand different qualifications;
- help universities or colleges identify the level that you have studied in a particular subject; and
- recognise other areas of your learning that can help your personal development and goals for the future.



THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications			Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12			↑	DOCTORAL DEGREE	
11				INTEGRATED MASTERS DEGREE MASTERS DEGREE POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	SVQ5
10				HONOURS DEGREE GRADUATE DIPLOMA GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	
9			↓	BACHELORS / ORDINARY DEGREE GRADUATE DIPLOMA GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	SVQ4
8		HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA		DIPLOMA OF HIGHER EDUCATION	
7	CREDIT POINTS ADVANCED HIGHER 32 SCOTTISH BACCALAUREATE 104	HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE		CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION	SVQ3
6	HIGHER SKILLS FOR WORK HIGHER 24 24		↑		
5	INTERMEDIATE 2 24 SKILLS FOR WORK INT 2 24 CREDIT STANDARD GRADE 24				SVQ2
4	INTERMEDIATE 1 24 SKILLS FOR WORK INT 1 24 GENERAL STANDARD GRADE 24	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE		NATIONAL PROGRESSION AWARD	SVQ1
3	ACCESS 3 18 SKILLS FOR WORK ACCESS 3 18 FOUNDATION STANDARD GRADE 24				
2	ACCESS 2 18				
1	ACCESS 1				

Table tip

Don't worry if you're not familiar with some of the qualifications mentioned above. You will learn more about them as you move through school. We explain each one on the interactive Framework diagram on our website at www.scqf.org.uk.

This Framework diagram shows the main SQA qualifications studied at secondary schools in Scotland. You might be surprised to know that other types of learning that you might do in your school or youth club are included in the SCQF. Turn over for information about some awards you might have heard of.



OTHER AWARDS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF

SCQF Levels	Learning Programme	Title	Credit Points
6	ASDAN	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 3	15
5	Youthlink	Participative Democracy	2
5	City and Guilds	Certificate in Retail Principles	34
5	ASDAN	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 2	12
4	ASDAN	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 1	12
4	Youth Scotland	Youth Achievement Award Bronze	7
5	Youth Scotland	Youth Achievement Award Silver	11
6	Youth Scotland	Youth Achievement Award Gold	14
7	Youth Scotland	Youth Achievement Award Platinum	16

Frequently asked questions

Are SCQF credit points the same as UCAS tariff points?

SCQF credit points are not the same as UCAS tariff points. UCAS tariff points relate to the grades you have achieved. SCQF credits are a measure of how much you need to learn to achieve a qualification, no matter what grade you get.

Why does an 'A' at Higher get the same number of SCQF credit points as a 'C' at Higher?

The number of SCQF credit points you've gained doesn't change depending on your grade at any particular level. SCQF credits reflect how much learning you've done, not how well you've learned a subject.

Will my qualifications be recognised if I move abroad?

SCQF levels are now referenced against the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), so learning institutions and employers in Europe can easily compare your qualifications against their own country's qualifications framework.

If I build up SCQF credit points, will I get into college or university?

Not directly, although SCQF credit points help admissions officers in colleges and universities know exactly how much learning you have done and at what level. The admissions officers still have other factors to consider, such as the subjects you studied and grades you achieved.

Will the SCQF help me to get a job?

Not directly, but it will help employers understand the level of difficulty of each qualification, as well as the number of credit points you have achieved as part of your personal development. As your career develops, any work-based qualifications you achieve may add to the number of credits you already have.

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