

Qualifications: what the different levels mean : Directgov - Education and learning

Only qualifications that have been accredited by the three regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland can be included in the NQF. This ensures that all qualifications within the framework are of high quality, and meet the needs of learners and employers.

NQF level	Examples of qualifications	What they give you
Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry level certificates - Skills for Life at entry level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic knowledge and skills - ability to apply learning in everyday situations - not geared towards specific occupations
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GCSEs grades D-G - BTEC Introductory Diplomas and Certificates - OCR Nationals - Key Skills level 1 - NVQs - Skills for Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic knowledge and skills - ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision - may be linked to job competence
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GCSEs grades A*-C - BTEC First Diplomas and Certificates - OCR Nationals - Key Skills level 2 - NVQs - Skills for Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good knowledge and understanding of a subject - ability to perform variety of tasks with some guidance or supervision - appropriate for many job roles
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A levels - Advanced Extension Awards - GCE in applied subjects - International Baccalaureate - Key Skills level 3 - NVQs - BTEC Diplomas, Certificates and Awards - BTEC Nationals - OCR Nationals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to gain or apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding, at a detailed level - appropriate if you plan to go to university, work independently, or (in some cases) supervise and train others in their field of work
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key Skills level 4 - NVQs - BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specialist learning, involving detailed analysis of a high level of information and knowledge in an area of work or study - appropriate for people working in technical and professional jobs, and/or managing and developing others
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HNCs and HNDs - NVQs - BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to increase the depth of knowledge and understanding of an area of work or study, so you can respond to complex problems and situations - involves high level of work expertise and competence in managing and training others - appropriate for people working as higher grade technicians, professionals or managers
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Diploma in Professional Production Skills - BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a specialist, high-level knowledge of an area of work or study, to enable you to use your own ideas and research in response to complex problems and situations - appropriate for people working as knowledge-based professionals or in professional management positions
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - highly developed and complex levels of knowledge, enabling you to

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Diploma in Translation- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">develop original responses to complicated and unpredictable problems and situations- appropriate for senior professionals and managers
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- specialist awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- opportunity to develop new and creative approaches that extend or redefine existing knowledge or professional practice- appropriate for leading experts or practitioners in a particular field

[Find out more about the National Qualification Framework \(opens new window\)](#)