

Table 1- National Qualifications Framework Level indicators

The proposed level indicators in the NQF are a guide to the range of qualifications and levels. They describe the learning and achievement that happens at each level, and show how the skills and knowledge relate to job roles. The indicators are not intended to be precise or comprehensive – they are working guides.

Framework level	Level indicators	Examples of qualifications
Entry	Entry level qualifications recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning in everyday situations under direct guidance or supervision. Learning at this level involves building basic knowledge and skills and is not geared towards specific occupations.	Qualifications are offered at entry 1, entry 2 and entry 3, in a range of subjects
Level 1	Level 1 qualifications recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision. Learning at this level is about activities which mostly relate to everyday situations, and may be linked to job competence.	NVQ 1; certificate in business administration; GCSEs grades D–G; foundation certificate in health and safety in the workplace
Level 2	Level 2 qualifications recognise the ability to gain a good knowledge and understanding of a subject area of work or study, and to perform varied tasks with some guidance or supervision. Learning at this level involves building knowledge and/or skills in relation to an area of work or a subject area and is appropriate for many job roles.	NVQ 2; SWiS level 2, GCSEs grades A*–C; certificate in coaching football; diploma for IT practitioners
Level 3	Level 3 qualifications recognise the ability to gain, and where relevant apply, a range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning at this level involves obtaining detailed knowledge and skills. It is appropriate for people wishing to go to university, people working independently, or in some areas supervising and training others in their field of work.	Certificate for teaching assistants; NVQ 3; SWiS level 3, A-levels; advanced extension awards; diploma in cleaning services supervision
Level 4	Level 4 qualifications recognise specialist learning and involve detailed analysis of a high level of information and knowledge in an area of work or study. Learning at this level is appropriate for people working in technical and professional jobs, and/or managing and developing others. Level 4 qualifications are at a level equivalent to certificates of higher education.	Higher professional diploma for IT practitioners; certificate in early years practice, Certificate in School Business Management
Level 5	Level 5 qualifications recognise the ability to increase the depth of knowledge and understanding of an area of work or study, to enable the formulation of solutions and responses to complex problems and situations. Learning at this level involves the demonstration of high levels of knowledge, a high level of work expertise in job roles, and competence in managing and training others. Qualifications at this level are appropriate for people working as higher grade technicians, professionals or managers. Level 5 qualifications are at a level equivalent	Diploma in school business management; higher national certificate in hospitality management, Foundation degrees

	to intermediate higher education qualifications such as diplomas of higher education, foundation and other degrees that do not typically provide access to postgraduate programmes.	
Level 6	Level 6 qualifications recognise a specialist high-level knowledge of an area of work or study to enable the use of an individual's own ideas and research in response to complex problems and situations. Learning at this level involves the achievement of a high level of professional knowledge and is appropriate for people working as knowledge-based professionals or in professional management positions. Level 6 qualifications are at a level equivalent to bachelors degrees with honours, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas.	Certificate in business awareness and advanced professional study, BA, BSc, BEd
Level 7	Level 7 qualifications recognise highly developed and complex levels of knowledge which enable the development of in-depth and original responses to complicated and unpredictable problems and situations. Learning at this level involves the demonstration of high-level specialist professional knowledge and is appropriate for senior professionals and managers. Level 7 qualifications are at a level equivalent to masters' degrees, postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.	PGCE, Executive diploma in management