

Level 1 Certificate (NFQ Level 1 - major award)

Level 1 certificates are designed to meet the needs of learners, both young and old, including those with intellectual and other disabilities, adults returning to training, and learners with few or no previous qualifications, including those within the workforce. These awards provide certification for learners who may progress to higher levels and also for those whose principal achievements rest at these levels. Each certificate comprises a number of components, most often in basic literacy and numeracy, which the learner can achieve at their own pace and accumulate over time towards one of the named certificates above. An example of an award at NFQ Level 1 is the Level 1 Certificate in Communications (major).

Descriptor

Title	Level 1 Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	1
Volume	Small
Knowledge - breadth	Elementary knowledge
Knowledge - kind	Demonstrable by recognition or recall
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate basic practical skills, and carry out directed activity using basic tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Perform processes that are repetitive and predictable
Competence - context	Act in closely defined and highly structured contexts
Competence - role	Act in a limited range of roles
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to sequence learning tasks; learn to access and use a range of learning resources
Competence - insight	Begin to demonstrate awareness of independent role for self
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programme leading to a Level 2 Certificate, or at a higher level if appropriate.

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Level 2 Certificate (NFQ Level 2 - major award)

Level 2 certificates are designed to meet the needs of learners, both young and old, including those with intellectual and other disabilities, adults returning to training, and learners with few or no previous qualifications, including those within the workforce. These awards provide certification for learners who may progress to higher levels and also for those whose principal achievements rest at these levels. Each certificate comprises a number of components, most often in basic literacy and numeracy, which the learner can achieve at their own pace and accumulate over time towards one of the named certificates above. An example of an award at NFQ Level 2 is the Level 2 Certificate in General Learning (major).

Descriptor

Title	Level 2 Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	2
Volume	Medium
Knowledge - breadth	Knowledge that is narrow in range
Knowledge - kind	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate limited range of basic practical skills, including the use of relevant tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction
Competence - context	Act in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts
Competence - role	Act in a range of roles under direction
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment
Competence - insight	Demonstrate awareness of independent role for self
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programme leading to a Level 3 Certificate, or at a higher level if appropriate.

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Level 3 Certificate (NFQ Level 3 – major award)

The Level 3 Certificate enables learners to gain recognition for, specific personal skills, practical skills and knowledge, basic transferable skills, the enhancement of individual talents and qualities and achievements and learning relevant to a variety of progression options. An example of an award at NFQ Level 3 is the Level 3 Certificate in Keyboard and Computer Skills (major)

Descriptor

Title	Level 3 Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	3
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Knowledge moderately broad in range
Knowledge - kind	Mainly concrete in reference and with some comprehension of relationship between knowledge elements
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate a limited range of practical and cognitive skills and tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Select from a limited range of varied procedures and apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems
Competence - context	Act within a limited range of contexts
Competence - role	Act under direction with limited autonomy; function within familiar, homogeneous groups
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to learn within a managed environment
Competence - insight	Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self- understanding and behaviour
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programme leading to a Level 4 Certificate, or at a higher level if appropriate.

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Junior Certificate (NFQ Level 3 – major award)

The first stage of post-primary schooling that learners encounter, usually commencing at age 12, is junior cycle, a three-year programme within the compulsory period of education that builds on the young person's educational experience at primary school by offering a broad, balanced and coherent programme of study across a wide range of curriculum subjects and areas. It is in junior cycle that the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills of learners—including the personal, social, moral and spiritual aspects—are extended and deepened with the aim of generating a love of learning in young people. In the process, junior cycle prepares learners for transition to senior cycle, for other further education opportunities, in some cases for employment and, in general, for the challenges involved in growing towards adulthood.

In junior cycle learners follow a number of subjects which include Irish, English, Mathematics, Social Personal & Health Education, Civic, Social and Political Education and two other subjects from a list which includes languages, Science, Business Studies, Art, Music etc. In addition, students in secondary schools must study History and Geography. The Junior Certificate examination takes place at the end of the junior cycle. Learners normally sit the examination at the age of 14 or 15. Junior Certificate subjects are usually assessed by means of a written terminal examination, along with practical examinations, project work, orals and aurals in some subjects. The majority of students in school will sit Junior Certificate examinations in at least seven subjects. However, candidates – including many learners in second chance education settings or repeat students – can also sit one or more individual subjects.

Descriptor

Title	Junior Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	3
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Knowledge moderately broad in range.
Knowledge - kind	Mainly concrete in reference. Some comprehension of relationships between knowledge elements.
Know-how and Skill – range	Demonstrate a limited range of skills and tools in various domains of activity - artistic, intellectual, scientific, physical and practical.
Know-how and Skill – selectivity	Choose from a limited range of varied procedures. Apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems.
Competence - context	Act within a limited range of contexts
Competence - role	Act under direction with limited autonomy. Function within familiar homogeneous groups.
Competence - learning to learn	Learn to learn within a managed environment.
Competence - insight	Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self- understanding and behaviour.
Progression and	Progression to programme leading to Leaving Certificate.

transfer	Progression to programme leading to Level 4 Certificate, or at a higher level.
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Awarding body: The State Examinations Commission

The Junior Certificate is typically awarded to learners following a three-year full-time programme prescribed by the Department of Education and Science.

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Leaving Certificate (NFQ Level 4 and 5 – major award)

The Leaving Certificate is studied over two years and aims to provide learners with a broad, balanced education while also offering some potential for specialisation towards a particular career option. The Leaving Certificate is taken in almost all schools and students are required to study at least five subjects, one of which must be Irish. The majority of students in school will sit Leaving Certificate examinations in at least seven subjects. However, candidates – including many learners in second chance education settings or repeat students – can also sit one or more individual subjects. All subjects are offered at two levels, Ordinary and Higher. Irish and Mathematics are also available at Foundation level. 33 Leaving Certificate subjects are available to schools.

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is designed to enhance the vocational dimension of the Leaving Certificate. This two-year programme combines the academic strengths of the Leaving Certificate with a dynamic focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. The defining features of the LCVP are that learners take some of their Leaving Certificate subjects from a specified set of vocational subjects, they study a recognised course in a modern European language, and take two additional courses, known as Link Modules, in the areas of Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education.

Leaving Certificate Applied

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a discrete programme designed for those learners whose aptitudes, learning interests and ways of learning are not fully catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes and for those learners who are at risk of early school leaving. Participants in the Leaving Certificate Applied engage in work and study of an active, practical and task-centred nature and it prepares participants for transition from the world of the school/centre to that of adult and working life. The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two-year programme made up of a range of courses that are structured round three elements:

- Vocational Preparation
- Vocational Education
- General Education.

Descriptor

Title	Leaving Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	4/5
Volume	Large
Knowledge- breadth	Broad range of knowledge.
Knowledge - kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking with significant depth in some areas. Some underpinning theory.
Know-how and Skill –	Demonstrate a broad range of cognitive and practical skills, and tools.

range	
Know-how and Skill – selectivity	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.
Competence- context	Identify and apply skill and knowledge to a moderately broad range of contexts. Take responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.
Competence- role	Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities. Function within familiar homogeneous groups.
Competence - learning to learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment.
Competence- insight	Assume responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour
Progression and transfer	Progression to programme leading to a further education and training award at level 5, or at a higher level. Progression to programme leading to a higher education and training award at level 6, or at a higher level.

Awarding body: The State Examinations Commission

The Leaving Certificate is typically awarded following a two-year full-time programme of education prescribed by the Department of Education and Science.

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Level 4 Certificate (NFQ Level 4 – major award)

The Level 4 Certificate enables learners to gain recognition for the achievement of vocational and personal skills, knowledge and understanding to specified standards, the enhancement of individual talents and qualities and the achievement and learning relevant to a variety of progression options, including employment at an introductory vocational level, and programmes leading to a Level 5 Certificate. Examples of Level 4 awards would include the Level 4 Certificate in Horticulture (major); the Level 4 Certificate in Pharmacy Sales (major).

Descriptor

Title	Level 4 Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	4
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge - kind	Mainly concrete in reference and with some elements of abstraction or theory
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate a moderate range of practical and cognitive skills and tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Select from a range of procedures and apply known solutions to a variety of predictable problems
Competence - context	Act in familiar and unfamiliar contexts
Competence - role	Act with considerable amount of responsibility and autonomy
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a supervised environment
Competence - insight	Assume partial responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programme leading to a Level 5 Certificate, or at a higher level if appropriate.

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Level 5 Certificate (NFQ Level 5 – major award)

The NFQ Level 5 Certificate enables learners to develop a broad range of skills, which are vocational specific and require a general theoretical understanding. They are enabled to work independently while subject to general direction. The majority of certificate/module holders at level 5 take up positions of employment. They are also deemed to meet the minimum entry requirements for a range of higher education institutions/programmes. Example of Level 5 awards would include the Level 5 Certificate in Restaurant Operations (major); the level 5 Certificate in Seafood Processing (major).

Descriptor

Title	Level 5 Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	5
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge - kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems
Competence - context	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	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 take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
Competence - insight	Assume full responsibility for consistency of self- understanding and behaviour
Progression & Transfer	Progression to a programme leading to an Advanced Certificate or a higher education and training award at Level 6, 7 or 8

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Advanced Certificate (NFQ Level 6 - major award)

An Advanced Certificate award enables learners to develop a comprehensive range of skills, which may be vocationally specific and/or of a general supervisory nature, and require detailed theoretical understanding. Modules include advanced vocational/occupational skills, enabling certificate holders to work independently or progress to higher education and training. The majority of certificate/module holders at NFQ Level 6 take up positions of employment, some of whom may be self-employed. Examples of FET awards at NFQ Level 6 would include Advanced Certificate Craft-Electrical (major); Advanced Certificate Craft-Metal Fabrication (major); Advanced Certificate Farm Management (major).

Descriptor

Title	Advanced Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	6
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	Specialised knowledge of a broad area
Knowledge - kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Formulate responses to well-defined abstract problems
Competence - context	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts
Competence - role	Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for the allocation of resources; form, and function within, multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
Competence - insight	Express an internalised, personal world view, reflecting engagement with others
Progression & Transfer	Transfer to a programme leading to a Higher Certificate. Progression to a programme leading to an Ordinary Bachelor Degree or to an Honours Bachelor Degree.

Awarding body: Further Education and Training Awards Council

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Higher Certificate (NFQ Level 6 – major award)

The Higher Certificate is normally awarded after completion of an accredited programme of two years duration (120 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution/provider. Entry to these programmes is generally for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. The Higher Certificate is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna First Cycle

Descriptor

Title	Higher Certificate
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	6
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Specialised knowledge of a broad area
Knowledge - kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant underpinning theory
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate comprehensive range of specialised skills and tools
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Formulate responses to well-defined abstract problems
Competence - context	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	Exercise substantial personal autonomy and often take responsibility for the work of others and/or for the allocation of resources; form, and function within, multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
Competence – learning to learn	Take initiative to identify and address learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group
Competence - insight	Express an internalised, personal world view, reflecting engagement with others
Progression & Transfer	Transfer to programme leading to an Advanced Certificate. Progression to a programme leading to an Ordinary Bachelor Degree or to an Honours Bachelor Degree.

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and some Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Ordinary Bachelor Degree (NFQ Level 7 – major award)

The Ordinary Bachelor Degree is normally awarded after completion of an accredited programme of three years duration (180 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution/provider. Entry to a programme leading to an ab-initio Ordinary Bachelor Degree is typically for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. In addition, there are 1 year add-on Ordinary Bachelor degree programmes (60 ECTS credits) for holders of the Higher Certificate. The Ordinary Bachelor Degree is compatible with the Bologna First Cycle descriptor, though holders of this award do not generally gain immediate access to programmes leading to Second Cycle awards in Ireland.

Descriptor

Title	Ordinary Bachelor Degree
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	7
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	Specialised knowledge across a variety of areas
Knowledge - kind	Recognition of limitations of current knowledge and familiarity with sources of new knowledge; integration of concepts across a variety of areas
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate specialised technical, creative or conceptual skills and tools across an area of study
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Exercise appropriate judgement in planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes
Competence - context	Utilise diagnostic and creative skills in a range of functions in a wide variety of contexts
Competence - role	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
Competence – learning to learn	Take initiative to identify and address learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group
Competence - insight	Express an internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programme leading to an Honours Bachelor Degree or to a Higher Diploma. Progression internationally to some second cycle (i.e. " Bologna masters") degree programmes.

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and some Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Honours Bachelor Degree (NFQ Level 8 – major award)

The Honours Bachelor Degree is normally awarded following completion of a programme of three or four years duration (180-240 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution/provider, although there are examples of longer programmes in areas such as architecture, dentistry and medicine. Entry to a programme leading to an ab-initio Honours Bachelor degree is typically for high achieving school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. In addition, there are typically programmes of 1-year duration (60 ECTS credits) leading to Honours Bachelor Degrees available to holders of the Ordinary Bachelor Degree. The Honours Bachelor Degree is a Bologna First Cycle qualification.

Descriptor

Title	Honours Bachelor Degree
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	8
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	An understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning
Knowledge - kind	Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field(s)
Know-how and skill - range	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
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing
Competence - context	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
Competence - role	Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically
Competence - insight	Express a comprehensive, internalised, personal world view manifesting solidarity with others
Progression & Transfer	Transfer to programmes leading to Higher Diploma. Progression to programmes leading to Masters Degree or Post-graduate Diploma, or in some cases, to programmes leading to a Doctoral Degree. Progression internationally to second cycle (i.e. "Bologna masters") degree programmes

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Higher Diploma (NFQ Level 8 – major award)

The Higher Diploma is normally awarded following completion of an accredited programme of 1-year duration (60 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution/provider. Entry to a programme leading to a Higher Diploma is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees but can also be for holders of Ordinary Bachelor Degrees. It is of note that the Higher Diploma is typically in a different field of learning than the initial award. The Higher Diploma is a qualification at the same level as completion of the Bologna First Cycle.

[Examples?]

Descriptor

Title	Higher Diploma
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	8
Volume	Medium
Knowledge - breadth	An understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning
Knowledge - kind	Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field
Know-how and skill - range	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
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing
Competence - context	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
Competence - role	Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically
Competence - insight	Express a comprehensive, internalised, personal world view manifesting solidarity with others
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programmes leading to Masters Degree or Post-graduate Diploma
Articulation	From an Ordinary Bachelor Degree, or from an Honours Bachelor Degree, into a new field of learning

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Masters Degree (NFQ Level 9 – major award)

There are two types of Masters Degree in Ireland: taught Masters Degrees and research Masters Degrees. The taught Masters Degree is awarded following the completion of an accredited programme of 1 to 2 years duration (60-120 ECTS credits). Entry to a programme leading to a taught Masters Degree is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees. Also, in some cases, entry to such programmes can be permitted for those with Ordinary Bachelor Degrees or equivalent who have some relevant work experience. Furthermore, in some cases, entry to such programmes is permitted for people with extensive experience in a relevant area. Research Masters Degree programmes are typically of 2 years duration, though they are not credit rated. Entry to a programme leading to a research Masters Degree is typically for holders of an Honours Bachelor Degree, with a high classification, i.e. first or second class honours. The Irish Masters Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna Second Cycle.

Descriptor

Title	Masters Degree
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	9
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge – kind	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
Know-how and skill - range	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Competence - context	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill defined contexts
Competence - role	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Competence - insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree, or to another Masters Degree or to a Post-graduate Diploma

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Post-graduate Diploma (NFQ Level 9 – major award)

The Post-graduate Diploma is normally awarded following completion of a programme of 1-year duration (60 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution. Entry to a programme leading to a Post-graduate Diploma is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees but can also be for holders of Ordinary Bachelor Degrees. The Post-graduate Diploma is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna Second Cycle.

Descriptor

Title	Post-graduate Diploma
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	9
Volume	Medium
Knowledge - breadth	A systematic understanding of knowledge, at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge - kind	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
Know-how and skill – range	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry
Know-how and skill - selectivity	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Competence - context	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill defined contexts
Competence - role	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Competence - insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Progression & Transfer	May exempt from part of the programme leading to a Masters Degree

Awarding bodies: Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institutes of Technology with delegated authority, and Universities

This is a major award. Major awards are the principal class of award made at a level. There are also component (minor), specific purpose (special purpose) and supplemental awards at the same level.

Minor awards

Minor Awards are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award.

Supplemental Awards

Supplemental Awards are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.

Special Purpose Awards

Special Purpose Awards are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement.

Doctoral Degree (NFQ Level 10 – major award)

Entry to a programme leading to a Doctoral Degree is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees. The general model is that a holder of an Honours Bachelor Degree with a high classification enters initially a Masters research programme, and transfers to a Doctoral programme after one year on the Masters research programme. In total, the number of years in the programme would generally be at least 3 years. There is also access to Doctoral Degrees for holders of Masters Degrees whether taught Masters or research Masters. Various models for Doctoral Degree programmes now exist, ranging from the traditional research doctorate to professional and practitioner doctoral programmes which have substantial taught components. Most doctoral programmes are now structured to include some taught components.

Descriptor

Title	Doctoral Degree
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
NFQ Level	10
Volume	Large
Knowledge - breadth	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge - kind	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
Know-how and skill - range	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 and skill - selectivity	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
Competence - context	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
Competence - role	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts
Competence - insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them
Progression & Transfer	

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