



# CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S DUE

A GUIDE TO CREDITS AND QUALIFICATIONS  
FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



**scqf**

scottish credit and  
qualifications framework

# UNDERSTANDING CREDITS AND QUALIFICATIONS

You will become more and more aware of the Scottish and Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF), as it is included on your son or daughter's SQA Scottish Qualifications Certificate which is issued every August. This leaflet tells you about the SCQF and what it means for your child.

## WHAT IS THE SCQF?

The SCQF can help you compare the wide range of Scottish qualifications. It covers achievements such as those from school, college and university, and many work-based qualifications. It does this by giving each qualification a level and a number of credit points.

The diagram on the next page shows that there are 12 levels. Qualifications at level 1 are the simplest to achieve, and qualifications at level 12 are the most complicated and demanding. The SCQF credit points show how much learning is involved in achieving each qualification, and credit points are awarded for all the learning your son or daughter has achieved. One SCQF credit point represents an average of 10 hours of learning.

For example, one person may study a course at General Standard Grade (level 4) and another at Higher (level 6). Both award the same number of SCQF credit points, but they are at different levels of difficulty.

## WHAT IS THE SCQF FOR?

The SCQF makes qualifications easier to describe and understand. Before the SCQF, there was no easy way to compare different types of qualifications. Now it is easy to see that, for example, an Advanced Higher is at the same level as a Higher National Certificate (HNC), the first year of a degree or an SVQ level 3. They are all at level 7 in the SCQF

because, although they have a different focus, content and types of assessment, the demands on the learner are roughly the same.

## HOW IS THE SCQF BEING USED?

All Scottish universities and colleges are now using SCQF levels and credit points to describe their courses, if these are included in the Framework. Also, a wide range of other learning is also being recognised using SCQF levels and credits. Some employers are also using SCQF levels instead of, or as well as, types of qualifications when they advertise jobs.

## THE SCQF CAN:

- help your son or daughter choose how they move forward in their learning;
- help you and your son or daughter understand qualifications you or they are not familiar with;
- help employers understand different types of qualifications which your son or daughter may have achieved;
- help universities or colleges identify the level your son or daughter has studied at in a particular subject, and make it easier to transfer credits between different learning programmes; and
- recognise other areas of learning that may contribute to your son or daughter's 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			PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD	BACHELORS / ORDINARY DEGREE GRADUATE DIPLOMA GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	SVQ4
8		HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA		DIPLOMA OF HIGHER EDUCATION	
7	ADVANCED HIGHER SCOTTISH BACCALAUREATE	CREDIT POINTS 32 104	HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION	SVQ3
6	HIGHER	24			
5	INTERMEDIATE 2 CREDIT STANDARD GRADE	24 24			SVQ2
4	INTERMEDIATE 1 GENERAL STANDARD GRADE	24 24	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	NATIONAL PROGRESSION AWARD	SVQ1
3	ACCESS 3 FOUNDATION STANDARD GRADE	18 24			
2	ACCESS 2	18			
1	ACCESS 1				



## TABLE TIP

Don't worry if you are not familiar with some of the qualifications mentioned above. You will learn more about them as your son or daughter moves through school. For more information on each award and its credit points, visit our website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

## TABLE NOTES

We have produced this Framework diagram to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications that SQA and higher-education organisations have already given a SCQF level and credit points to. However, there is a varied range of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, we cannot show here. For more information on other learning that has a SCQF level and credit points, please visit our website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)

## OTHER LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND QUALIFICATIONS

There are some other learning programmes and qualifications that your son or daughter might take at school, college or a local youth club that may also have an SCQF level and credit points. This area of the framework will continue to develop, so it is worth checking our website.

SCQF Levels	Learning Programme	Title	Credit Points
6	ASDAN	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 3	15
5	Youthlink	Training for Advocates	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

### What do the level and credit columns mean on my son or daughter's SQA exam certificate?

These refer to the SCQF levels of the exams your son or daughter has taken, and reflect the knowledge and skill they needed to achieve that particular award. So, for example, a Higher will have a '6' in the level column and a '24' in the credit column, as the credit reflects the amount of learning involved in a qualification. A Standard Grade will have a '3', '4' or '5' in the level column, depending on whether they achieve a Foundation, General or Credit Standard grade. All Standard Grades have 24 credit points, whatever their level.

### How does the SCQF fit with Curriculum for Excellence and the new national qualifications?

Curriculum for Excellence will provide a rounded education experience for your son or daughter, and give them the qualifications they need for the fast-paced world we live in. The new national qualifications which will replace Standard Grades and Intermediates 1 and 2 in 2014 will be known as 'National Courses 4 and 5', which directly link to their SCQF level. Curriculum for Excellence also recognises that not all learning takes place in the classroom, and this is also a feature of the SCQF, where credit can be given for informal learning. For more information on Curriculum for Excellence, visit the Parentzone website at:

[www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

### Will the SCQF help my son or daughter to get a job or into a course at college or university?

Not directly – but it will help employers, colleges and universities understand the level of difficulty, the number of credit points and the range of qualifications your son or daughter has achieved. As their career develops, they can add SCQF credit points they achieve at work, college or university to the number they already have.

### How do SCQF credit points relate to UCAS tariff points? Are they the same?

SCQF credit points are not the same as UCAS tariff points. UCAS is the organisation that processes applications for higher-education courses, and tariff points relate to the grade at which a qualification has been achieved. SCQF credit points are a measure of how much learning needs to be done to achieve a particular qualification, whatever the final grade.

### How can the SCQF help my son or daughter choose what subjects to study?

When your son or daughter chooses subjects, it's important that they keep their options open by picking a broad range of subjects and by keeping an open mind about their future career options. The SCQF can help with this by showing how qualifications they study at school, and beyond, relate to each other, and how they can move forward in their learning and achieve their future goals.

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