

QCF

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Background

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) is a credit-based qualifications framework, allowing a unit-based approach to building qualifications. All vocational qualifications will be placed on to the QCF. General qualifications (GCSEs and GCEs) are not included as yet, but it is intended that they will be placed on the framework by 2013. The QCF will replace the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) by December 2010 for all 14+ vocational qualifications not just 19+ as originally stated by QCA. With it comes new powers for Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) as the voice of the employers to approve qualifications on to the QCF. The regulators' are committed to a strategic, risk-based approach to safeguarding the interests of the learners. This means more checking of the awarding organisation's processes for developing units and rules of combinations (RoC) and awarding credit, rather than checking every individual unit submitted to the QCF.

What is Credit?

One credit represents 10 hours of learning time.

Learning time is the amount of time a learner at the level of the unit, is expected to take, on average, to complete the learning outcomes of the unit to the standard defined by the assessment criteria.

Learning time is different from guided learning hours (glh) which does not include learning away from the teacher. Learning time includes all the time needed to achieve a unit, including directed study, homework, assessment time and preparation time.

BTECs in the QCF

BTECs have an important position in the skills agenda and we will be re-developing the BTECs to be QCF compliant for 2010.

Tests and Trials

Ministers asked the regulators for England (QCA) Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA) to subject the proposed framework to 'Tests and Trials' over a two year period from September 2006 to June 2008. Edexcel was involved with a number of Tests and Trials with learners, employers, other awarding bodies, Sector Skills Councils, colleges and training providers. The regulators final report with recommendations was published in June 2008.

NQF to QCF Timescales

QCF is already live and there are awarding organisations' qualifications on the National Database for Accredited Qualifications (NDAC): www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

QCF is expected to be fully operational by December 2010.

Vocational qualifications accredited into the NQF will not have an accredited end date beyond 31st December 2010.

Any new accreditations from 1st January 2010 will have to be within the QCF.

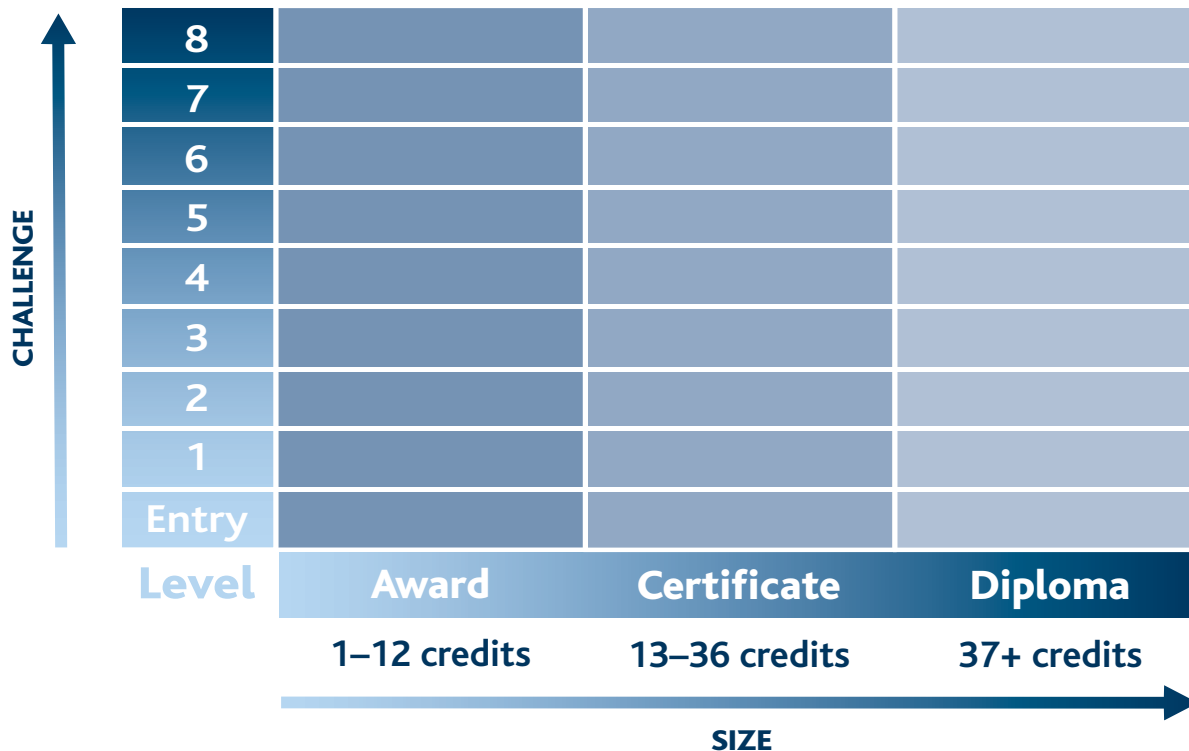
IT Systems in the QCF

Edexcel systems are currently able to accept Unique Learner Numbers (ULN), but do not require them to certificate a qualification comprising of Edexcel or BTEC units.

All existing systems, including on-line approval, on-line registration, certification and quality assurance systems will continue as present. Workshops are available for centres when they register for Workskills.

Edexcel are committed to implementing the IT requirements of the QCF. Any changes this may require to our systems will be communicated clearly to centres at the earliest opportunity.

The Qualifications and Credit Framework



Funding:

The DCSF plan to put forward more detailed proposals on how we will move 14-19 qualifications onto a credit-based framework, with a view to completing this move by 2013.

In 2008/09 LSC funding for 16-19 year olds will be based on a 14-19 plan for each area, which will be drawn up with the support of a 14-19 strategic partnership that involves all key stakeholders. Funding will support the plan by ensuring that allocations are made to fund provision in line with the 14-19 plan and the regional commissioning plan. Provision that does not support the locally agreed plan and local 14-19 objectives will not receive any allocation for growth, and in future, should the provision conflict with local plans and objectives, then funding may be withdrawn.

LSC funding for adults will prioritise funding based on the advice of the SSCs, and supports shared or restricted units within full Level 2 and Level 3 and other priority qualifications.

For Entry and Level 1 qualifications within a Progression Pathway (FLT) units must be shared. 2008/09 is the first year of the operation of the QCF (apart from the Test and Trials). The process for then aligning public funding with priority qualifications will be staged. The LSC is working with a small number of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) to trial this.

The funding switch from NQF to QCF provision will be from August 2009.

It is unlikely that 16-19 or adult funding will be based on credit any time soon and so will continue to be based on guided learning hours (glh).

For more information on 2008/09 funding there is 'The hands on guide to post-16 funding' available from edexcel.com/fundingguide

Other information:

www.edexcel.com www.ofqual.gov.uk/51.aspx www.qca.org.uk/qca_8150.aspx

www.ukces.org.uk/readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-deliveringworldclassskills-jan07.pdf