

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SCQF lets you compare Scottish qualifications and see how one can lead to another. It makes it easier for you to see how to **move on** or **move between** qualifications and plan what you need for the course or job you want to do.

Aims of the Framework

The SCQF aims to:

- make it easier to compare the various Scottish qualifications
- make it easier to see how different ways of learning – at school, college or work – compare
- describe qualifications by a **level** and a number of **credit points**
- help you to see the next step you should take
- save you doing the same work again – you can use credits from one course in another course.

Every qualification has a **level** (based on how difficult the learning is) and a **credit value** (based on the amount of learning it takes to get it), so you can compare them to see where they stand in relation to each other.

Levels

The SCQF has 12 Levels

- they range from level 1 for basic education to level 12 for very advanced education
- in any level, some qualifications cover a broad range of knowledge and skills while others are much more specialised
- but they are at the same level because the work is at the same level of difficulty.

If you look at the table below you will see that there are some different qualifications at the same level. For example the Advanced Higher is level 7, and so is the Higher National Certificate (HNC). This doesn't mean they are the same. The content is different and they are assessed differently, but each is as hard to achieve as the other. They are at the same level because they need the same level of skill and understanding to complete.

Credit Values

Each qualification has also been allocated a number of credit points. These points are for the amount of learning you have to do to get the qualification. One SCQF credit point represents a notional ten hours of learning time. So some qualifications, at the same level, earn more points than others.

For example the Advanced Higher and the HNC are both at level 7, but each Advanced Higher is worth 32 credit points and each HNC is worth 96.

The table shows Highers are at level 6. Each is worth 24 credit points.

Standard grades are also worth 24 credit points but, as the table shows, Foundation courses are at level 3, General courses at level 4 and Credit courses at level 5.

You can use your credit points to move on to courses at a higher level. Some universities now ask for a certain number of SCQF credit points for entry.

You may be able to transfer credit points from one course to another. For example if you took an Advanced Higher in Information Systems at school, it could be credited towards the HNC Computing in a further education college. You should not need to do it again.

The table below shows the main Scottish qualifications and where they lie in the SCQF.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SCQF Levels	SQA National Units, Courses and Other Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12	Professional Development Awards, spanning Levels 6 to 12	Doctorate	
11		Masters Degree Post Graduate Diploma Post Graduate Certificate	SVQ 5
10		Honours Degree Graduate Certificate or Diploma	
9		Ordinary Degree Graduate Certificate or Diploma	
8		Higher National Diploma (HND) or Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	
6	Higher		SVQ 3
5	Intermediate 2 or Credit Standard Grade		SVQ 2
4	Intermediate 1 or General Standard Grade National Certificates National Progression Awards		SVQ 1
3	Access 3 or Foundation Standard Grade		
2	Access 2		
1	Access 1		

1. The new Skills for Work courses are National Courses available as Access, Intermediate and Higher Qualifications (SCQF levels 3 - 6).
2. Ongoing work to credit rate SVQs shows that SVQ units range from SCQF level 4 to level 12. SVQs at 3 and 4 can be placed at different SCQF levels.

As you gain higher qualifications you could move either horizontally or vertically through the table – for example you could:

- take Standard grades at General level (SCQF level 4) at school
- then start work and take an SVQ level 2 (SCQF level 5) then SVQ level 3 (SCQF level 6)
- move on to an HNC (SCQF level 7) perhaps by part time study while you were still working
- then perhaps go back to full time study for an HND (SCQF level 8) and maybe a degree (SCQF level 9 or 10).

There are a lot of choices and there will be changes to the SCQF over the next few years, to include a broader range of qualifications, so check the website to see what's new.

Web: <http://www.scqf.org.uk/>