

Making sense of Qualifications and Levels

National Qualifications Framework combining QCA and QAA (revised Jan 07)ⁱ	General/academic subjects	Vocationally related oriented towards a vocation/ profession or trade	Occupational directly applicable to gaining or developing in work
8 D (doctorate) level	Doctorates	Doctorates	Doctorates in professional Practice and by Public Works Level 5 NVQ or diplomas derived from Sector Skills Council Qualification Frameworks approved by QCA ⁱⁱ
7 M (masters) level	Master degree, Postgraduate certificates & postgraduate diplomas	Master degree, Postgraduate certificates & postgraduate diplomas, graduate apprenticeships Key skills	Master of Professional Practice (WBL) Level 5 NVQ or diplomas derived from Sector Skills Council Qualification Frameworks approved by QCA
6 H (honours) level	Bachelors degrees with Honours, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas	Bachelors degrees with Honours, graduate certificates Higher and graduate diplomas Key skills	Level 4 NVQ or diplomas derived from Sector Skills Council Qualification Frameworks approved by QCA
5 I (Intermediate) level	Ordinary (Bachelors) degrees, diplomas of Higher Education and other higher diplomas	Foundation degrees, ordinary (Bachelors) degrees, diplomas of Higher Education and other higher diplomas eg HND's Key skills	Level 4 NVQ or diplomas derived from Sector Skills Council Qualification Frameworks approved by QCA
4 C (certificate) level	Certificates of Higher Education	Certificates of Higher Education HNC's Key skills	Level 4 NVQ or diplomas derived from Sector Skills Council Qualification Frameworks approved by QCA
3 advanced level	A and AS levels, key skills or functional skills	Vocational A levels Various vocational diplomas and awards eg BTEC Nationals Specialised Diplomas Advanced Apprenticeships, including key skills or functional skills ⁱⁱⁱ	Level 3 NVQ Advanced Apprenticeships, including key skills or functional skills
2 intermediate level	GCSE grade A*-C	Intermediate GNVQ Various vocational certificates and awards Specialised Diplomas Vocational GCSE (grade A*-C) Apprenticeships, including key skills or functional skills Functional skills	Level 2 NVQ Apprenticeships, including key skills or functional skills
1 foundation level	GCSE grade D-G	Vocational GCSE grade D-G Foundation GNVQ Specialised Diplomas	Level 1 NVQ
Entry level	Cert of educational achievement		

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ⁱ QCA levels are represented in numerals.

ⁱⁱ Sector Skills Councils (SSC) is developing qualifications and a framework to locate them to reflect employer need in their sector. In addition the SCC is responsible for maintaining and developing the national occupational standards applicable to them.

ⁱⁱⁱ Functional skills are being developed by QCA to replace key skills in numeracy and communication amongst others over time.