

## **National Qualifications framework: Making sense of qualifications and levels.**

There have been many variations of diagrams, charts and tables which try to unravel the complexity of the structures, levels and meanings of qualifications nationally. Revisions to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which came into force in January 2006 prompted many organisations to provide new ways in which the qualifications framework could be presented to enable users to access and understand the new arrangements.

The revised NQF has since had further development and change for example the introduction of Specialised Diplomas, Functional Skills and the engagement of Sector Skills Councils in new diploma qualifications.

One thing is definite ... There will be more changes and revisions and the framework will continue to evolve and adapt to reflect national agendas such as Leitch etc.

In an effort to simplify the current state of play, Simon Roodhouse and Yvonne Dickinson agreed to co-author a version that could be used in many contexts by different users such as prospective learners as they try to understand progression routes and levels of qualifications or indeed Staff in FE and HE Institutions as they develop curricula and support progression opportunities through subject or sector themes.

This diagram, based on earlier published research<sup>1</sup> by Simon Roodhouse and from various websites and organisations, gives a simple and clear representation of the types of qualifications and levels that 14+ education are working with. Use this as you see fit, whether as an 'aide memoire' on your notice board, as a visual in prospectuses and brochures or as copy in your bulletins and fact sheets for onward circulation. Please acknowledge the source in line with standard copyright legislation.

We would be pleased to receive comments and examples of how this has been used as we may not have captured all the alternatives and complexities of the national qualifications matrix.

Thank you

Professor Simon Roodhouse and Yvonne Dickinson (2007)

---

<sup>1</sup> 2004, Connectivity and Responsiveness to Vocational Higher Education to Promote Workforce Development, Journal of Media Practice, volume 5 number 1pp 33 - 42