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Qualifications Frameworks for Quality: Good Practices in Quality Assurance

Dr Padraig Walsh

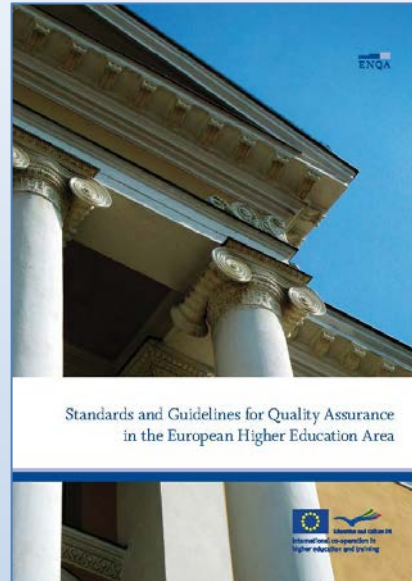
Chief Executive,
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)



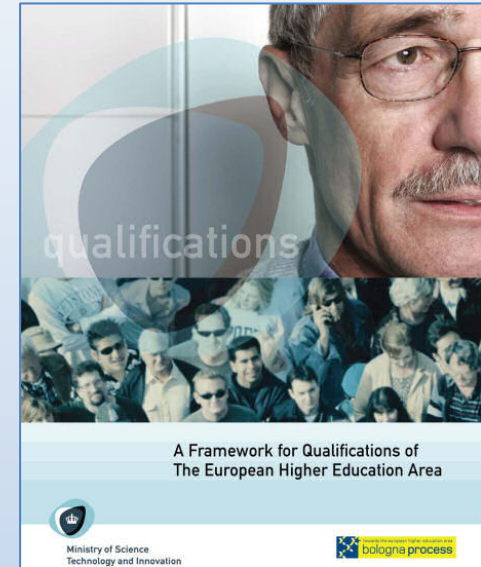
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In Bergen (Norway) in 2005, European ministers for Higher Education adopted two documents



Standards and Guidelines for
Quality Assurance in the
European Higher Education
Area (ESG)

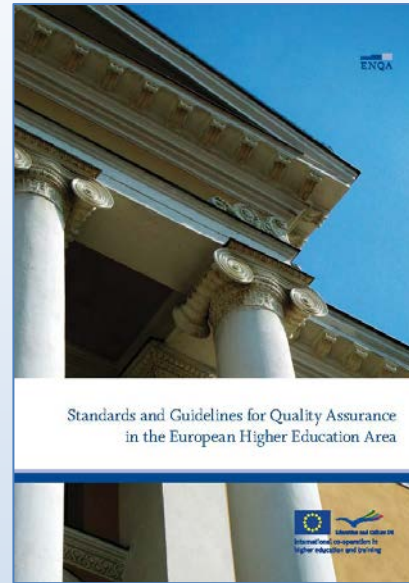


A Framework for
Qualifications on the
European Higher Education
Area (QF – EHEA)



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As the ESG and QF-EHEA were adopted
at the same time, there is no explicit
mention of qualifications frameworks in
ESG 2005



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A revised version of the ESG was
adopted by the Ministers in Yerevan
(Armenia) in 2015



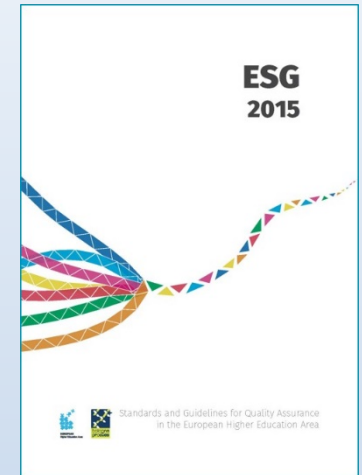
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‘Since 2005, considerable progress has been made in quality assurance as well as in other Bologna action lines such as qualifications frameworks, recognition and the promotion of the use of learning outcomes ...’

‘The ESG should be considered in a broader context that also includes qualifications frameworks ... that ... contribute to promoting the transparency and mutual trust in higher education in the EHEA’





*‘Programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the **intended learning outcomes**. The qualifications resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the **correct level** of the **national qualifications framework** for higher education and, consequently, to the **Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area**.’*

*‘... **quality assurance** processes for assessment take into account the following:
- ... the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the **intended learning outcomes** have been **achieved**’*





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QA and QF good practice - linkage and sequencing

- A programme of study is designed by a higher education institution leading to a qualification in the **national qualifications framework**
- The programme is developed and **validated/accredited** so that it sets out the **intended learning outcomes** that are appropriate to the **relevant level** on the NQF
- The **assessment** strategy for the programme is such that it allows the student to **achieve** the **intended learning outcomes**



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QA and QF good practice - linkage and sequencing

- Quality assurance mechanisms such as **monitoring** and (internal) **periodic review** of the programme are such that they can measure if students are **achieving** the **intended learning outcomes**
- Cyclical external quality assurance measures the extent to which the higher education institution is ensuring that programmes are levelled both **ex ante** and **ex post** at the appropriate level in the NQF



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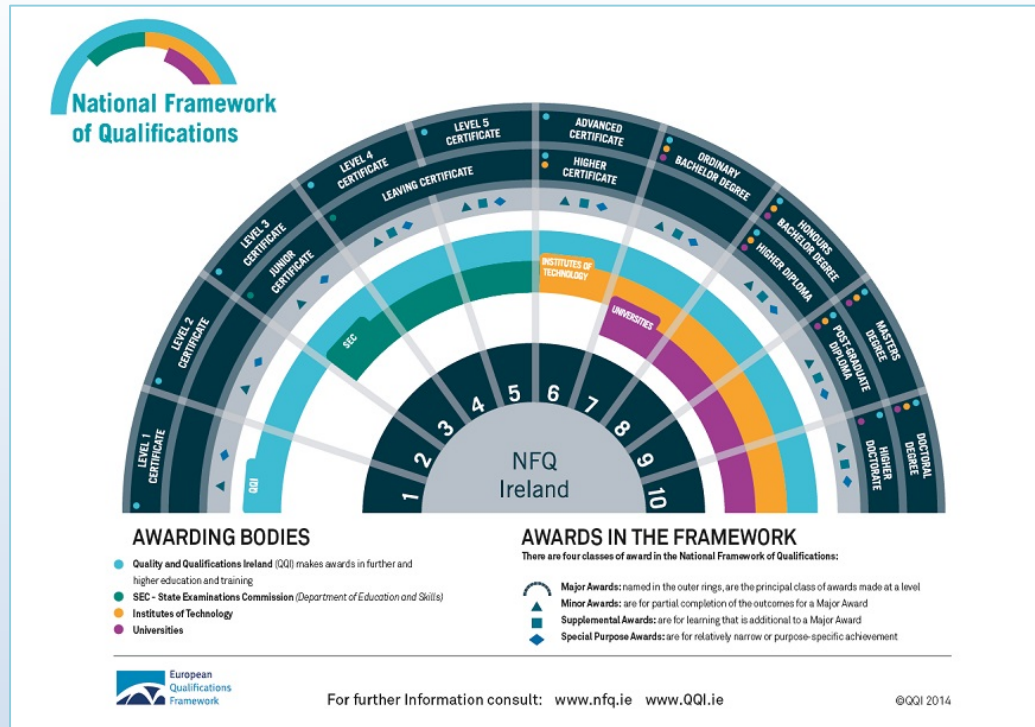
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- QQI was established in 2012 as an amalgamation of 4 bodies that were responsible for **quality assurance** and **qualifications** :
- QQI is responsible for
 - Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Further Education and Training/VET
 - The Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
 - NARIC Ireland (qualifications recognition advice)



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- Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
- Established in 2003
- Comprehensive framework for General Education, Further Education and Training (VET), Higher Education

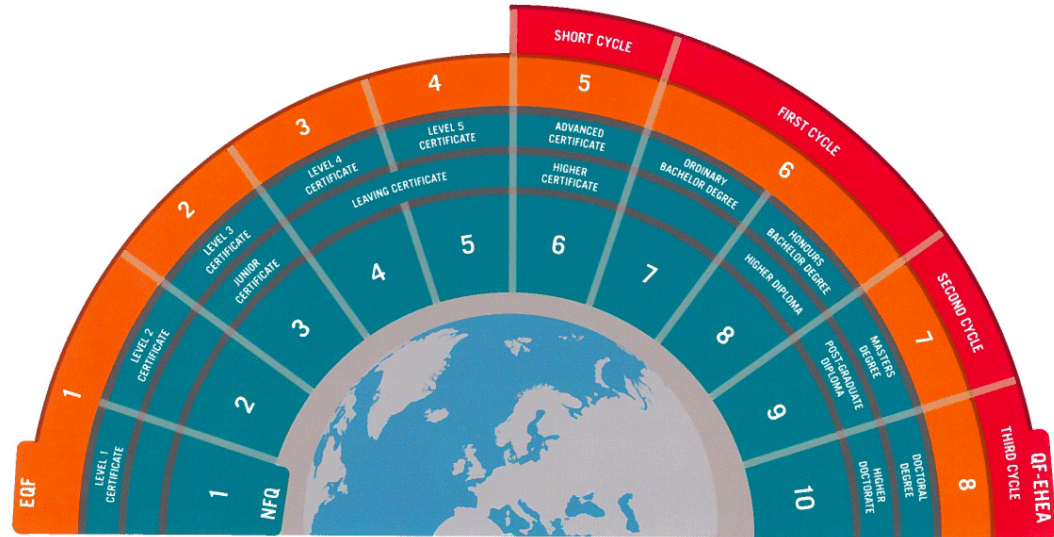


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Qualifications Frameworks - Going Global



- NQF Irish National Framework of Qualifications
- EQF European Qualifications Framework
- QF-EHEA Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area



For further information consult: www.nfq.ie www.qqi.ie

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Ireland was the first country to reference its NQF to both of the European meta- frameworks: QF-EHEA and EQF



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National QF to national QF – comparisons and alignment



In addition to referencing national frameworks to continental meta-frameworks, it is also good practice to perform comparisons and alignments between different national frameworks, particularly where there is (a history of or a wish to promote) mobility of students and qualified workers between the respective national jurisdictions

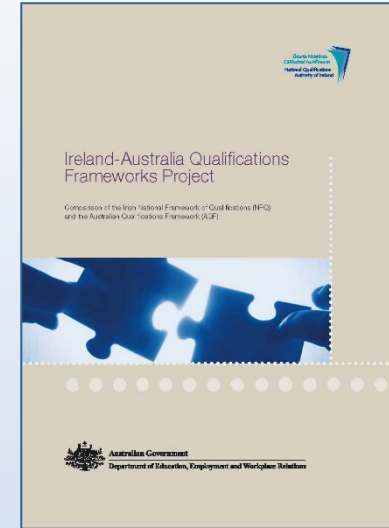


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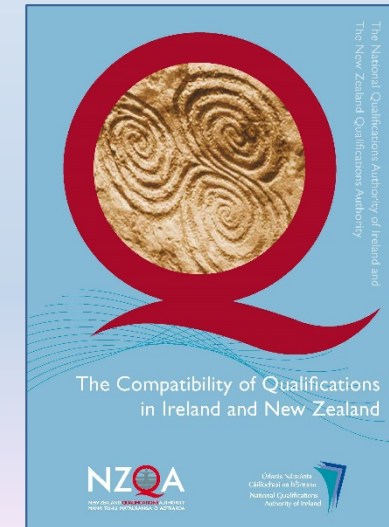
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Comparing National Frameworks

Ireland and Australia (2010)



Ireland and New Zealand (2010, currently being updated)





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Qualifications recognition advice

- inwards

QQI hosts NARIC Ireland, which provides downloadable comparability statements for qualifications (now numbering over 1000 qualifications from over 60 countries) to assist graduates in having their foreign qualifications recognised for employment purposes or for access to further education opportunities





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Qualifications recognition advice - inwards



Browser window showing the NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications search page. The URL is <https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search/searchtype=recognitions>.

Navigation menu: Home, Search, Publications, Policies, Reviews, Programmes, Awards, Providers, Validation Reports, **NARIC**, Exemptions, Infographics.

NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications

NARIC Ireland provides advice on the academic recognition of a foreign qualification by comparing it, where possible, to a major award type and level on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). A comparability statement for each qualification listed is available for download.

Click here to see our "Guide to using the NARIC database".

If you are unable to locate a particular qualification, you may submit a query using the query form available [here](#).

Search

Country:

Type of Education:

1085 Qualifications

Licence (الإجازة) Bachelor Degree	NFQ Level: 8	Country: Algeria
Diplôme d'Études Supérieures (ديبلوم في الدراسات العليا) Diploma of Higher Studies	NFQ Level: 8	Country: Algeria
Licenciado Bachelor Degree	NFQ Level: 8	Country: Argentina
Specialist Diploma (Հիպոտ մասնագետի) Irish Award Type: Honours Bachelor Degree	NFQ Level: 8	Country: Armenia
Certificate III Irish Award Type: An Award at Level 4	NFQ Level: 4	Country: Australia
Certificate IV Irish Award Type: Level 5 Certificate	NFQ Level: 5	Country: Australia
Diploma Irish Award Type: An Award at Level 6	NFQ Level: 6	Country: Australia
Advanced Diploma		



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Qualifications recognition advice

- outwards



Useful links

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) www.nqai.ie

National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) www.nfq.ie

Qualifications Recognition www.qualrec.ie

ENIC-NARIC (European Network of Information Centres)
/National Academic Recognition Information Centres
www.enic-naric.net

FETAC www.fetac.ie

HETAC www.hetac.ie

European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) www.ec.europa.eu/eqf/home_en.htm

Bologna Framework
www.nqai.ie/documents/bolognasummary.pdf

Europass www.europass.ie

Department of Education and Skills www.education.ie



Údarás Náisiúnta
Cáilíochtaí na hÉireann
National Qualifications
Authority of Ireland
www.nqai.ie

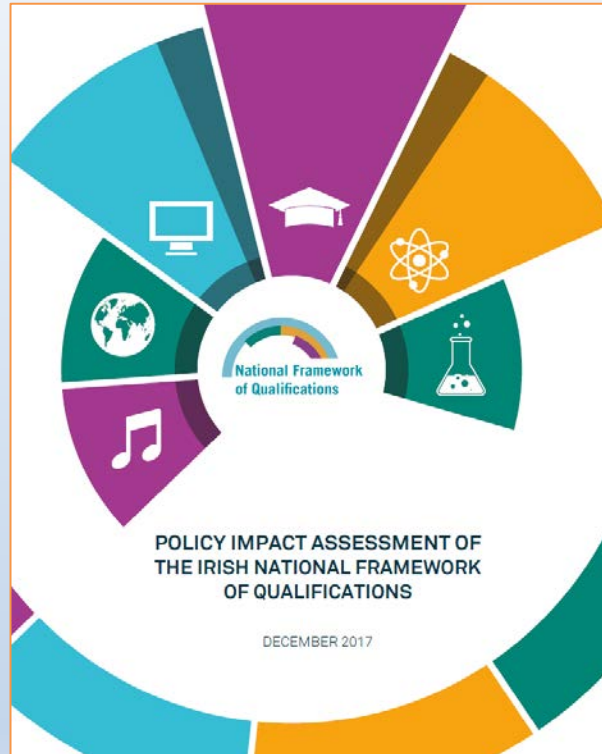




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Policy Impact assessment of NFQ





Policy Impact assessment of NFQ

- Selected findings on quality and skills matching



FINDINGS: THE NFQ IMPACT ON...

Quality of Qualifications

[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



Qualifications included in the NFQ are relevant for users (learners, employers etc.)



Qualifications included in the NFQ are highly trusted, nationally and internationally.



Overall, the NFQ has enhanced the quality of qualifications in Ireland.



Qualifications included in the NFQ meet consistent quality standards wherever they are provided.

Employment/ Skills Matching

[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



The NFQ has improved the dialogue between the world of qualifications & the world of work.



Vocational qualifications included in the NFQ signal relevant skills and competencies required for particular occupations.



The NFQ has facilitated better matching between skills and job vacancies.

Public awareness levels of the NFQ are at their highest level since commencing a longitudinal survey in 2014. Today, one in three claim to be aware of the NFQ.



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Thank You!

Useful links:

Irish National Framework of Qualifications – www.NFQ.ie

ESG 2015 – www.engq.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

NARIC Ireland - www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/NARIC-Ireland.aspx

Policy Impact Assessment of the NFQ - www.qqi.ie/Downloads/NFQ%20Review%20at%20a%20Glance.pdf

QQI – www.QQI.ie