

Why Quality Assurance Matters

Dr Janet Brown
Chief Executive



About SQA



- ◆ International accreditation and awarding body
- ◆ Established by an Act of Parliament & work closely with government
- ◆ Staff in Scotland, UK & key international regions
- ◆ Comprehensive portfolio including Higher Education Qualifications that offer progression to degree study

National framework expertise

- ◆ Founding partner of SCQF
- ◆ Current member of SCQF Partnership
- ◆ All SQA qualifications on SCQF
- ◆ Credit rating body
 - Credit rate own provision
 - Approval of SCQF credit rating submissions
 - Credit rating of third-party provision
- ◆ Work with others on framework alignment
- ◆ Provide expertise on framework development



Key messages

- ◆ The importance of QA in QFs
- ◆ Quality assurance – responsibility of all
- ◆ QA needs to be embedded
- ◆ Framework alignment essential



Why have Quality Assurance in QFs?

- ◆ Standards
- ◆ Trusted by ALL
- ◆ Benefits
 - Recognition
 - Comparability
 - Benchmarking
 - Portability



QA of frameworks & CROs

- ◆ Governance
- ◆ Partnership
- ◆ Buy-in & support
- ◆ Credit rating organisations:
 - good standing; robust QA; capacity & commitment
 - application and visit
- ◆ On-going monitoring



QA of qualifications on the SCQF

- ◆ Own qualifications
 - Credit and level embedded in the design and development process
 - Validation and Accreditation
 - On-going monitoring
- ◆ Others
 - Rated and vetted
 - Visit
 - Decision by independent groups
 - On-going monitoring



THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK



scottish credit and qualifications framework

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications			Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12				DOCTORAL DEGREE	
11				INTEGRATED MASTERS DEGREE / MASTERS DEGREE POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	SVQ5
10				HONOURS DEGREE GRADUATE DIPLOMA GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	
9			PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD	BACHELORS / ORDINARY DEGREE GRADUATE DIPLOMA GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	SVQ4
8		HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA		DIPLOMA OF HIGHER EDUCATION	
7	ADVANCED HIGHER SCOTTISH BACCALAUREATE	HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE		CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION	SVQ3
6	HIGHER				
5	INTERMEDIATE 2 CREDIT STANDARD GRADE				SVQ2
4	INTERMEDIATE 1 GENERAL STANDARD GRADE	NATIONAL CERTIFICATE	NATIONAL PROGRESSION AWARD		SVQ1
3	ACCESS 3 FOUNDATION STANDARD GRADE				
2	ACCESS 2				
1	ACCESS 1				

Framework alignment

- ◆ Ensure its own systems & processes are robust
- ◆ QA from development to on-going maintenance
- ◆ Qualifications credit rated against national frameworks
- ◆ Framework to framework alignment



SCQF → other UK frameworks

- ◆ No overarching (*metaframework*) in the UK
- ◆ 5 frameworks in UK
- ◆ Partnership approach to align frameworks
Worked closely – with end users in mind
- ◆ Has maximised the mobility of learners and workers



Framework comparison

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework www.scf.org.uk		Qualifications and Credit Framework/National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland* www.ofqual.gov.uk		Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq	
LEVEL		LEVEL		LEVEL	
10	Bachelor's Degrees with Honours, Professional Development Awards, Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates	6	Vocational Qualifications Level 6	6	Bachelor's Degrees with Honours, Bachelor's Degrees, Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates
9	Bachelor's/Ordinary Degrees, Professional Development Awards, SVQ Level 4, Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates				
8	Higher National Diplomas, SVQ Level 4, Professional Development Awards, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	NVQ Level 4, Higher National Diplomas (HND), Higher National Certificates (HNC), Vocational Qualifications Level 5	5	Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE), Higher National Diplomas (HND)
7	Professional Development Awards, Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) SVQ Level 3, Advanced Highers,	4	Vocational Qualifications Level 4	4	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)

SCQF → EQF



- ◆ EQF is a reference framework and translation device
- ◆ Overarching (*metaframework*) for member countries of the European Union
- ◆ SCQF part of the UK EQF Co-ordinating Group
- ◆ Consultation and partnership between framework authorities in UK
- ◆ SCQF and other UK frameworks referenced to EQF

European Qualifications Framework

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF)	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)	European Higher Education Area (EHEA – Bologna)
8	8	12	3 rd Cycle
7	7	11	2 nd Cycle
6	6	10/9	1 st Cycle
5	5/4	8/7	Short Cycle
4	3	6	
3	2	5	
2	1	4	
1	E3	3	
	E2	2	
	E1	1	

Who benefits?

- ◆ Learners
- ◆ Employers
- ◆ Business & industry
- ◆ Economies
- ◆ Wider society

