

The Qualifications and Credit Framework

The Framework is a new way of recognising skills and qualifications. It does this by awarding credit for qualifications and units (small steps of learning). It enables people to gain qualifications at their own pace along flexible routes.

At present, it can be hard to understand all the different types of qualification that learners hold - what level they are, how long they take to complete, what content they cover, and how they compare to other qualifications. The new framework will help present qualifications in a way that is easy to understand and measure.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Credit and level

Every unit and qualification in the framework will have a credit value (one credit represents 10 hours, showing how much time it takes to complete) and a level between Entry Level and Level Eight (showing how difficult it is).

There are three sizes of qualifications in the Qualifications and Credit Framework:

- Awards (1 to 12 credits)
- Certificates (13 to 36 credits)
- Diplomas (37 credits or more)

So in the new framework you can have an award at Level 1 or an award at Level Eight. This is because the qualification type "award", "certificate", "diploma" represents the size of a qualification, not how difficult it is.

Each qualification title contains the following:

- the level of the qualification (from Entry Level at the bottom to Level Eight at the top)
- the size of qualification (award/certificate/diploma)
- details indicating the content of the qualification

Simply by looking at the title of a qualification you will be able to see how difficult it is, how long it will take the average learner to complete, and its general content.

The framework has been tested and trialed during 2007-08 and will be fully put in place in 2008-10.

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