



ACHIEVEMENT COUNTS

A STUDENTS' GUIDE TO
CREDITS AND QUALIFICATIONS

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Clarity approved by
Plain English Campaign

scqf[®]

scottish credit and
qualifications framework

MAKING SENSE OF CREDITS AND QUALIFICATIONS

You will become aware of the SCQF as it features on your SQA Scottish Qualifications Certificate issued every August. This leaflet tells you about the SCQF and how you will benefit from it.

WHAT IS IT?

The SCQF is a way of comparing the wide range of Scottish qualifications. It covers achievements such as those from school, college and university, and many work-based qualifications. It does this by giving each qualification a level and a number of credit points.

As you can see from the table opposite, the level of a qualification shows how difficult the learning is. For example, one person may study a course at Intermediate 1 and another at Higher. Both award the same number of SCQF credit points but they are at different levels of difficulty. The credit points show how much learning is involved in achieving that qualification and you will get credit points for all the learning you have achieved.



WHAT IS IT FOR?

The SCQF makes qualifications easier to describe and understand. Before the SCQF, there was no easy way to compare qualifications of different types. Now there's an easier way to show that – for example, an Advanced Higher is at the same level as a Higher National Certificate, or HNC (though there is less time spent learning). SCQF is being used more and more to measure achievement in schools, colleges and universities.

HOW IS THE SCQF BEING USED?

Many Scottish universities and colleges are now using the SCQF levels and credit points to describe their courses.

THE SCQF CAN:

- help you choose how you make progress in your learning;
- help you understand qualifications you are not familiar with;
- help employers understand different types of qualifications;
- help universities or colleges identify the level that has been studied in a particular subject; and
- recognise other areas of your learning that may contribute to your personal development and your goals for the future.

THE 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	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				



TABLE TIP

Don't worry if you are not familiar with some of the qualifications mentioned above. You will learn more about them as you move on through school. Each one is explained, along with their credit points, on the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk

TABLE NOTES

We have produced this Framework diagram to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and higher-education institutions. However, there is a varied range of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limits of this format, cannot be shown here. For more information on other credit rated education, please visit our website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the database

OTHER LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND QUALIFICATIONS

There are some other learning programmes and qualifications you might take in your school or youth club that also have a level and credit points. This area of the Framework will be continually developed, so keep your eye on the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk

SCQF Levels	Learning Programme	Title	Credit Points
6	ASDAN ¹	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 3	15
5	Youthlink ²	Training for Advocates	2
5	City and Guilds ³	Certificate in Retail Principles	34
5	ASDAN ¹	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 2	12
4	ASDAN ¹	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 1	12
4	Youth Scotland ⁴	Youth Achievement Award Bronze	7
5	Youth Scotland ⁴	Youth Achievement Award Silver	11
6	Youth Scotland ⁴	Youth Achievement Award Gold	14
7	Youth Scotland ⁴	Youth Achievement Award Platinum	16

1 Credit rated by SQA 2 Credit rated by Adam Smith College 3 Credit rated by SQA 4 Credit rated by SQA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do SCQF credit points relate to UCAS tariff points? Are they the same?

SCQF credit points are not the same as UCAS tariff points. UCAS tariff points relate to the grade at which a qualification has been achieved. SCQF credits are a measure of how much learning you need to do to achieve a qualification, no matter what grade you gain.

Why does an 'A' at Higher get the same number of SCQF credit points as a 'C' at Higher?

The number of SCQF credit points you've gained doesn't change depending on your grade at any particular level – the SCQF credit points reflect how much learning you've achieved, not how well you've learned it.

Why does Intermediate 1 get 24 credit points, the same as a Higher?

SCQF credit points are awarded on the amount of learning achieved, not on the level of difficulty.

If I build up SCQF credit points, will I get into college or university?

Not directly – although SCQF credit points will help admissions officers in colleges and universities know exactly how much learning you have achieved in a range of areas and SCQF helps describe the level. The admissions officers still have other factors to consider, such as the subjects you studied and grades you achieved – these aren't covered by the SCQF.

Will the SCQF help me to get a job?

Not directly – but it will help employers understand the level of difficulty, the number of credit points you have achieved and the range of qualifications you have achieved for your personal development. As your career develops, any work-based qualifications you achieve may add to the number of credits you already have.

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