

“we’re here  
to help you  
improve your  
workforce”

**Qualifications and Credit Framework**  
for employers



The way that qualifications are organised and structured is changing. This includes all vocational qualifications in all sectors. The current National Qualifications Framework (NQF) will be replaced by the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF). This is a government initiative across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

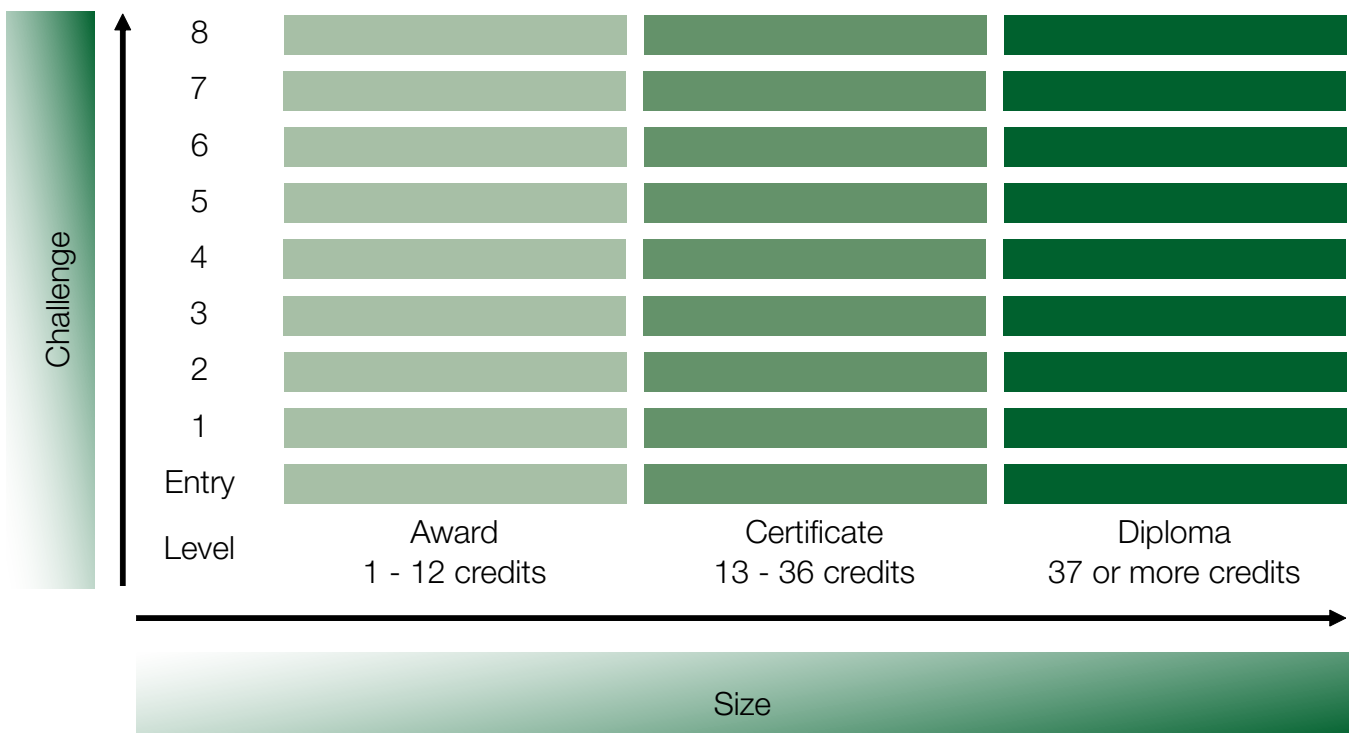
The QCF is a new flexible way of recognising and rewarding skills and qualifications. The QCF will present units and qualifications in a simpler way and it will lead to qualifications that are flexible and meet the skills and knowledge needs of the workforce.

### how will it work?

The diagram illustrates the structure of qualifications on the QCF. Units and qualifications can be distinguished by complexity and size. Every unit and qualification in the framework will have both a credit value and a level. One credit represents 10 hours of learning, so the credit value shows how much time it takes to complete. Levels can vary from entry level through to level 8.

there are three sizes of qualifications in the QCF:

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





### skills for care's response to the QCF

Skills for Care believes that the QCF is a real opportunity to develop units and qualifications in different ways to meet the rapidly changing needs of the workforce, as highlighted through extensive consultation with the sector.

New Types of Working (NToW) highlights the varied way that services are structured to meet the needs of people who use services, from the individual who employs their own workers to multi-national employers. The development of the personalisation agenda means there are new skills and knowledge requirements. In addition there are anticipated changes to the requirements for registration and regulation. Adult social care is facing a number of changes such as the way services are configured to ensure choice and diversity for the people who use services.

In response to the changing needs of the sector the QCF allows for 'spikey profile'. This enables learners to undertake learning at various levels and recognises that job roles include tasks and responsibilities at different levels.

Skills for Care propose qualifications made up of knowledge units and competence units that may require separate or combined assessment methods.

It is envisaged that the current NVQ Level 2 will be replaced by a QCF Level 2 Diploma and the current NVQ Level 3 will be replaced by a QCF Level 3 Diploma.

It is important to emphasise that workers who have undertaken relevant NVQs or VRQs have already got legitimate qualifications that demonstrate competency, and these qualifications will continue to be recognised once the new QCF is in place.

We are still in the early stage of developing qualifications for the QCF. As individual or groups of qualifications are developed in partnership with awarding organisations the following will be determined:

- Assessment criteria.
- Assessment method.
- Credit values for units and whole qualifications.
- Structure of units within qualifications.
- Pathways.

### benefits for you as employers:

- Allows you to measure the level and size of units and qualifications held by prospective workers through a clear and coherent framework.
- Makes training options and pathways clear, helping you find the right training for your workers' learning and your business needs
- You will save cost to your organisation through the avoidance of workers repeating learning.
- Helps you improve retention and progression rates for your workers by recognising smaller steps of achievement.
- You are able to track your workers' achievements through the use of a unique learner number (ULN) and an individual's electronic learner record, giving providers standard information about each worker's past achievements.

**Further information can be found on our website [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)**

## the qualifications and credit framework (QCF) august 2009

This is an update on Skills for Care's direction of travel for developing new qualifications for the Qualification Credit Framework. The introductory leaflets can be found at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf)

### new qualifications

The programme for the development of new QCF units/qualifications has been divided into a number of projects. The current Health and Social Care NVQs will be replaced by Health and Social Care (HSC) Diplomas at Level 2, 3 and 4. To support the HSC Diplomas several other Awards and Certificates will be developed. These smaller qualifications will:

- Allow for specialist pathways within the HSC diploma i.e HSC Diploma in learning disabilities or HSC Diploma in dementia care
- Allow the workforce to supplement learning already achieved with specialist learning
- Encourage Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- Incorporate learning achieved in completion of the Common Induction Standards and Management Induction Standards.

The current list of qualification work streams are:

- Dementia
- Preparing for Work in the Care Sector
- Food Safety & Nutrition
- Induction Award Adults
- Learning Disability
- Physical Disability
- Leadership and Management in Care Services
- First Aid
- Mental Health
- Medication
- Sensory Services
- Substance Misuse
- End of Life Care

- Activities Organiser
- Contracting Procurement & Commissioning
- Moving & handling.

As projects progress further units and qualifications may be identified and developed to meet the needs of the sector.

Many units within the new qualifications will be split on the basis of knowledge (what workers need to know) and performance (what workers need to be able to do). This will enable learners who are not able to demonstrate competence in a work setting, e.g. college, to gain credit for the knowledge units they have acquired. These workstreams enable the creation of units that can be used in various qualifications identified by the Sector Skills Council through rules of combination to avoid duplication of learning.

As individual or groups of qualifications develop the following will be determined:

- Assessment criteria
- Assessment methods
- Credit values for units and whole qualifications
- Structure of units within qualifications.
- Pathways.

This work is taking place in close collaboration with Awarding Organisations, alliance partners and other sector skills councils.

Skills for Care are working rapidly to progress the qualifications in time to meet the deadlines of when the LSC are withdrawing funding.

All new qualifications are envisaged to be ready and available by Autumn 2010.

Further updates and information can be found on our website [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf)

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