



QUALIFICATIONS

What qualifications you can get when you come to college

Almost all of our courses, both full time and part time, lead to a qualification: the exceptions are some short courses and evening classes.

You don't always need to have specific qualifications to enter our courses – you simply enter at the level which suits your ability and experience. Courses in many subject areas are offered at different levels, e.g. at National Certificate and Higher National Certificate, so once you have gained a qualification at one level you could move on to the next.

If you already have qualifications you may be able to cope with an advanced level course such as an HNC. However, if you have had a break from learning or have studied up to Standard grade, you may prefer to start off with an NC or SVQ level 1 or 2 course.

National Certificates and National Qualifications

These non advanced qualifications are designed to provide you with a balanced programme of study. You will be assessed throughout the academic session. Once you have successfully achieved a National Certificate you may be able to progress to a Higher National Certificate course.

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

SVQs are primarily designed for the workplace, but may also be studied at College (where simulated workplace environments have been established), or by a mix of College attendance and workplace training. Assessment may take the form of written or practical project work, according to the nature of the course.

Higher National Certificates, Diplomas and Degree

HNCs and HNDs are widely respected qualifications, which are highly valued by employers and recognised by many professional and technical bodies. Some HNCs and HNDs are linked directly to Degree courses and may be able to give you direct entry into the second or third year of a course.

It is possible therefore to attend college on a full time basis to gain Higher National Units in order to receive the full HNC award, with the HND award requiring a further one full time academic session.

It is possible to gain these units over a longer period by attending on a part time basis during the day, in the evening or on a blended learning basis. HNCs generally require a total of 12 - 15 credits with HNDs generally requiring 30 credits for the award. A Degree is the next level of course we

offer. It is possible, for some awards, to study full time to achieve a Degree in the third year, following on from the HND.

We offer a number of Degree courses. In some cases, a Degree may be achieved following a three year course, with the option of achieving a CertHE after the first year and a DipHE after the second. In many cases, it is now possible to study to Honours Degree level with a fourth year of study. As an Academic Partner of the UHI Millennium Institute, we are able to offer an ever-increasing range of degrees; in some cases we are able to host students studying networked UHI degrees. The UHI has the power to award its own degrees, therefore students completing undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees and other awards (CertHE, DipHE, PgCert, PgDip) may receive their awards from UHI.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

What is the SCQF?

The SCQF is a way of comparing the wide range of Scottish qualifications. It covers achievements such as those from school, college, university, and many work-based qualifications. It does this by giving each qualification a level and a number of credit points. The level of a qualification shows how difficult the learning is. The credit points show how much learning is involved in achieving that qualification. Each credit point represents an average of 10 hours of learning.

The SCQF can:

- help you decide how you progress in your learning;
- help you understand qualifications you are not familiar with;
- help employers understand different types of qualifications and help with the development of your skills;
- help colleges and universities identify the level that has been studied in a particular subject and make it easier to transfer credit points between different learning programmes; and
- provide recognition of other areas of your learning that may contribute to your personal development and your goals for the future.

All Scottish universities and colleges are now using SCQF levels and credit points to describe their courses, if these are included in the Framework. A wide range of other learning is also being recognised using SCQF levels and credits. Some employers are also using SCQF levels instead of, or as well as, types of qualification when they advertise jobs.

The SCQF also helps to illustrate the relationships between Scottish qualifications and those in the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond, which can clarify opportunities for international progression routes and credit transfer. The SCQF has recently been referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), meaning that there is now an easy way to compare the level of qualifications of the countries in Europe who have developed a National Qualifications Framework.

For more information on The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, visit www.scqf.org.uk. For information on the SCQF level and credit points for learning programmes which have been credit rated, search the SCQF database at http://www.scqf.org.uk/SCQF_CourseSearch.aspx?

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 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				

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the relationship between qualifications at each of the levels of SCQF and Higher Education institutions. There are a large number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the flexibility of the system, cannot be represented here. For more information on other or not listed providers, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or contact the contact centre.