



THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE



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The Irish NFQ – Hindsight, Insight and Foresight

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QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



Our Work on Qualifications

- Implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
- National Awarding Body for Further Education and Training
- External Quality Assurance Body for Post-School Education and Training
- Promote and facilitate international recognition of qualifications
- National Co-ordination point for European Qualifications Framework

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

The **NFQ**:

- A system of ten **levels for classifying** qualifications in Ireland
- Promotes the use of **learning outcomes** to represent and recognise learning achievements
- Defines the **relationship between qualifications** and supports **pathways** within further education and employment opportunities
- Promotes public confidence in the **quality of qualifications** offered and achieved in Ireland
- Facilitates academic **recognition of qualifications**
- A **policy instrument** for **lifelong learning**

The Irish NFQ in Practice

❑ **Implementation**

- Legislative framework and partnership approach governing NFQ implementation by awarding bodies, providers and quality assurance bodies.
- Legislation has supported establishment, consolidation and development phases of the NFQ.

❑ **Use**

- Students, employers, researchers, guidance, credential evaluators, regulators, policy makers...

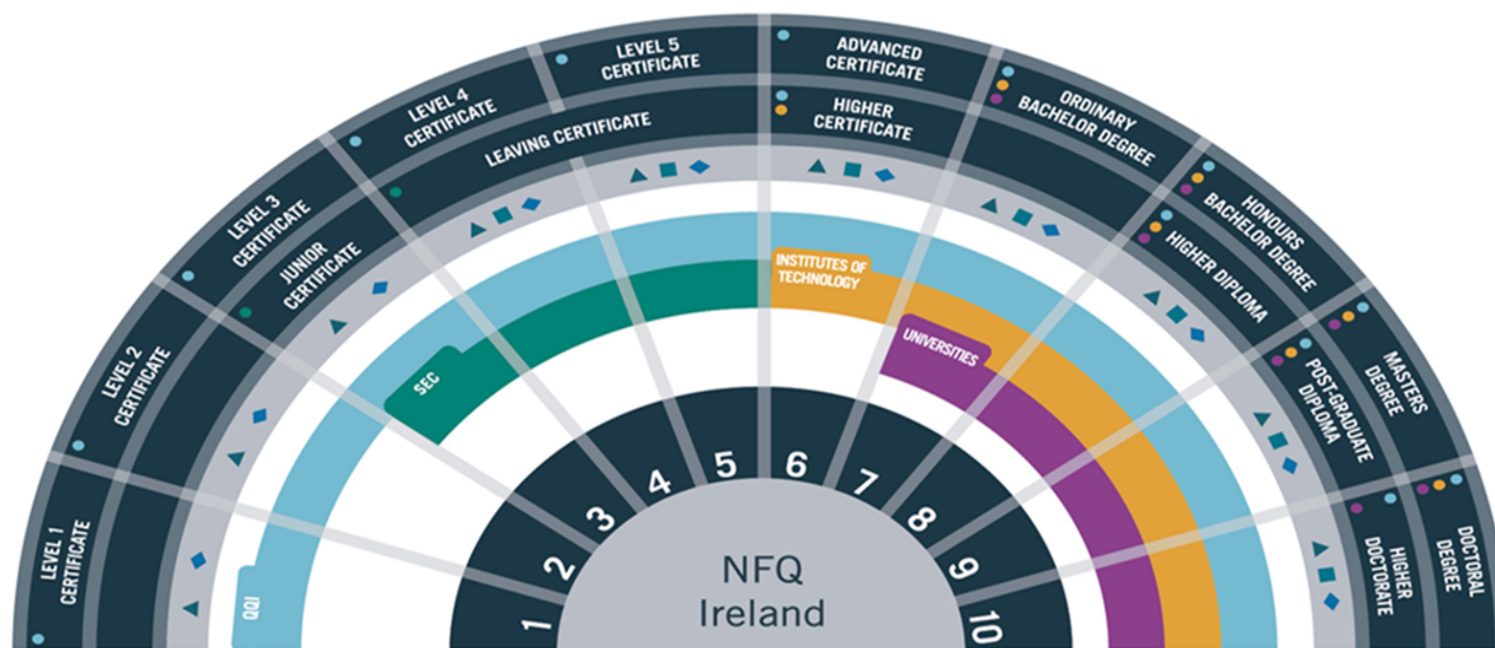
❑ **Impact**

- Transparency, Quality, Lifelong Learning, Mobility and Recognition....

The Irish NQF



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AWARDING BODIES

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) makes awards in further and higher education and training
- SEC - State Examinations Commission (Department of Education and Skills)
- Institutes of Technology
- Universities

AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK

There are four classes of award in the National Framework of Qualifications:

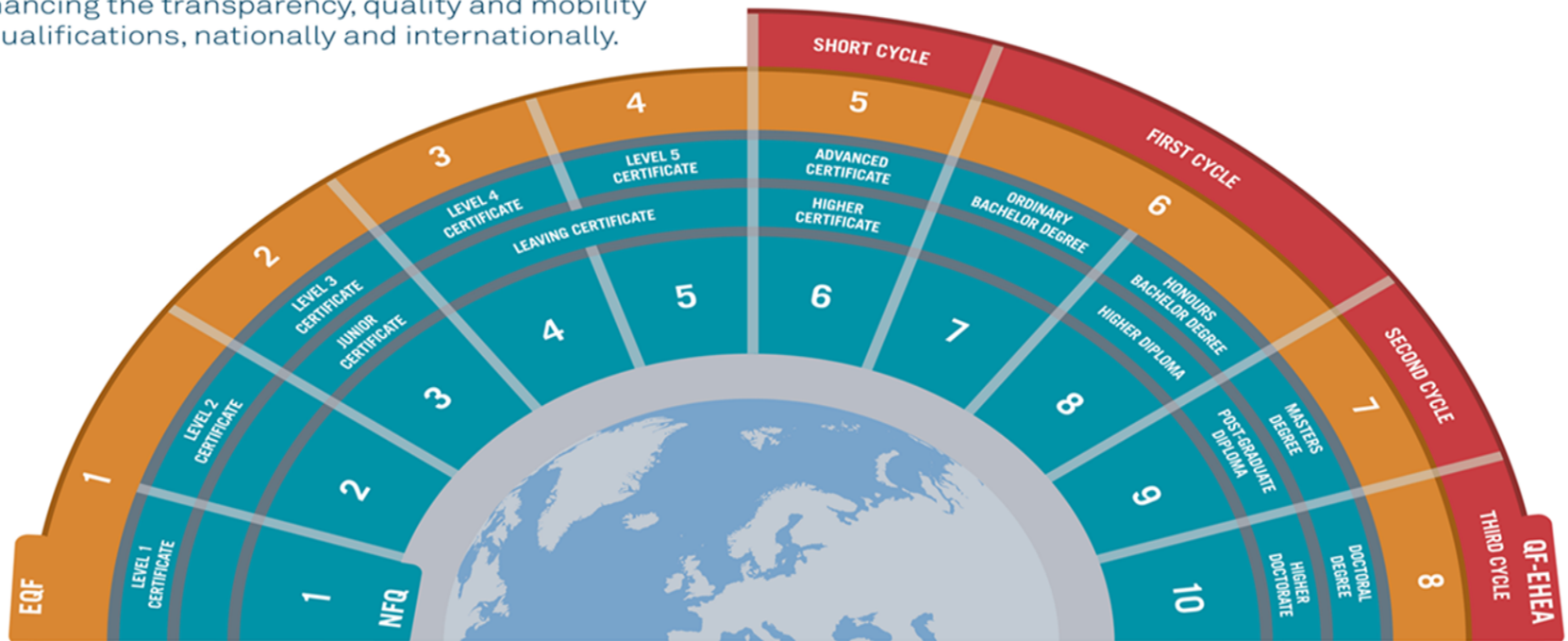
- Major Awards: named in the outer rings, are the principal class of awards made at a level
- ▲ Minor Awards: are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award
- Supplemental Awards: are for learning that is additional to a Major Award
- ◆ Special Purpose Awards: are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement

European Dimension



Qualifications Frameworks - Going Global

Enhancing the transparency, quality and mobility of qualifications, nationally and internationally.



- **NFQ** Irish National Framework of Qualifications
- **EQF** European Qualifications Framework
- **QF-EHEA** Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area

European Referencing – EQF and Bologna system expectations for NQFs

- Describe domestic ***institutional, governance and policy landscape*** for qualifications
- Evidence a functioning NQF based on ***Learning Outcomes***
- ***Lifelong learning*** orientation – RPL, credit, NQF in recognition practices
- Convincing ***technical mapping*** of relevant qualification descriptors
- Transparent process for ***including qualifications within NFQ***
- NQF embedded in national arrangements for ***Quality Assurance***
- ***Visibility*** of EQF and QF-EHEA status
- Secure broad based ***engagement and endorsement*** from national stakeholders
- Alignment subject to ***peer review*** – role of international experts and EQF-AG community.

Reflections and Future Prospects

- Legislation, Institutional arrangements and Stakeholder engagement all matter
- NFQ - a **social** and a **technical** construct
- Qualifications system was implicit – NFQ made it **explicit**
- **Pragmatism** and **consensus** is the Irish way
- Never too early to think about **evaluation**, we didn't!
- **Regional** qualifications frameworks can be influential
- **Policy learning** not policy borrowing
- Growing **expertise and knowledge** available – In Africa and in Europe
- Keeping NFQ **alert** and **responsive** to qualifications and skills ecosystem?

Thank You

