

What is the Bologna Process all about and what implications does it have for our University?



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Dr Declan Kennedy,
Department of Education,
University College Cork

The Bologna Process

- Bologna Agreement signed in Bologna, Italy in 1999 by 29 countries. A total of 46 countries have now signed up to this agreement.
- The overall aim of the Bologna Agreement is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education in Europe in terms of academic standards of degrees and quality assurance standards.
- One of the main features of this process is the need to improve the traditional ways of describing qualifications and qualification structures.



Bologna, Italy (1999)

What countries have signed the Bologna Agreement?

European Union - all 27 countries

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
United Kingdom

Non-European Union

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Croatia
Georgia
Holy See
Iceland
Liechtenstein
Montenegro
Moldova
Norway
Macedonia
Russia
Serbia
Switzerland
Turkey
Ukraine



What is the Bologna Process all about?

- Setting up of European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to ensure the increased international competitiveness of the European system of higher education.
- The Bologna Process is not based on a European Union initiative. The agreement is between both EU and non-EU countries.
- Setting up of system to make it easier to understand the description of qualifications and qualification structures.
- Every student graduating will receive a ***Diploma Supplement*** describing the qualification that the student has received. The purpose of the Diploma Supplement is to improve transparency and facilitate recognition. A standard format will be used to help compare qualifications and make them easier to understand. The Diploma Supplement will also describe the content of the qualification and the structure of the higher education system in which it was issued.

Learning Outcome in Bologna Process

- ‘Ministers encourage the member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area.’

Berlin Communiqué 2003

- ‘We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles.’

Bergen Communiqué 2005

- ‘We underline the importance of curricula reform leading to qualifications better suited both to the needs of the labour market and to further study. Efforts should concentrate in future on removing barriers to access and progression between cycles and on proper implementation of ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload.’
- ‘Qualifications frameworks are important instruments in achieving comparability and transparency within the EHEA and facilitating the movement of learners within, as well as between, higher education systems. They should also help HEIs to develop modules and study programmes based on learning outcomes and credits, and improve the recognition of qualifications as well as all forms of prior learning.’
- ‘We urge institutions to further develop partnerships and cooperation with employers in the ongoing process of curriculum innovation based on learning outcomes.’
- ‘With a view to the development of more student-centred, outcome-based learning, the next [Stocktaking] exercise should also address in an integrated way national qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credits, lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior learning.’

London Communiqué 2007

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

- The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was initially set up in 1989 as a pilot scheme within the framework of the Erasmus programme.
- Its aim at that time was to facilitate the recognition of study periods undertaken abroad by mobile students through the transfer of credits.
- A credits system is a systematic way of describing an educational programme by allocating a certain value (credits) to each module of the programme to describe the student workload required to complete the module.
- Mobility to Accumulation. Bologna Process has developed the ECTS system from simply being a system for recognising study at foreign institutions into a Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. This takes ALL learning into account – not just study in other countries.
- Hence, ECTS now stands for “European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System”.

Framework of Qualifications for European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

- Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in Bergen, Norway (2005) adopted the overarching framework for qualifications in EHEA.
- This framework shows
 - **Three cycles** (including within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications)
 - **Generic descriptors** for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences.
 - **ECTS credit ranges** in the first and second cycles (i.e. Bachelors and Masters levels).
- Ministers committed themselves to drawing up National Frameworks for Qualifications compatible with Framework of Qualifications for European Higher Education area by 2010.



Bergen, Norway (2005)

Dublin Descriptors

- Descriptors drawn up at meeting of Education Ministers in Dublin
- These generic descriptors are used in The Framework for Qualifications of EHEA (Bologna Process). Adopted in 2005.



First Cycle : Bachelor's Cycle

[180 – 240 ECTS credits]

	Outcomes	ECTS Credits
First cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;• can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;• have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;• can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;• have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits

Minimum of
3 years =
180 credits

4 years =
240 credits.

Second Cycle: Master's cycle

[60 – 120 ECTS credits]

Second cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;• can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;• have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments;• can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;• have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.	Typically include 90-120 ECTS credits, with a minimum of 60 credits at the level of the 2 nd cycle
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1 year
or
2 years

Third Cycle: Doctoral cycle

[Number of ECTS credits not specified]

Third cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field; • have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity; • have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication; • are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas; • can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise; • can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society. 	Not specified
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See two page summary of framework of qualifications on:
www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/Framework_qualificationsforEHEA-May2005.pdf

Time involved in various cycles

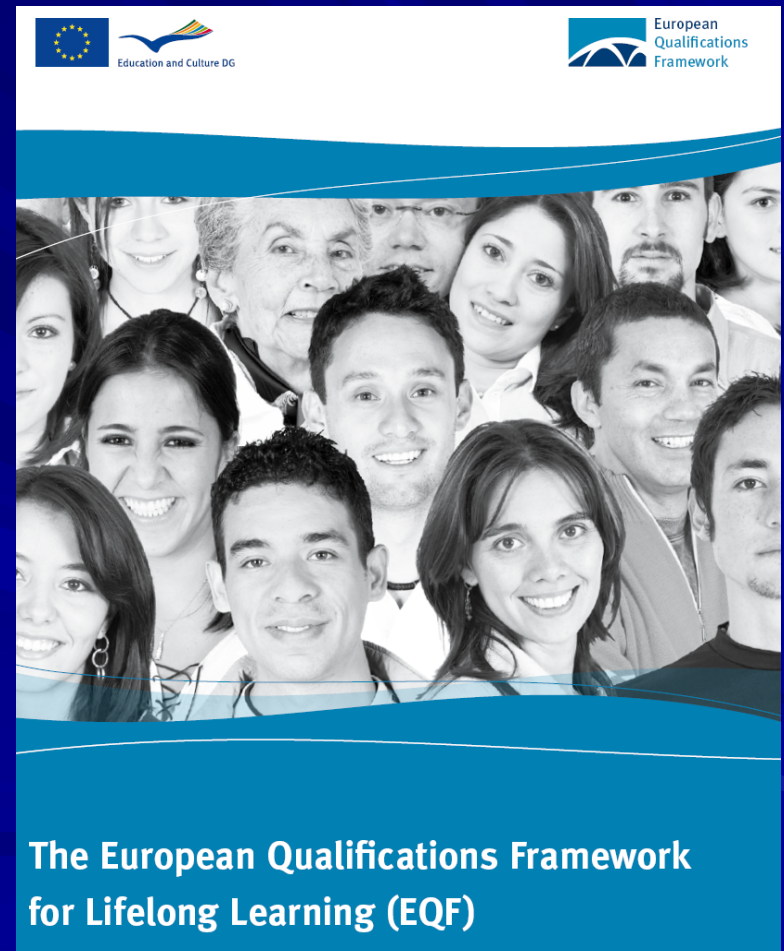
- Bachelor's degree = 3 or 4 years
- Master's degree = 1 or 2 years
- Doctoral degree = 3 years

Each of the three Bologna cycles is described in terms of learning outcomes as outlined in the “Dublin descriptors” (2005).

Note: The three cycles are closer to models in the UK and Ireland than in many countries of continental Europe where the model is based on the Magister or Diploma.

European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)

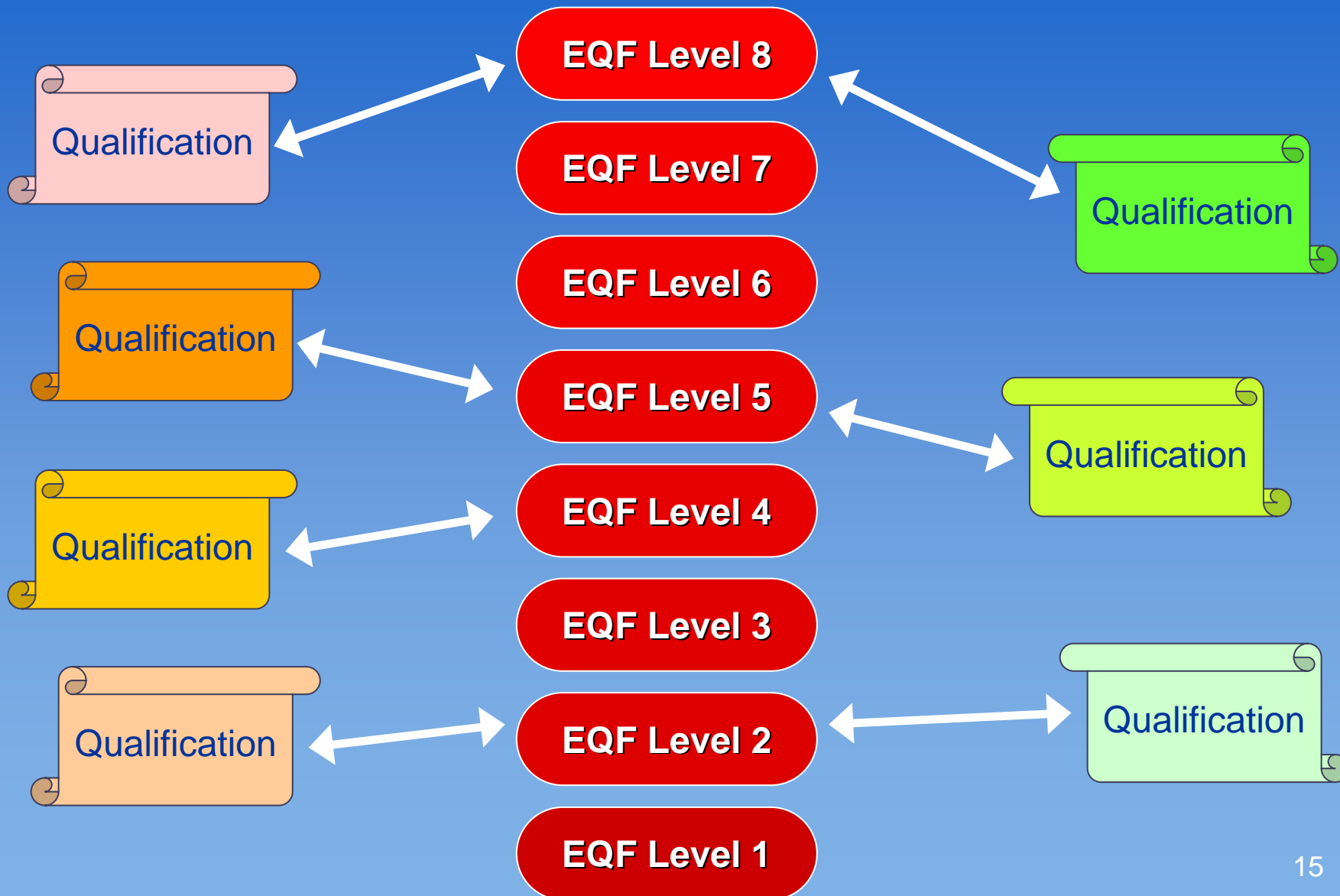
- Adopted by EU in 2008.
- A common European reference framework that links together the qualification systems of EU countries.
- A “Translation Device” to make qualifications easier to understand.
- Has 8 levels with a set of descriptors for each level. These descriptors describe the learning corresponding to each level under the heading of knowledge, skills and competence.





Country A

Country B



THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

DESCRIPTORS DEFINING LEVELS IN THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)

		KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	COMPETENCE
Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications.		In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.	In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).	In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.
LEVEL 5*	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 5 are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change review and develop performance of self and others
LEVEL 6**	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 6 are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups
LEVEL 7***	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 7 are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
LEVEL 8****	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 8 are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

Recommendation that Member States:

“Use an approach based on learning outcomes when defining and describing qualifications, and promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning... paying particular attention to those citizens most likely to be subject to unemployment or insecure forms of employment, for whom such an approach could help increase participation in lifelong learning and access to the labour market”

(EU Commission, 2008)

Some Further Points about EQF

- The 8 levels span the full scale of qualifications.
- Work started in 2004 in response to requests from member states.
- The EQF is compatible with the EHEA framework and cycle descriptors of Bologna Process.
- Whilst the Bologna descriptors were developed specifically for higher education, the EQF is a lifelong learning framework.
- The EQF emphasises the results of learning rather than focussing on inputs such as length of study.
- The EQF defines a learning outcome as “a statement of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process”.
- Each of the 8 reference levels are described in terms of learning outcomes.

- The EQF supports providers of education and training by increasing transparency of qualifications awarded outside the national systems, e.g. by sectors and multinational companies. International sectoral organisations can relate their qualifications systems to a common European reference point. Thus, relationship between international sectoral qualifications and national qualification systems is clarified
- The EU recommends enhanced cooperation in vocational education and training within the EQF.
- The EQF describes levels of qualifications. It does not award qualifications. Awarding of qualifications is still left to national qualification bodies.
- Main users of EQF will be bodies in charge of national and/or sectoral qualification systems and frameworks.
- Generic descriptors of Bologna cycles and EQF are not specific enough to be used as programme learning outcomes.

	EHEA Framework (Bologna)	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) EU only
Honours Bachelor Degree	First cycle	Level 6
Masters Degree	Second cycle	Level 7
Doctorate	Third cycle	Level 8

Relationship between Dublin Descriptors of Bologna Process and reference levels of European Qualifications Framework

Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle are awarded to students who:	EQF-level 6
have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education ²⁷ , and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;	<p>Use detailed theoretical and practical knowledge of a field. Some knowledge is at the forefront of the field and will involve a critical understanding of theories and principles</p> <p>Demonstrate mastery of methods and tools in a complex and specialised field and demonstrate Innovation in terms of methods used</p> <p>Devise and sustain arguments to solve problems</p>
can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional ² approach to their work or vocation, and have competences ³ typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;	<p>Demonstrate administrative design, resource and team management responsibilities in work and study contexts that are unpredictable and require that complex problems are solved where there are many interacting factors</p> <p>Show creativity in developing projects and show initiative in management processes that includes the training of others to develop team performance</p>
have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;	<p>Consistently evaluate own learning and identify learning needs</p>
can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;	<p>Communicate, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences using a range of techniques involving qualitative and quantitative information</p>
have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	<p>Express a comprehensive internalised personal world view manifesting solidarity with others</p> <p>Gather and interpret relevant data in a field to solve problems</p> <p>Demonstrate experience of operational interaction within a complex environment</p> <p>Make judgements based on social and ethical issues that arise in work or study</p>

Progress of Bologna Process

- Bologna 1999 – 29 Countries, 6 action lines
- Prague 2001 – 33 Countries, 9 action lines
- Berlin 2003 – 40 Countries, 10 action lines
- Bergen 2005 – 45 Countries
- London 2007 – 46 Countries

Influence of Bologna Process is now worldwide with other countries aligning their systems to Bologna.

Emphasis on implementing and making progress in the Bologna Process.

The 10 Action Lines of Bologna Process

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
2. Adoption of a system based on three cycles
3. Establishment of a system of credits
4. Promotion of mobility
5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance
6. Promotion of the European dimension in Higher education
7. Focus on Lifelong Learning
8. Inclusion of Higher Education Institutions and students
9. Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area
10. Doctoral Studies and the links between the European Higher education Area and the European Research Area

“The three Bologna cycles are based on generic descriptors of learning outcomes, so it is clear that describing higher education programmes in terms of learning outcomes is a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010. Learning outcomes are critically important in the development of national qualifications frameworks, systems for credit transfer and accumulation, the diploma supplement, recognition of prior learning and quality assurance.”

- Bologna Process Stocktaking
London 2007, p. 51.

Bologna Process Stocktaking London 2007



“If the Bologna Process is to be successful in meeting the needs and expectations of learners, all countries need to use learning outcomes as a basis for their national qualifications frameworks, systems for credit transfer and accumulations, the diploma supplement, recognition of prior learning and quality assurance. This is a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010.”

- Bologna Process Stocktaking
London 2007, p. 2.

Bologna Process Stocktaking London 2007



department for
education and skills

	Degree System			Quality Assurance			Recognition			
	2 cycles	Access	NQF	External	Students	Internal	Dip supp.	Lisbon	ECTS	RPL
COUNTRY										
Albania										
Andorra										
Armenia										
Austria										
Azerbaijan										
Belgium Flemish										
Belgium French										
Bosnia Herzegovina										
Bulgaria										
Croatia										
Cyprus										
Czech Republic										
Denmark										
Estonia										
Finland										
France										
Georgia										
Germany										
Greece										
Holy See										
Hungary										
Iceland										
Ireland										
Italy										
Latvia										
Liechtenstein										
Lithuania										
Luxembourg										
Malta										
Moldova										
Montenegro										
Netherlands										
Norway										
Poland										
Portugal										
Romania										
Russia										
Serbia										
Slovakia										
Slovenia										
Spain										
Sweden										
Switzerland										
The PYROM										
Turkey										
Ukraine										
UK - ENGL										
UK - Scotland										



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The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade

**Communiqué of the Conference of
European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education,
Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009**

6. The Bologna Process is leading to greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education and is making it easier for learners to be mobile and for institutions to attract students and scholars from other continents. Higher education is being modernized with the adoption of a three-cycle structure including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications linked to the first cycle and with the adoption of the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance. We have also seen the creation of a European register for quality assurance agencies and the establishment of national qualifications frameworks linked to the overarching European Higher Education Area framework, based on learning outcomes and workload. Moreover, the Bologna Process has promoted the Diploma Supplement and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System to further increase transparency and recognition.

National Framework of Qualifications

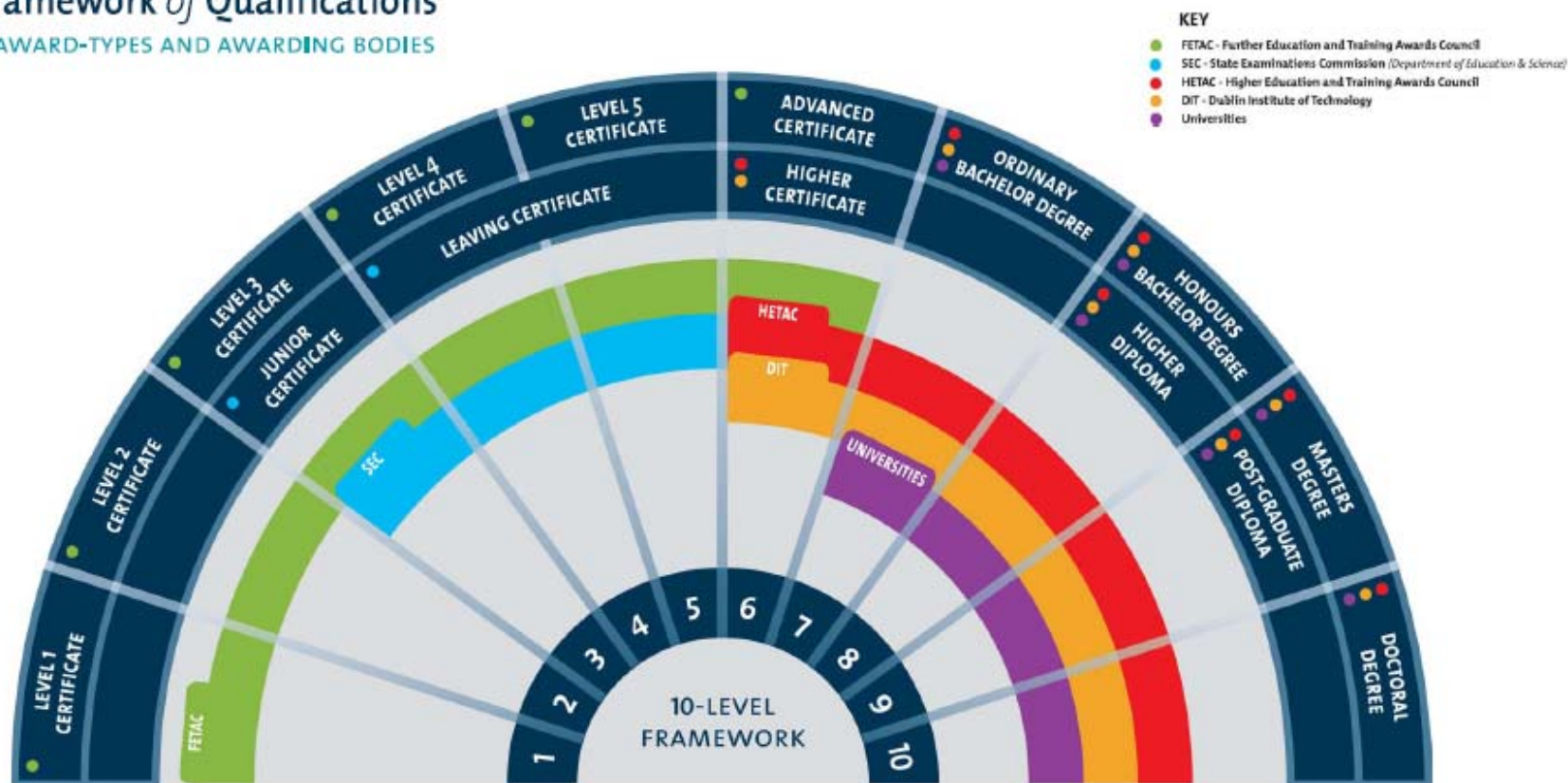
- Putting the Bologna Process into practice.
- A national framework of qualifications “is an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society”.

(EQF 2008)

- For many countries, one of the most challenging parts of the Bologna reform process is to make their National Framework of Qualifications compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.
 - Showing that National Qualifications Framework is compatible with Framework of Qualifications of EHEA and EQF
 - Introducing Learning Outcomes and writing modules and programmes in terms of Learning Outcomes.
 - Showing evidence that the Learning Outcomes have been achieved.
 - Workload in terms of ECTS credits and credit accumulation rather than teaching time.
 - Showing how the National Framework of Qualifications facilitates Lifelong Learning.
 - Lifelong Learning the only way to avoid obsolescence and is the key for ensuring progress.

National Framework of Qualifications in Ireland

National Framework of Qualifications INITIAL MAJOR AWARD-TYPES AND AWARDDING BODIES





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The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade

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12. The development of national qualifications frameworks is an important step towards the implementation of lifelong learning. We aim at having them implemented and prepared for self-certification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area by 2012. This will require continued coordination at the level of the EHEA and with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Within national contexts, intermediate qualifications within the first cycle can be a means of widening access to higher education.

National Qualification Frameworks and EQF

- The European Commission has set 2010 as the recommended target date for countries to relate their national qualification frameworks to the EQF.
- “Adopt measures, as appropriate, so that by 2012 all new qualification certificates, diplomas and ‘Europass’ documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualification systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level” – EU Commission (2008)

Development of Irish National Framework of Qualifications



Dr Declan Kennedy,
Department of Education,
University College,
Cork, Ireland



National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

- The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) was established in 2001 under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.
- The Authority is an agency of the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
- It has responsibility for developing and maintaining the National Framework of Qualifications.



Sean O Foghlú, Chief Executive



Dr Jim Murray,
Director of Framework
Implementation and Qualifications
Recognition

Three main objectives of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

1. The establishment and maintenance of a framework of qualifications for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired by learners
2. The establishment and promotion of the maintenance and improvement of the standards of awards of the further and higher education and training sector, other than in the existing universities
3. The promotion and facilitation of access, transfer and progression throughout the span of education and training provision.

Note: The NQAI is not an awarding body.

Awarding Bodies

- The Universities
- The Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)
- Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)
- Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)
- State Examinations Commission (SEC)



Development of Framework

- The National Framework of Qualifications was proposed through the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 and launched in 2003.
- Definition of framework: The single, nationally and internationally accepted entity through which **all learning achievements may be measured** and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards.
- An ambitious undertaking: the Framework seeks to encompass the entire spectrum of learning achievements

- In simple terms the Framework is a tool for fostering transparency, flexibility and mobility of learners.
- In each country at national level, need for systematic explanation and navigation between qualifications.
- Each country develops its own Framework.
- The overarching (European) qualifications frameworks serve as the translation device.
- The individual qualifications relate to the national qualifications framework and do not relate directly to the overarching qualification frameworks.

Helping the Development of the Framework

- **Strong legislative base: Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999:**
 - Legitimisation – “the stick”
- **Stakeholder approach:**
 - Large amount of consensus-building and consultation (2001 – 2003) – “The carrot”

Dual approach has enabled

- comparatively rapid development
- implementation across all elements of the education and training system

Outline of Framework

- **A structure of 10 levels**
- **Each level based on a range of standards of knowledge, skills and competences.**
- **Set out in grid of level indicators.**
- **The 10 level indicators are defined in terms of 8 sub-strands of knowledge, skill and competence.**

Award Types in Framework

- The award types are the central element in the Framework concept
- A class of named awards e.g. Honours Bachelor Degree or Masters Degree
- One or more award-types at each level in the Framework
- A set of 16 major award-types defined
- Each has a descriptor consisting of the 8 sub-strands in the grid.



Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)

- FETAC Awards Made from basic level, e.g. Level 1 Certificate in Communications, Level 1 Certificate in General Learning, Level 2 Certificate in General Learning
- Awards at Level 1 and Level 2 aim to meet the needs of learners, young and old, adults who may be returning to education and training or who may be engaging with learning for the first time, learners with few or no previous qualifications and some learners who are currently in the workforce.
- They provide certification for learners who may progress to higher levels and also for those whose principal achievements rest at these levels.

FETAC

Examples of Learning Outcomes for the first three levels in Framework:

As a guide, the learning outcomes related to the six levels can be summarised as follows:

Level 1

Ability to access and use a range of learning resources, to sequence learning tasks and to learn elementary facts.

Level 2

Ability to learn new skills and knowledge, including literacy and numeracy in a supervised environment and to act in a range of roles under direction.

Level 3

Ability to perform relatively straightforward work related tasks; confirming a minimum level of employability, while incorporating practical capabilities and understanding of theory.

LEVEL	NEW TITLE	FORMER TITLE	FORMER AWARDING BODY
1	Communications*	Not Applicable (N/A)	N/A
1	General Learning*	N/A	N/A
2	General Learning*	N/A	N/A
3	Customer Care and IT Skills	Customer Care and IT Skills	FÁS
3	General Learning	National Foundation Certificate	NCVA
3	Keyboard and Computer Skills	Basic Keyboard and Computer Skills	FÁS
3	Personal and Social Employment Skills	Employability Skills Personal and Social	FÁS
3	Pre-Apprenticeship Skills	Preparatory Programme for Apprenticeship	FÁS
3	Vocational Employment Skills	Employability Skills Vocational	FÁS
4	Accommodation Skills	Elementary Accommodation	Fáilte Ireland
4	Agriculture	Certificate in Agricultural Skills	Teagasc
4	Bar Skills	Bar Skills	Fáilte Ireland
4	Bar Skills	Elementary Bar	Fáilte Ireland
4	Catering Skills	Elementary Catering	Fáilte Ireland
4	Computer Aided Engineering	Computer Aided Engineering	FÁS

State Examinations Commission

- The State Examinations Commission is responsible for the development, assessment, accreditation and certification of the second-level examinations of the Irish state: the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate.
- The State Examinations Commission is a non-departmental public body under the aegis of the Department of Education and Science.
- Entry to third level on basis of Leaving Certificate examination results.



Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

- HETAC was established in 2001, under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.
- HETAC is the qualifications awarding body for third-level educational and training institutions outside the university sector.
- HETAC delegates authority to make awards to Recognised Institutions under the Act. Recognised Institutions currently comprise the Institutes of Technology.



Main Functions of HETAC

- The setting of standards for named awards.
- The validation of programmes.
- The agreement of providers' quality assurance procedures.
- The review of the implementation and effectiveness of those procedures.
- The Council may also delegate authority to make awards to recognised institutions.



HETAC is a public body, accountable to the Irish government and the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament)

- Sets standards, accrediting programmes and awarding qualifications at all levels of higher education and training
- Provides assurance to the public that programmes of higher education and training are above an acceptable threshold level of quality and that sufficient quality assurance processes are in place to meet the expectations of Irish society and the international community.
- Delivers a quality improvement service to higher education and training providers so as to contribute to raising standards to increasingly higher levels.

Delegation to Individual Institutions (Institutes of Technology)



- Delegation of authority to make awards and the review of delegation of authority by the Council, is provided for under Sections 29 and 30 of the Act.
- Delegation enables recognised institutes to make awards of the Council in their own name and to issue their own parchments.
- The awards are set on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- The holder has the recognition, access, transfer and progression entitlements that are a feature of the framework

“ The Council takes a progressive approach to third-level education and training. The Council welcomes the delegation of authority to recognised institutions to make awards and facilitates optimum delegation of authority to recognised institutions. This approach takes account of the maturity of the recognised institutions and the extent to which they have developed the capacity and processes to develop, quality assure and self-validate programmes of higher education and training, leading to awards whose standards have been set by the Council. It also recognises that self-regulation and self-validation, which allows institutions to take responsibility for their own processes relating to programme development, is in line with international practice”

(HETAC, 2006)

<http://www.hetac.ie/docs/Current%20status%20of%20Delegation%20of%20Authority%20to%20Make%20Awards,%20March%202006%20-%20General%20Introduction.pdf>

- Recognised institutions with delegation of authority have serious responsibilities and are accountable through regular review for meeting those responsibilities.
- The criteria for this delegation are defined by the Council and agreed with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.
- Thirteen Institutes of Technology in Ireland.



The Mechanism

- How is all this to be achieved? By means of Learning Outcomes.
- The Framework defines and describes the outcomes, in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, which characterise awards at different levels
- The Framework defines the relationship between the levels through these learning outcomes.
- The Framework positions certain key qualifications at the appropriate level on the basis of the learning outcomes associated with them
- *In the Framework an award is:*
 - *A recognition of learning outcomes*
 - *Not a recognition of participation in a programme or in any particular learning process*

Verification of National Framework of Ireland with EHEA Framework

Summary of Irish Outcome

The Irish verification report summarises the outcome of the process as follows:

- “The Irish Higher Certificate is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna first cycle.
- The Irish Ordinary Bachelor Degree is compatible with the Bologna first cycle descriptor. However, holders of Irish Ordinary Bachelor Degrees and their equivalent former awards do not generally immediately access programmes leading to second cycle awards.
- The Irish Honours Bachelor Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna first cycle.
- The Irish Higher Diploma is a qualification at the same level as completion of the first cycle, and is a qualification typically attained in a different field of learning than an initial first cycle award.
- The Irish Masters Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna second cycle.
- The Irish Post-Graduate Diploma is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna second cycle.
- The Irish Doctoral Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna third cycle.

Verification of Compatibility of Irish National Framework of Qualifications with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Summary of Final Report – November 2006

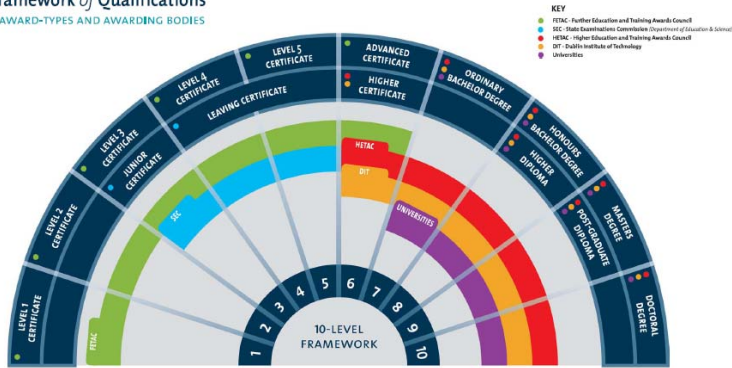


National Qualifications Frameworks Development and Certification

Report from Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks

May 2007

National Framework of Qualifications
INITIAL MAJOR AWARD-TYPES AND AWARING BODIES



That's all Folks. Hope you learned something about the Bologna Process and the National Framework of Qualifications in Ireland!

