

Qualifications Table

Earlier this year the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) produced the policy profile on education in the UK report <http://www.oecd.org/publications/education-policy-outlook-2015-9789264225442-en.htm>).

The report presents comparative analysis of education policies and reforms across the OECD Countries and comparative insight on policies and reforms on selected topics.

Following the publication of the report, the Scottish Government has reviewed the mapping of Scottish qualifications against the ISCED Levels. The most notable change being that no Scottish qualification maps to ISCED Level 4.

In addition, the European Commission also updated the definitions of each of the levels in June of this year and a descriptor has been added to the attached document for ease of reference.

European Structural Funds and State Aids Division
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SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AND UNESCO ISCED LEVELS

SCQF Levels	National Courses	Higher Education	ISCED Levels	Definitions of UNESCO
12		Doctorate	Level 8	DOCTORAL OR EQUIVALENT are designed primarily to lead to an advanced research qualification. Programmes at this level are devoted to advanced study and original research and typically offered only by research-orientated tertiary educational institutions such as universities.
11		Masters Degree	Level 7	MASTERS OR EQUIVALENT are designed to provide participants with advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a second degree or equivalent qualification.
10		Honours Degree	Level 6	BACHELOR OR EQUIVALENT are often designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Traditionally offered by universities and equivalent tertiary educational institutions.
9		Ordinary Degree		
8		HND	Level 5	SHORT CYCLE EDUCATION programmes are often designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Typically these are practically based, occupationally specific and prepare students to enter the labour market. However programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education
7		HNC	Level 5	

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				programmes. Programmes at this level have more complex content than programmes at ISCED L3 & 4, but they are shorter and usually less theoretically orientated than ISCED L6 programmes.
			Level 4	POST SECONDARY NON TERTIARY education provides learning experiences building on secondary education and preparing for labour market entry as well as tertiary education. It aims at the individual acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies below the high level of complexity characteristic of tertiary education. Programmes at this level are typically designed to provide individuals who complete ISCED L3 with non-tertiary qualifications that they require for progression to tertiary education or for employment when their ISCED L3 qualification does not grant such access.

SCQF Levels	National Courses	Higher Education	ISCED Levels	Definitions of UNESCO
7	New Advanced Higher Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureates		Level 3	UPPER SECONDARY education programmes are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education, or to provide skills relevant to employment or both. Programmes at this level are more varied, specialised and in-depth instruction than programmes at ISCED Level 2. They are more differentiated, with an increased range of options and streams available.
6	New Higher Higher Skills for Work Higher			
5	National 5 (Intermediate 2) Skills for Work National 5 (Credit Standard Grade)			
4	National 4 (Intermediate 1) Skills for Work National 4 (General Standard Grade)		Level 2	LOWER SECONDARY education programmes typically designed to build upon learning outcomes from ISCED L1. Usually the educational aim is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning & human development on which education systems may systematically expand further educational opportunities
3	National 3 Access 3 Skills for Work National 3 (Foundation Standard Grade)			
2	National 2 Access 2			
1	National 1 Access 1			

ISCED 1 – Primary School Education

ISCED 0 – Early Learning and Childcare