



TPG B

Recognition of alternative pathways: the Irish approach to micro credentials (snapshot)

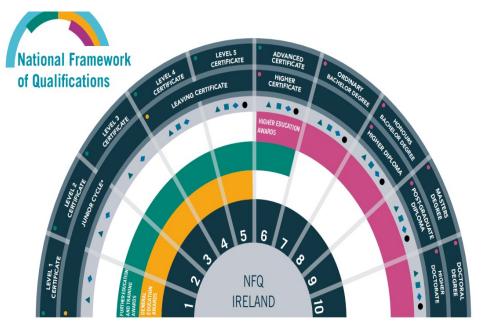






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A snapshot of practice





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LASSES OF AWARD

Major Awards: named in the outer rings, are the principal class of awards made at a leve

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
- Professional Awards: are for occupation-orientated qualifications including apprentices
 *Please refer to NCCA website, ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/



Alternative recognition?

Enabling architecture within the NFQ-

Levels

Range of award classes provide for diverse volumes of awards

Irish Register of Qualification (irq.ie) clarifies which qualifications and associated programmes are included in the NFQ

Section 43 of Act- each award made by a designated awarding body should as far as is practicable be included in the NFQ

Quality assurance methodologies apply, including ESG





Dynamic practice- work in progress

Acknowledged features nationally

- Strategic partnerships with industry
- Complementary and supplemental orientation
- Acknowledge flexibility drivers for greater participation
- Need for streamlined processes for accreditation (OECD '23)
- Holistic engagement

Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

FET

- Extensive use of minor awards (MC?) as part of NFQ and Majors
- 84% of QQI awards between 2012 and 2021 were not major
- Recently there are designated Micro Qualifications for e.g. green skills.

HE

- Extensive use historically of small volume qualifications also, not branded MCs
- Microcreds project- Irish Universities Association and seven public Universities- not all awards on IRQ yet
- Technological Universities currently list 1123 MCs on the IRQ
- Home MicroCreds | Short, Flexible, Accredited
 Courses

Summary of features and recognition implications

Different approaches to what constitutes an MC, how it is advertised- is it stand-alone, a module on a programme leading to a major, or what are the transfer and progression options, if any within educational pathways?

Informal use of NFQ levels for awards which are not formally included lead to variations in transparency which inhibit academic recognition beyond the institution of origin, notwithstanding the use of ECTS and learning outcomes.

Comprehensive stakeholder engagement is ongoing, including with NARIC projects (AIT, CIMEA and NUFFIC)

NARIC recognition policy currently provides advisory comparability statements for major awards with reference to the NFQ.

