TPG B

Recognition of alternative pathways: the Irish approach to micro credentials (snapshot)
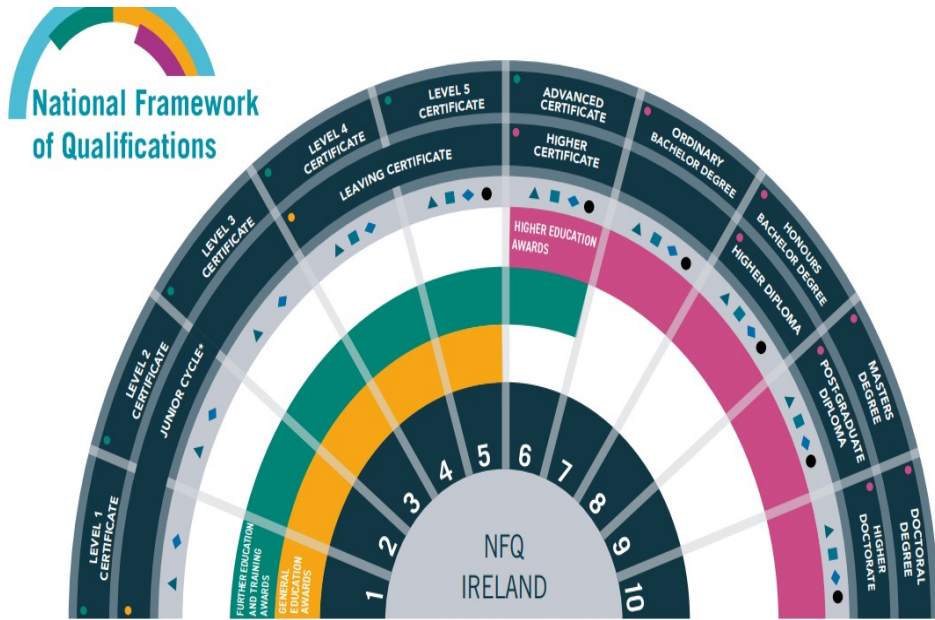
Dearbhú Cáilíochta
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and
Qualifications Ireland

IN·GLOBAL
Enhancing Knowledge of the
EHEA and Global Dialogue

Co-funded by
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bologna process

EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

A snapshot of practice

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
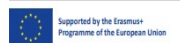
Dynamic practice- work in progress

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

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.