

# VQ Day Report 2010

An initiative by  Edge

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**VQDay**

Celebrating Vocational  
Achievement

**VQ Day – backed by the evidence set out in this report – celebrates all the fantastic achievements in vocational education, training and qualifications in the UK.**

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## 1. Preface

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**VQ Day – backed by the evidence set out in this report – celebrates all the fantastic achievements in vocational education, training and qualifications in the UK. It also helps us challenge what Vince Cable MP (Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills) calls "the outdated value distinction between blue collar apprenticeships and further education on one hand, and university on the other".**

In a modern economy, knowledge becomes productive when it is used, and that requires skill. This is true for the landscape gardener who draws on knowledge – say, about how plants grow in different types of soil – and practical skills to create a garden. It is just as true for the accountant, who needs a combination of knowledge and skills to prepare a set of accounts.

The good news is that there has been a 11 per cent rise in the number of vocational qualifications achieved in the United Kingdom in the past year. This is real progress and very positive news. It is a credit to the hard work and talent of millions of individuals, supported by their teachers, trainers, employers and colleagues.

Vocational qualifications (VQs) are directly linked to the skills and knowledge people need at work. VQs help people prepare for jobs – particularly as they enter the job market for the first time. They also help people develop new skills and abilities throughout their working lives, and it's encouraging that there has been another increase in the number of VQs awarded to people already in jobs.

This report is not limited to an analysis of qualifications data, important though that is. It includes the real-life stories of people who have seen their prospects transformed through vocational qualifications.

People like Craig Hindmarsh, who was unemployed until an opportunity came up at Auchinlea Residential Home in Largs. Craig has found a true talent for helping and caring for people. He has already achieved a level 1 Scottish Vocational Qualification in Health and Social Care; helped by Kilmarnock College, he is now on track for his Level 2 SVQ.

Or take James O'Driscoll, from Bromley, who lost his sight and with it, many of his original aims in life. He has retrained as a fitness instructor, achieving a Central YMCA Qualification at level 2. As Fazilet Hadi of the RNIB says, "James is proof that with the right support and services, blind and partially sighted people can find their lives again."

In short, the headline figure in this report – 4 million VQs awarded in a single year – is hugely impressive. So are the stories of each of the millions of people who have achieved those qualifications. VQ Day is our opportunity to celebrate both.

**The Rt Hon Lord Baker of Dorking CH  
Chairman, Edge**

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## 2. Highlights

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**The number of vocational qualifications (VQs) achieved in the UK continues to rise. In 2008-09, there were over 4 million qualifications achieved, an increase of more than 11% on the previous year.**

Overall, level 2 VQs are growing fastest and now constitute nearly half of all VQs awarded in the UK.

**However, this rise in the number of qualifications achieved is not consistent across the UK:**

In Northern Ireland, estimates show that NVQs and foundation degrees have grown but overall qualification numbers have fallen, mainly due to a drop in vocationally-related qualifications (VRQs).

In Scotland, estimates show a small fall in qualification completions across all types of qualification, with larger falls for VRQs and HNCs/HNDs.

In Wales, NVQs and foundation degrees have risen, but VRQs have declined and there is a startling decrease in participation at higher levels of VQs.

In England, qualification achievements at levels 2 and 3 through Train to Gain grew especially strongly, with significant growth also recorded for NVQs and foundation degrees.

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## 3. Introduction

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**This report aims to provide a general update to the headline figures from the VQ Landscape Review 2009. Its scope is more limited than the Landscape reviews of previous years, but it aims to shed light on overall trends in uptake of vocational qualifications in the UK and in each of the four nations. The statistical data is complemented by a set of case studies, each of which highlights a particular aspect of vocational qualifications in the UK and each of which celebrates the achievements of learners in the VQ sector.**

Gathering statistical evidence around vocational qualifications in the UK continues to be a challenging enterprise. There remain issues around the definition of what constitutes a vocational qualification. In keeping with previous reports, for instance, our figures for the number of VRQs awarded have been taken from the Annual Qualifications Market Report – but it should be noted that these figures include qualifications such as ESOL which fall outside the definition of VQs used in this report. We have, therefore, used these figures for the sake of comparability with previous years, but they should be treated with caution.

Due to changes in data collection methods it has often been difficult to provide a direct comparison with previous years' figures. Our conclusions about trends in VQs in comparison with previous years should therefore be treated with caution, and we have highlighted in the following report those areas where there are particular reasons to do so. In general, however, we can state that the number of VQs awarded in the UK has continued to rise, and it is of particular note that this has occurred despite the global economic downturn. This growth has not been consistent across the four nations, across different sectors, or across level of qualification, however.

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## 4. Definitions

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**We have kept our definition of VQs consistent with the VQ Landscape 2009 report. Accordingly, as in previous years, VQs include:**

- National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs / SVQs), which assess competence in specific occupations based on UK-wide national occupational standards.
  - Vocationally-related qualifications (VRQs), such as Edexcel BTECs, City & Guilds and OCR Nationals. VRQs generally test knowledge of (or gained in) an occupational area, rather than the full range of skills needed to do a particular job.
  - National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Scotland, designed to assess a defined set of skills and knowledge in specialist vocational areas.
  - Higher education qualifications such as Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNCs / HNDs), foundation degrees and work-related honours and higher degrees such as Masters of Business Administration (MBAs).
  - Professional Development Awards (PDAs) in Scotland. These are flexible higher qualifications made up of Higher National, SVQ and other vocational units.
  - Professional qualifications awarded by recognised professional bodies (with an emphasis on those that can be achieved through vocational, rather than purely academic, routes).
- Apprenticeship programmes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland typically include the completion of two vocational qualifications: an NVQ (concerned with competence) and a VRQ (concerned with theory and knowledge, and sometimes called a 'technical certificate'). Where appropriate, Apprenticeship programmes may contain a single accredited qualification spanning both elements. The equivalent programme in Scotland is the Modern Apprenticeship, which is based on the completion of a relevant SVQ. VQs achieved through an Apprenticeship are included in the overall figures but not identified as a separate category. Welsh NVQ figures include NVQs achieved as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate.

## 5. Qualification Levels

**VQs are available and achieved at all levels of the current National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. VQs are also available at all levels of the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). VQs are being added to the QCF each day, with all key qualifications expected to be on the QCF and available in credit-based units of learning by the end of 2010.**

The NQF and QCF levels are as follows:

- Entry level – for those not ready to achieve at level 1 and above
- Levels 1 and 2 – GCSEs, level 1 and 2 NVQs and VRQs e.g. BTEC First Diploma
- Level 3 – A levels and level 3 NVQs and VRQs e.g. BTEC National Diploma
- Levels 4 and 5 – HNC, HND, foundation degrees and level 4 NVQs
- Levels 6, 7 and 8 – honours degrees, higher degrees and level 5 NVQs

Apprenticeship programmes are mainly available at levels 2 and 3, with a number of Higher Apprenticeship programmes available at level 5 in a number of sectors.

The level of a qualification refers to its level of difficulty, not the length of the course. This is particularly the case with VRQs, where qualifications at the same level may vary from awards requiring a few days' tuition to large qualifications requiring many months of learning.

Qualifications on the QCF come in three different sizes based on the number of credits (one credit is 10 hours of learning): awards 1-12 credits, certificates 13-36 credits and diplomas 37+ credits.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework has 12 levels denoting the volume of accredited qualifications as well as their difficulty. Equivalences with the rest of the UK can be gauged through NVQs and SVQs levels 1 to 5, which are positioned on the Scottish framework at levels 4, 5, 6, 8 and 11.

1. Note that the data source used provides an overestimate of the total number of VRQs; this data source was used for consistency with last year's report and comparability with last year's figures. For information on how the data was calculated, please see Annex

## 6. Overall numbers

**In the tables shown in this and subsequent sections, figures for which there are reliable sources are given in black; those which have been obtained through calculation and/or estimation, and which should therefore be treated with more caution, are given in grey.**

Our calculations indicate that approximately 4 million vocational qualifications were achieved in the UK in 2008-09. This represents an increase on the previous year's figure of nearly 12%, with significant growth recorded across most types of VQ:

- The majority of VQs achieved in the UK continue to be VRQs, with over 2.6 million<sup>1</sup> awarded in 2008-09. This is an increase of 6% on the previous year's figures.
- 959,000 National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications were achieved in 2008-09, an increase of over 24% on the previous year.
- Qualifications achieved at levels 2 and 3 achieved through Train to Gain in England showed particularly strong growth, with 256,998 qualifications awarded. This represents an increase of well over 50% on the previous year's figure.
- Foundation degrees also grew strongly in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with 18,850 awarded across the UK in 2009-10 compared to fewer than 15,000 the previous year – an increase of over 25%.

It should be noted, however, that this is based on estimated figures and should be treated as less reliable than for the other qualifications listed above. Similarly, we estimate a slight fall in NPA completions of 2.3% to 5,862.

### A note on Train to Gain figures

In 2008/9 Train to Gain figures included NVQs delivered in the workplace, which were previously funded by further education, meaning that the headline figure was not comparable to previous years. In order to be consistent with recording methods used in previous VQ Landscape reports, our stated figures for Train to Gain qualifications therefore exclude the estimated figures for NVQs achieved in the workplace through Train to Gain. These are included under the NVQ category instead. Our methodology for reaching this estimate is outlined in Annex 1.

For the sake of completeness, the table below and that showing the figures for England demonstrate the estimated numbers of workplace-based NVQs achieved through Train to Gain in brackets under the headline Train to Gain figures.

**Table 1. Headline VQ Figure, UK**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>% change</b>
NVQs/SVQs (including L2 and L3 delivered in the workplace through T2G)	773,000	959,000	24.1%
VRQs	2,461,426	2,607,898	6.0%
T2G L2-L3 qualifications achieved in England (excluding NVQs delivered in the workplace)	167,500	256,998	53.4%
(T2G L2 and L3 NVQs, estimated)	(132,000)	(168,102)	(27.4%)
NPAs	6,000	5,862	-2.3%
Foundation Degrees	14,975	18,850	25.9%
HNCs & HNDs	54,000	48,067	-11.0%
PDA's	10,000	9,770	-2.3%
Degrees/professional qualifications	120,000	119,484	-0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,606,901</b>	<b>4,025,929</b>	<b>11.6%</b>

## 7. Vocational Qualifications by Level

Across the UK as a whole, VQs have grown at every level in the past year, with level 2 showing the strongest increase and making up nearly 50% of the total qualifications awarded. These figures come from the Annual Qualifications Market Report and cover all awarding body qualifications other than GCSE and GCE. This therefore includes qualifications that are excluded from our definition of VQs. This information is provided to give a general indication of trends across different levels in the UK.

**Table 2. Qualifications by level, United Kingdom**

Level	2007/8	2008/9	% change
Entry	573,011	603,295	5.3%
1	1,286,036	1,464,382	13.9%
2	2,507,718	2,968,832	18.4%
3	847,134	956,551	12.9%
4+	99,066	114,937	16.0%

Source: Annual Qualifications Market Report, 2010

## 8. The picture in the four nations

**For Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, data was generally only available for learner numbers, rather than qualifications achieved. Many of the figures provided are therefore rough estimates on the basis of changes in learner numbers (see Annex 1 for details on how the estimates were calculated). These figures should accordingly be treated with care.**

### 8.1 England

England recorded strong growth across all lower levels of vocational qualifications, particularly through Train to Gain at levels 2 and 3 with over a quarter of a million qualifications awarded in 2008-09. VRQs, with nearly 2.5 million qualifications, remain by far the largest type of VQ in England, and have grown by almost 7% in the last year. NVQs and Foundation Degrees also grew strongly, each by more than 25%.

**Table 3. Headline VQ Figure, England**

Qualification	2007/8	2008/9	% change
NVQs/SVQs (including L2 and L3 delivered in the workplace through T2G)	665,000	849,000	27.7%
(T2G L2 and L3 NVQs, estimated)	(132,000)	(168,102)	(27.4%)
VRQs	2,281,742	2,440,220	6.9%
T2G L2-L3 qualifications achieved (excluding NVQs delivered in the workplace)	167,500	256,998	53.4%
Foundation Degrees	14,355	18,050	25.7%
HNCs & HNDs	32,395	28,541	-11.9%
Degrees/professional qualifications	100,280	99,849	-0.4%
TOTAL	3,261,272	3,692,658	13.2%

### 8.2 Northern Ireland

Estimates for Northern Ireland indicate a rise of approximately 7% in NVQs and a strong increase in foundation degrees, albeit from a very low base. VRQs and HNCs/HNDs show a significant decline.

**Table 4. Headline VQ Figure, Northern Ireland**

Qualification	2007/8	2008/9	% change
NVQs/SVQs	10,846	11,559	6.9%
VRQs	41,844	39,744	-5.0%
Foundation Degrees	35	75	114.3%
HNCs & HNDs	4,932	4,620	-6.3%
Degrees/professional qualifications	2,059	2,050	-0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59,716</b>	<b>58,088</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>

### 8.3 Scotland

All qualifications in Scotland have seen a fall in completions. HNC/HND qualifications in particular fell significantly, by over 12%.

**Table 5. Headline VQ Figure, Scotland**

Qualification	2007/8	2008/9	% change
NVQs/SVQs	50,264	48,391	-3.7%
VRQs	27,076	25,058	-7.5%
NPAs	6,000	5,862	-2.3%
Foundation Degrees	-	-	-
HNCs & HNDs	8,823	7,755	-12.1%
PDA's	10,000	9,770	-2.3%
Degrees/professional qualifications	11,291	11,243	-0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,454</b>	<b>108,079</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>

### 8.4 Wales

Foundation degrees and NVQs have both shown healthy growth in Wales, while VRQs have declined by over 7% although they continue to represent the majority of qualifications achieved.

**Table 6. Headline VQ Figure, Wales**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>% change</b>
NVQs/SVQs	46,890	50,010	6.7%
VRQs	110,764	102,876	-7.1%
Foundation Degrees	585	725	23.9%
HNCs & HNDs	7,850	7,151	-8.9%
Degrees/professional qualifications	6,370	6,342	-0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172,459</b>	<b>167,104</b>	<b>-3.1%</b>

## 9. Vocational qualifications by sector

**Health, Public Services & Care was the biggest single sector for VQs in the UK in 2008-09, with over a million qualifications achieved. It is followed by Arts, Media & Publishing, with three quarters of a million, and Information and Communications Technology, with just over half a million.**

In terms of growth, Science & Maths is the strongest performing sector, having grown by a third on the previous year; however, at 96,000 qualifications achieved, it remains relatively small (note that this does not include academic qualifications in Science & Maths such as GCSEs or A levels). Business, Administration & Law and Leisure, Travel and Tourism also show strong growth rates. The only sector to show an overall decline in qualifications achieved is Agriculture, Horticulture & Animal Care, which dropped by 27.4% to 90,000 qualifications achieved.

The table below includes qualifications such as ESOL which fall outside of the definition of vocational qualifications used in this report. It has been included, however, to give a general indication of how qualifications are changing in different subject areas across the United Kingdom.

The subjects which are not assessed to be vocational in the table below have been put in a paler font, and are not included in the key points above.

**Table 7. Qualifications achieved by sector, UK**

Sector	2007/8	2008/9	% change
Agriculture, Horticulture & Animal Care	124,000	90,000	-27.4%
Arts, Media & Publishing	697,000	766,000	9.9%
Business, Administration & Law	401,000	497,000	23.9%
Construction, Planning & the Built Environment	210,000	257,000	22.4%
Education & Training	89,000	99,000	11.2%
Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies	318,000	386,000	21.4%
Health, Public Services & Care	961,000	1,015,000	5.6%
History, Philosophy & Theology	31,000	42,000	35.5%
Information & Communication Technology	506,000	549,000	8.5%
Languages, Literature & Culture	330,000	334,000	1.2%
Leisure, Travel & Tourism	339,000	420,000	23.9%
Preparation for Life & Work	862,000	1,153,000	33.8%
Retail & Commercial Enterprise	370,000	411,000	11.1%
Science & Maths	72,000	96,000	33.3%
Social Sciences	3,000	3,000	0.0%

Source: Annual Qualifications Market Report, 2010

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## 10. Case Studies

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**Every VQ earned in the UK represents an individual story of achievement – by the learner who gains the qualification, as well as by the institutions that provide training, the awarding bodies and other organisations involved in the development of the qualification, and the employers who give time to their staff for training or who offer employment opportunities for those who gain VQs. The following case studies, gathered from around the UK, celebrate individual achievement and highlight where VQs are making a key contribution to addressing the challenges facing today’s society.**

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### Case Study 1

**Craig Hindmarsh, Kilmarnock College, Ayrshire**  
From unemployment into the care sector through Job Centre Plus and SVQs

Craig Hindmarsh from Stevenston in Ayrshire had been unemployed for over six months when a JobCentre Plus scheme proved to be a new start for him. The 19-year-old’s confidence had been damaged by his time out of work, but when he had the chance to take part in a 13-week training course and work placement designed to help long-term unemployed young people into employment he was determined to make the most of it.

Craig began working at the Auchinlea Residential Home in Largs in September 2009. With the support from his colleagues at Auchinlea and the training staff at Kilmarnock College he discovered new skills and aptitudes for the care sector – something which was entirely new to him.

In December last year, building on his new skills and improved confidence, Craig began studying the one year SVQ Health and Social Care course through Kilmarnock College. SVQ courses are delivered in the workplace, meaning students work toward the qualification during their day-to-day work. Kilmarnock College VQ Care Assessor, Joan Jamieson, visits Craig at Auchinlea once a month to evaluate and assess his progress, and also provides him with guidance on the legislative issues he needs to familiarise himself with to gain his SVQ.

Joan said: “Prior to his employment at Auchinlea, Craig had no experience within the care sector. However he has learned fast and picked up a range of skills aiding him in his SVQ. He should be very pleased with what he has achieved so far.”

Ann Cassidy, manager at Auchinlea, commented: “We saw Craig’s potential and we are all very pleased with his progress. Our only male staff member is a true success story.”

Craig is gradually taking on more responsible duties at work and continues to develop his skills. He added: “Everything is fantastic. I am currently working towards my SVQ level 2 and it is brilliant. My future is here at Auchinlea.”

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### Case Study 2

**James O’Driscoll, London South Bank University**  
Proving that disability need not be a barrier to vocational learning

At the age of 26, James O’Driscoll, from Bromley in Kent, was a successful young man with a career in construction and a busy social life. All that changed when he was struck down with a rare form of Optic Neuropathy, a condition which in the course of six weeks destroyed his sight in both eyes. The emotional and mental impact of this was enormous: increasingly depressed, James lost his girlfriend, his flat and his job and became a recluse.

Physical fitness played a key role in helping James to adjust to being blind and to recover from his depression. After joining a gym, James regained his interest in life and wanted to do something meaningful. He became a classroom assistant for children attending a local education college for students with a visual impairment. He developed his role by becoming a mentor and volunteer fitness advisor, passionately encouraging kids and adults coming to the college to use the gym after school hours. His success with the students ignited James's calling to a career in fitness.

James enrolled and trained alongside non-disabled students on a CYQ (Central YMCA Qualifications) level 2 course at London South Bank University, leading to an internationally recognised fitness instructor qualification. In doing so, he became the first blind person in England to become a qualified fitness instructor.

On qualifying, James said: "Becoming physically active changed my life, taking me from a place of depression to happiness. Now I'm seeking to give as many other people the opportunity to experience the life-enhancing benefits of getting and keeping fit."

James's achievement leads the way for future blind students to become fitness instructors and to benefit from training courses that could be fully inclusive (open to applicants with and without disabilities). While he was expected to fulfil the same criteria for the theory and practical components of the course as other students, James received additional support, funded by The London Sports Forum for Disabled People and London South Bank University. This included the provision of audio translation, an assistant for practical sessions and care for his guide dog while he was in practical sessions.

As an instructor, James delivers fitness instruction to a client using a model called 'The Eyes of the Instructor'. An assistant acts as James's 'eyes', enabling him to gain information about the clients' physical safety, exercise performance and technique by verbal comment, questioning and prompting. The Assistant does not offer information freely, but is directed by James who leads the session. James will have the support of an Eyes Assistant once he takes up employment as a Fitness Instructor in his local health club.

Inclusive Society Director at the Royal National Institute of Blind People, Fazilet Hadi, said: "As James's experience highlights, losing sight is devastating. When you lose your sight, you lose more than your ability to see - you lose the life you once had and the future you had expected. James is proof that with the right support and services, blind and partially sighted people can find their lives again. We wish him all the very best with his new career and hope that other people will find inspiration in his story."

### Case Study 3

**Kelly Williams, Coleg Glan Hafren**

Vocational Qualifications turn a love of cars into a career

Kelly Williams, 24, became interested in cars at an early age. She did well at Bryn Celynog Comprehensive School, leaving with 13 GCSEs and an A level in Textiles, but it was through studying for vocational qualifications that she was able to turn her passion into a career. In 2005, at 21, she enrolled on an Auto course at Coleg Glan Hafren, studying for an NVQ in vehicle body repair one day a week while working for the rest of her time at Newtown Accident Repair Services in Church Village. She was the only woman in a class of 15 learners, but she says this proved to be no obstacle: "The boys on my course were great and gave me 100 per cent support. I was just treated as one of a team. The fact I'm female didn't come into it."

**"The boys on my course were great and gave me 100 per cent support. I was just treated as one of a team. The fact I'm female didn't come into it."**

**Kelly Williams**

Kelly's ambition is to own and run a car body workshop specialising in special effects paint work and modifications. "Everything about cars just fascinates me and there is so much to learn," she says. "It's what I always wanted to do."

Since leaving college, Kelly, who is now 24, moved to the Midlands. When she arrived in the Midlands she looked around the main car dealers and applied and was successful in getting a job with Listers Group. Kelly works full-time as a Smart Repair Technician for the Listers Group, which has 39 dealerships across the Midlands and the South. Kelly earns a good salary working across Listers Group dealerships doing emergency paint and body repairs on new and nearly new vehicles, including BMWs, Audis, Lexus and Hondas.

Kelly now has her own house in the Midlands and has also branched out into modifying cars in her own time. Kelly said: "The qualification I gained at Coleg Glan Hafren got me the interview with Listers as it's highly valued by employers in England and Wales. The skills I learnt from the college's experienced lecturers in the Auto workshops have helped me perform well in my job. The lessons I learnt at college gave me a huge leg up in life and have helped me to get my dream job and make it my own."

#### **Case Study 4** **Fife Women's Technology Centre**

Success in supporting marginalised learners

The Fife Women's Technology Centre (FWTC) has been providing training in new technology to unemployed women since 1990, aiming to tackle the continuing under-representation of women in high-tech industries. It particularly aims to attract women with few or no previous qualifications, who have been out of the labour market for long periods, especially carers, lone parents, black and minority ethnic women and women with disabilities. The Centre runs positive outreach programmes to attract learners from these groups. Courses are free as the centre receives funding from key sources including Learn Direct, and assistance with childcare and travel costs is provided.

In recent years, FWTC has also opened up access to its training for unemployed men, offering industry recognised IT Essentials and Cisco networking courses to help them get back into work or retrain further. In partnership with local schools, the Centre also offers a programme of technology based activities for pupils at risk of exclusion, who may benefit from the opportunity to experience learning about technology in a less formal setting.

There are currently 186 learners enrolled at FWTC. As the Centre caters for learners at a transition stage – coming from unemployment and inactivity into learning – attendance can be a challenge, particularly in the early stages. For this reason the Centre provides a high level of personal support to all their learners in order to help them adjust to the learning environment. This helps to maintain a low drop-out rate. This approach requires significant investment in the Centre's staff. Because of the particular challenges posed by providing training for learners who have previously been marginalised, it has been particularly important that staff receive training on how to handle the needs of learners and how to manage conflict.

At the start of the course, learners take a learning style assessment to understand how they learn best. This is important as their style of learning may not have been valued at school. The FWTC aims to support all learning styles and shows learners that they have the capacity to learn. Once learners are engaged, higher level material is often sourced from universities and colleges to keep pace with learners' demands.

For many of the Centre's learners, going into a work environment is a big step. Work placements therefore do not begin until a quarter of the way through the course, after time has been devoted to consolidating skills and building confidence. Learners are provided with the support they need to identify a placement of interest to them, while those able to are encouraged to research and source their own placement. Local employers now regularly request learners for work placements.

Seventy five per cent of the Centre's female learners on progression courses – many of whom were long-term unemployed prior to attending – go on to gain employment on completion of the course, with the figure rising to 80 per cent plus for the Centre's core course, targeted specifically at women with no formal qualifications. For men on progression courses, the figure is 71 per cent. Some learners have gone on to secure jobs that include continued training. Others have continued on to degree level, HND courses, and nursing and social work qualifications.

One of the Centre's former learners, who has gone on to achieve a doctorate, explained: "When people ask me why I have taken the path I have, I often say that FWTC pushed a 'self development' button in me that's stuck. It's not been easy but there are very few things I'd change about my life at the moment."

**Case Study 5****Alexander Chu, Coleg Sir Gar**

Launching a glowing career through a modern apprenticeship

Alex Chu had already made a success of school education before he decided to apply for an apprenticeship. After leaving school with three A-levels, the 26-year-old from Swansea decided to build on his love of electronics and computing by applying to Corus for an Apprenticeship as an electrical craftsman. His top marks in an aptitude test helped secure him one of just six available places from 380 applicants.

Alex faced particular challenges in continuing his education after school, as he was not living with his parents but renting a flat and living by himself. The opportunity to earn as he learned as an apprentice, combined with part time weekend work, enabled him to follow his chosen career. The gamble paid off handsomely and Alex was taken on at Corus's Trostre plant where he began his modern apprenticeship in Electrical Maintenance. His objectives were to achieve an HNC in Electrical and Electronic Engineering and an NVQ Level 3 in Electrical Maintenance.

Finishing his HNC two years in front of the other apprentices in his year – and collecting distinctions in all eight modules en route – Alex enrolled for a BSc in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. He completed this, becoming the only student in his year to be awarded an overall distinction. In the meantime, Alex scooped a Corus Award for Best Second Year Apprentice and was placed second in the EEF Apprentice of the Year as a second year student, which he returned to win in his third year. "The senior management team has recognised my abilities and decided I was able to cope with the responsibilities of a junior manager's role," Alex says. "My placement in the systems department straight from the apprenticeship programme has, in effect, jumped me up two levels of engineering status."

Mark Abramo, Process Development Manager at Corus Trostre, described Alex as "a diligent individual both his academic and work placed-activities" and said his ability had seen him placed alongside middle management grades to work as a peer. "He has been tested in all engineering facets, from working within a close knit team and interfacing with contractors/suppliers to interfacing with production personnel – all of which have assisted in his development as an apprentice," Mark added. "The journey has just started with Alex within the engineering function at Trostre, and I have no doubt that he will continue his rapid progression towards a bright future."

**Case Study 6****Lismore Comprehensive School**

Engaging school pupils through VQs

Teachers at Lismore Comprehensive School in Craigavon, Northern Ireland, believe making education relevant, topical and interesting motivates students to learn. One particularly successful strategy they have used to do this has been to offer OCR Nationals to pupils. Since their introduction, the numbers of qualifications achieved have been steadily increasing.

Previously teaching GNVQ ICT as a bridging qualification for pupils who needed an additional year in between GCSEs and A-levels, OCR Nationals level two ICT seemed the ideal replacement when the GNVQ ceased to be offered. The flexible content, portfolio based structure and ongoing assessment allows teachers to monitor the pupils' progress, ensure realistic and achievable objectives are set and create an interesting course pupils would enjoy.

Shauna Lennon, Head of ICT at Lismore Comprehensive School said: "It is really nice to see the children motivated, working to deadlines, becoming independent learners and enjoying education. The ability to relate the course to everyday life and technology that they use, such as the iPhone, makes the course interesting to them."

Lismore Comprehensive School has offered OCR Nationals in ICT for the past three years and staff find the course is not just interesting for the pupils but the teachers themselves. The ability to choose units has meant the school can pick units to match the expertise of teachers, resulting in different teachers teaching different units.

Barry Geraghty, an ICT teacher at Lismore Comprehensive School said: "It is very refreshing, as a teacher, and I am sure as a student, to find a course that you really enjoy to teach or learn. Due to the number of units available, it was easy to pick six units we knew would be of interest to all involved. The course is very hands on and active and our pupils really respond well."

Shauna Lennon and her colleagues plan to continue teaching OCR Nationals. With mid-year moderations, clear assessment criteria, interesting content and solid support from OCR, Shauna freely recommends OCR Nationals to other teachers and schools.

Shauna concluded: "The course is flexible, appealing to pupils, interesting and motivating. The majority of our pupils achieve a merit, the remainder a pass with many moving on to A level studies. OCR Nationals provides us with a qualification we need to bring the best out of our pupils."

### Case Study 7

#### Christopher Robinson, Fermanagh College World-class achievement in plumbing

Christopher Robinson finished school with two A levels and an offer of a place to study Computer Science at Queen's University Belfast, but his decision to follow his heart and pursue a career in plumbing instead has proven to be a fruitful and rewarding decision. Christopher said: "Although I didn't know any plumbers, I was really attracted to doing something practical which required a degree of knowledge at the same time. I enjoyed it right from the start which I think has been a great motivator to improve my skills."

En route to gaining a level 3 NVQ in mechanical engineering (plumbing) and an HNC in construction, Christopher also had the opportunity to compete in the WorldSkills 2005 competition in Helsinki, where he was awarded a medallion for excellence. He won his place at the competition by building up a solid record of achievement at local, regional and UK skills competitions, and undertook extensive extra training before going to Helsinki. At the time of the competition, Christopher was working for Roy Finlay in County Tyrone – a small business which nevertheless encouraged Christopher's ambitions and gave him time off for the extra training.

The experience of competing in WorldSkills has boosted Christopher's confidence and expanded his horizons. "I feel as though there's nothing that's unobtainable now," he said. "Leading the UK team into the opening ceremony carrying the Union Jack, I can't remember ever feeling so proud."

Christopher now runs his own plumbing company and is continuing his development by studying for a degree in Construction Management and Engineering at the University of Ulster. His decision to continue training was prompted in part by the recession: "I want to be as qualified as I can so that when things pick up I'll be in the best position possible." Keen to share his knowledge and skills, Christopher also lectures part time at South West College and helped train two competitors for the Northern Ireland SkillBuild competition in March 2009.

### Case Study 8

#### KEITS Ltd.

#### Making the most of the Qualifications and Credit Framework

KEITS Ltd., an independent training provider based in Hertfordshire specialising in animal care, horticulture, horse care and floristry, shows what opportunities are provided by the move to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) – and what is needed to ensure that a smooth transition is achieved for learners as well as for training providers. KEITS Ltd. faced particular challenges as animal care and horticulture became the first in which NVQ qualifications were replaced by the new QCF diploma.

**"It is really nice to see the children motivated, working to deadlines, becoming independent learners and enjoying education. The ability to relate the course to everyday life and technology that they use, such as the iPhone, makes the course interesting to them."**

**Shauna Lennon**

The key to making a successful transition was information. As Rebecca Diamond, KEITS director for centre awards, explained: "When changes to qualifications are on the horizon, you need to build in development time to ensure that information is prepared and available early enough for all who need it. It's easy to miss some key people out and assume that they'll be able to understand and run with the changes."

KEITS Ltd. needed to ensure that learners continued to be offered the best routes through qualifications, and that employers understood the new terminology and the opportunities presented by the QCF. So far, the results have been positive. Employers can tailor programmes to suit their individual employees' development needs, and learners can more easily choose to focus on a particular specialism. In animal care, for instance, as well as the general training previously offered by an NVQ, learners can choose to specialise in fields such as zoos and wildlife or kennels and catteries. The structure and wording of the qualifications have also become clearer and more defined, which makes them easier for learners, employers and assessors to understand.

KEITS Ltd. has been in the vanguard of the introduction to the QCF and its experiences indicate some valuable lessons as the wider implementation gets underway.

### Case Study 9

#### Northumberland College, Kirkley Hall Campus, Northumberland

Vocational qualifications for a renewable future

As a highly rural county, Northumberland has always had a need for high quality training for the agricultural sector. It also has enormous potential, however, as a source of renewable energy to help secure a greener future for the UK. Northumberland College is leading the way in developing vocational programmes in the renewable energy sector.

To date, the college's main focus within the green energy sector has been predominantly on- and off-shore wind energy. It is also starting to consider other areas of the renewable market, particularly biomass – an innovation that will give new opportunities to its agricultural graduates. The objective is to develop skills enabling those working in the sector to turn farm waste into energy.

The college aims to become an international centre of excellence in wind energy. Recent learners have come from as far afield as Greece as well as various parts of the UK with further enquiries from India, Canada and Bulgaria.

Work-based learning and theoretical learning are split 50/50 on the college's sustainable energy courses, and the theoretical component on campus includes workshop situations. At the end of 20 weeks in college, learners look for a work-based internship, although due to the high health and safety costs inherent in the sector this can be a complicated process.

Due to the newness of the sector, there are currently few opportunities for the college's graduates to continue to higher qualifications. The college is, however, working to develop a foundation degree which it plans to launch later this year.

Employers have been delighted with the skills demonstrated by graduates of the college's programmes. In particular, they have valued the provision of generic skills such as health and safety and first aid knowledge. This saves employers having to provide additional training and provides them with staff with transferable skills which they will be able to use across their whole subsequent career.

Although most of its learners are mature, the college is also playing its part in developing awareness of agriculture and environmental awareness among young learners. In partnership with local schools, Northumberland College offers young people the chance to come in to attend one of its courses, and it also gives them the opportunity to complete a micro-generation project.

The key features of Northumberland College's success at providing vocational training for the sustainable energy industry include:

- Flexible courses
- Working with employers to understand skills needs
- A holistic approach that includes additional learning support
- Provision of information, advice and guidance on career options.

Northumberland College's offshore wind programme is unique in the UK, but the college is now looking at the possibility of rolling it out to other training institutions in partnership with Industry and partner institutes.

## Annex 1: Assumptions, Limitations & Calculations

### 1. Headline VQ figure, United Kingdom

#### VRQs

– Data was taken from the Annual Qualifications Market Report (AQMR) 2010. This is likely to be a considerable overestimate of the number of VRQs awarded, as the AQMR includes qualifications such as ESOL which are outside the scope of our definitions of VQs. This data source was used, however, to provide continuity with previous reports, which appear to have arrived at AQMR estimates.

#### Train to Gain L2-L3 qualifications achieved

– The headline figure for 2008/9 was 425,100.  
 – In 2008/9 Train to Gain figures included NVQs delivered in the workplace, which were previously funded by FE, meaning that the headline figure was not comparable to previous years.  
 – According to the data source, there were 132,000 qualifications achieved in NVQs delivered in the workplace in 2007/8. This was calculated to be 19.8% of the total NVQs awarded in England.  
 – In 2008/9, 849,000 NVQs were awarded in England. 19.8% of this is 168,102, which is CSD's estimated number of additional qualifications covered by the 2008/9 headline figure.  
 – 168,102 was therefore taken off the total number of Train to Gain L2-L3 qualifications achieved for 2008/9 to make it comparable to 2007/8.

#### National Progression Awards & Personal Development Awards

– Figures for 2008/9 could not be found. CSD therefore applied a percentage change to figures from last year's report, based on the average change in Scottish learners at different levels (covering NVQ/SVQ L1-4 plus HNCs and HNDs) to arrive at an estimated figure for 2008/9.

#### HNCs/HNDs

– Full data on HNCs/HNDs was not available. The 54,000 for 2007/08 comes from last year's report. The estimate for 2008/09 was made by adding together the estimates made for HNCs/HNDs awarded in each of the separate nations (see below for method).

### Vocational-related honours, higher degrees and professional qualifications

– It was unclear how the figure from last year's report (126,000) was calculated, as later in the same report a figure of 420,650 was cited, which constitutes the total numbers of learners studying business & administrative studies, subjects allied to medicine, education, engineering & technology, law, computer science, architecture, building & planning, mass communications & documentation, medicine & dentistry, agriculture & related subjects, and veterinary science. A small proportion of the difference in numbers can be explained by removing foundation degrees and non-UK learners, but a large unexplained gap remains. CSD therefore decided to look at the percentage change on the 420,650 figure from 2007/8 to 2008/9 (-0.43%), and apply it to the 126,000 figure from last year's report.

### 2. Headline VQ figure, England

#### NVQs

– The statistics on NVQs for England were taken directly from the Statistical First Release.

#### VRQs

– Composite VRQ data comes from the Annual Qualifications Market Report (AQMR), which does not break the figure down further by country. The headline figure for 2007/8 for England was taken from The VQ Landscape 2009 by applying the proportion allocated for England (92.8%) to the overall UK figure. The percentage change between 2007/8 and 2008/9 was calculated using the proxy of changes in adjusted achievement data from the statistical first release (levels 1-3, excluding Skills for Life), which was 12.9% between 2007/8 and 2008/9. A factor of .946 was then applied to this figure, as it was for all nations, to bring it into line with the overall UK VRQ data.

### [As for the UK]: Train to Gain L2-L3 qualifications achieved

- The headline figure for 2008/9 was 425,100.
- In 2008/9 Train to Gain figures included NVQs delivered in the workplace, which were previously funded by FE, meaning that the headline figure was not comparable to previous years.
- According to the data source, there were 132,000 qualifications achieved in NVQs delivered in the workplace in 2007/8. This was calculated to be 19.8% of the total NVQs awarded in England.
- In 2008/9, 849,000 NVQs were awarded in England. 19.8% of this is 168,102, which is CSD's estimated number of additional qualifications covered by the 2008/9 headline figure.
- 168,102 was therefore taken off the total number of Train to Gain L2-L3 qualifications achieved for 2008/9 to make it comparable to 2007/8.

### HNCs/HNDs

- We were only able to source the actual HNCs/HNDs awarded for Northern Ireland. For each of the other nations, we calculated the 2007/8 figure by minusing Northern Ireland from the 54,000 figure given for the UK for 2007/8, then applying the proportions from data on HNDs/HNCs delivered through HE to each nation to find the breakdown for 2007/8. The proportional changes from data delivered through HE between 2007/8 and 2008/9 were then applied to each figure to estimate the full change (HNCs and HNDs delivered through all routes) for each nation.

### Degrees/professional qualifications

- The proportion of vocational degrees/professional qualifications in each nation was calculated by summing the qualifications achieved in vocational subjects for each nation in 2008/9 and dividing it by the total for the UK (the 420,650 figure explained above under 'UK'). This proportion was then used to calculate the approximate number of qualifications in each nation using the 120,000 figure from last year's report. The overall change across the UK (-0.43%) was used between the 2 years as this is an estimate only.

### 3. Headline VQ figure, Northern Ireland

#### NVQs

- The NVQ statistics were calculated from information provided to CSD by DELNI. The data provided was for the FE sector only. An assumption was made that this represented 95% of all NVQs delivered. This was used to calculate final figures.

#### HNCs & HNDs

- The HNC/HND statistics were provided to CSD by DELNI.

#### VRQs

- Composite VRQ data comes from the Annual Qualifications Market Report (AQMR), which does not break the figure down further by country. The headline figure for 2007/8 for Northern Ireland was taken from The VQ Landscape 2009 by applying the proportion allocated for Northern Ireland (1.7%) to the overall UK figure. The percentage change between 2007/8 and 2008/9 was calculated using the proxy of changes in adjusted achievement data from DELNI (professional and technical enrolments, all levels), which was 0.27% between 2007/8 and 2008/9. A factor of .946 was then applied to this figure, as it was for all nations, to bring it into line with the overall UK VRQ data.

### Degrees/professional qualifications

- The proportion of vocational degrees/professional qualifications in each nation was calculated by summing the qualifications achieved in vocational subjects for each nation in 2008/9 and dividing it by the total for the UK (the 420,650 figure explained above under 'UK'). This proportion was then used to calculate the approximate number of qualifications in each nation using the 120,000 figure from last year's report. The overall change across the UK (-0.43%) was used between the 2 years as this is an estimate only.

### 4. Headline VQ figure, Scotland

#### NVQs/SVQs

- Qualifications data was available for England, Northern Ireland, Wales and the UK. Scottish data was calculated by taking the English, Northern Irish and Welsh figures off the UK total.

### VRQs

– Composite VRQ data comes from the Annual Qualifications Market Report (AQMR), which does not break the figure down further by country. The headline figure for 2007/8 for Scotland was taken from The VQ Landscape 2009 by applying the proportion allocated for Scotland (1.1%) to the overall UK figure. The percentage change between 2007/8 and 2008/9 was calculated using the proxy of average changes in participation in NVQs/SVQs and HNCs/HNDs, which was -2.3% between 2007/8 and 2008/9. A factor of .946 was then applied to this figure, as it was for all nations, to bring it into line with the overall UK VRQ data.

### National Progression Awards & Personal Development Awards

– Figures for 2008/9 could not be found. CSD therefore applied a percentage change to figures from last year's report, based on the average change in Scottish learners at different levels (covering NVQ/SVQ L1-4 plus HNCs and HNDs) to arrive at an estimated figure for 2008/9.

### Degrees/professional qualifications

– The proportion of vocational degrees/professional qualifications in each nation was calculated by summing the qualifications achieved in vocational subjects for each nation in 2008/9 and dividing it by the total for the UK (the 420,650 figure explained above under 'UK'). This proportion was then used to calculate the approximate number of qualifications in each nation using the 120,000 figure from last year's report. The overall change across the UK (-0.43%) was used between the 2 years as this is an estimate only.

### HNCs/HNDs

– We were only able to source the actual HNCs/HNDs awarded for Northern Ireland. For each of the other nations, we calculated the 2007/8 figure by minusing Northern Ireland from the 54,000 figure given for the UK for 2007/8, then applying the proportions from data on HNDs/HNCs delivered through HE to each nation to find the breakdown for 2007/8. The proportional changes from data delivered through HE between 2007/8 and 2008/9 were then applied to each figure to estimate the full change (HNCs and HNDs delivered through all routes) for each nation.

## 5. Headline VQ figure, Wales

### NVQs

– The number of NVQs represents actual qualifications gained.

### VRQs

– Composite VRQ data comes from the Annual Qualifications Market Report (AQMR), which does not break the figure down further by country. The headline figure for 2007/8 for Wales was taken from The VQ Landscape 2009 by applying the proportion allocated for Wales (4.5%) to the overall UK figure. The percentage change between 2007/8 and 2008/9 was calculated using the proxy of average changes in participation at all levels, which was -1.95% between 2007/8 and 2008/9. A factor of .946 was then applied to this figure, as it was for all nations, to bring it into line with the overall UK VRQ data.

### Degrees/professional qualifications

– The proportion of vocational degrees/professional qualifications in each nation was calculated by summing the qualifications achieved in vocational subjects for each nation in 2008/9 and dividing it by the total for the UK (the 420,650 figure explained above under 'UK'). This proportion was then used to calculate the approximate number of qualifications in each nation using the 120,000 figure from last year's report. The overall change across the UK (-0.43%) was used between the 2 years as this is an estimate only.

### HNCs/HNDs

– We were only able to source the actual HNCs/HNDs awarded for Northern Ireland. For each of the other nations, we calculated the 2007/8 figure by minusing Northern Ireland from the 54,000 figure given for the UK for 2007/8, then applying the proportions from data on HNDs/HNCs delivered through HE to each nation to find the breakdown for 2007/8. The proportional changes from data delivered through HE between 2007/8 and 2008/9 were then applied to each figure to estimate the full change (HNCs and HNDs delivered through all routes) for each nation.

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## Annex 2: Acronyms and abbreviations

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<b>AQMR</b>	Annual Qualifications Market Report
<b>BTEC</b>	Business and Technology Education Council
<b>CYQ</b>	Central YMCA Qualifications
<b>DELNI</b>	Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland
<b>ESOL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>FE</b>	Further Education
<b>FWTC</b>	Fife Women's Technology Centre
<b>GCSE</b>	General Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>GNVQ</b>	General National Vocational Qualification
<b>HNC</b>	Higher National Certificate
<b>HND</b>	Higher National Diploma
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>MBA</b>	Masters of Business Administration
<b>NPA</b>	National Progression Award
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>NVQ</b>	National Vocational Qualification
<b>PDA</b>	Professional Development Award
<b>QCF</b>	Qualifications and Credit Framework
<b>SCQF</b>	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
<b>SFR</b>	Statistical First Release
<b>SVQ</b>	Scottish Vocational Qualification
<b>T2G</b>	Train to Gain
<b>VRQ</b>	Vocationally Related Qualification
<b>VQ</b>	Vocational Qualification

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## Annex 3: Glossary of Terms

<b>Vocational Qualification / VQ</b>	Recognised awards designed primarily to give entry to or advancement in a specific line of work
<b>Advanced Apprenticeships ('Modern apprenticeships' In Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)</b>	Recognised work-based training programmes at level 3 that normally include the completion of an NVQ and VRQ at that level, together with general functional skills and other elements specified by the relevant industry. Typically takes two years to complete. (An Apprenticeship is technically not a qualification, but a learning programme through which vocational qualifications will be gained.)
<b>Apprenticeships ('Foundation Modern Apprenticeships' in Wales, 'Traineeships' in Northern Ireland and 'Skillseekers' in Scotland are broadly similar).</b>	Recognised work-based training programmes at level 2 that normally include the completion of an NVQ and VRQ at that level, together with general functional skills and other elements specified by the relevant industry. Typically takes one and a half years to complete. (An Apprenticeship is technically not a qualification, but a learning programme through which vocational qualifications will be gained.)
<b>BTEC</b>	Brand of vocationally-related qualifications awarded by Edexcel.
<b>Foundation degrees</b>	Level 5 vocational qualifications combining academic study with workplace learning. They are designed to meet skills shortages at the higher technician and associate professional levels, and employers are closely involved in their development. Foundation degrees take two years full-time but many are undertaken part-time by employees over a longer period. They provide progression if desired to the final year of an Honours degree.
<b>Further Education / FE</b>	Post-16 learning up to level 3 delivered by a sixth-form college, further education college, higher education institution, private training provider or in the workplace. The majority of FE learning programmes are vocational.
<b>Higher Education / HE</b>	Learning at level 4 and above provided by universities, higher education colleges and some further education colleges. Vocational HE often involves work placements or more substantial periods of work-based learning.

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### Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

Higher vocational qualifications delivered by colleges and universities and awarded by Edexcel BTEC and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. An HNC is about 60 per cent of the size of an HND. An HND is roughly equivalent to a Foundation degree.

Both qualifications are positioned at level 5 on the NQF and at levels 7 and 8 respectively in Scotland on the SCQF.

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### National Qualifications Framework

The current framework for positioning qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see SCQF for Scotland). There are a basic Entry Level and eight main levels of qualification:

- **Entry level (1,2 and 3):** Entry Level Certificates and Awards
- **level 1:** NVQ Level 1, GCSE grade D-G, BTEC Introductory Certificate
- **level 2:** NVQ Level 2, GCSE A\*-C, BTEC First
- **level 3:** NVQ Level 3, A Level, BTEC National
- **level 4:** University certificate
- **level 5:** HNC/HND, Foundation degree
- **level 6:** Honours degree
- **level 7:** Masters degree
- **level 8:** Doctorate

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### National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

Recognised practical qualifications based on National Occupational Standards that certify competence to do a particular job or job role. Available at five levels, from the performance of basic routine skills at level 1 (NVQ Level 1) to advanced skills at level 5 involving considerable responsibility and autonomy. All Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships involve the completion of an NVQ. Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are the Scottish equivalent of NVQs.

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### Qualifications and Credit Framework

The new way of recognising learning achievements by awarding credit for qualifications and units (small steps of learning). Subject to successful testing and agreement by ministers, the QCF will gradually replace the NQF as recognised qualifications are allocated credit within the new framework.

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**Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework**

- level 12: Doctorates
- level 11: SVQ 5, Masters
- level 10: Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma/Certificates
- level 9: Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma/Certificates, Professional Development Awards
- level 8: SVQ 4, Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education, Professional Development Awards, Graduate Diploma/Certificates
- level 7: Higher National Certificate, Advanced Higher, Professional Development Awards
- level 6: SVQ 3, Higher, Progression Awards
- level 5: SVQ 2, Progression Awards, Intermediate 2, Credit Standard Grade
- level 4: SVQ 1 General Standard, Grade Intermediate 1
- level 3: Access 3, Foundation Standard Grade
- level 2: Access 2
- level 1: Access 1

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**Train to Gain**

Train to Gain is a government programme providing subsidised training to employees in England. Launched in April 2006 and rolled out fully in September that year, it was initially aimed particularly at employees who do not already hold a full level 2 qualification (equivalent to five GCSEs A\*– C). Its scope has been broadened to support the acquisition of higher level qualifications.

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**Vocationally-related Qualifications (VRQs)**

A wide range of recognised work-related qualifications, including BTECs, City & Guilds and OCR Nationals. VRQs are typically knowledge-based qualifications but many also involve practical work. They are available at various levels and considerably varying sizes: a level 3 VRQ, for example, may involve learning ranging from just several days or that of more than two A Levels. For example, with City and Guilds VRQs, a Level 3 Foundation Award in Public Relations requires an estimated 30 hours' tuition, while a Level 3 Diploma in Advanced Professional Cookery requires 900 hours.

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**Work-based Learning (WBL)**

Learning delivered or facilitated by a university, college or training provider in the workplace, supported by a workplace mentor and/or supervisor.

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## **Annex 4: Sources**

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**Annual Qualifications Market Report 2010**

**March 2010 Statistical First Release on  
Post-16 Education and Skills**

**HESA Statistical First Release no. 142  
on Higher Education Student Enrolments  
and Qualifications Obtained at Higher  
Education Institutions in the UK, 2008/09**

**Data on HNCs/HNDs direct from HESA**

**StatsWales**

**DELNI Statistical Bulletin on Professional  
Technical Enrolments in the Northern  
Ireland Further Education Sector for  
2007/08 and 2008/09**

**Data on NVQs direct from DELNI**

**Scottish Funding Council Infact Database**

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