

Regulated Qualifications Framework



The RQF provides a single, simple system for cataloguing all qualifications regulated by us. It's like a bookcase in a library, with qualifications indexed by their 'level' and 'size'. Qualifications at any specific level can be very different from one another, for example in their content and purpose. We maintain a register that provides more detail on each qualification (register.ofqual.gov.uk).

Qualification Level

Levels indicate the difficulty and complexity of the knowledge and skills associated with any qualification. There are eight levels supported by three 'entry' levels. While most qualifications will be assigned a single level some, such as GCSEs, can span more than one.

Qualification Size

Size refers to the estimated total amount of time it could typically take to study and be assessed for a qualification. This can be anything from a matter of hours to several years of study and different students can take different amounts of time to study for the same qualification. Size is expressed in terms of Total Qualification Time. The part of that time typically spent being taught or supervised, rather than studying alone, is known as Guided Learning Hours.

Qualifications can sit at different levels, but require similar amounts of study and assessment time. Equally, qualifications at the same level can take different amounts of study and assessment time.

The RQF replaced the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and National Qualifications Framework in October 2015.