



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

ANNUAL ANALYSIS OF AWARDS MADE BY QQI IN 2021



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This is a synoptic analysis of QQI Certification Data for 2021.

It provides breakdowns of QQI awards made for the calendar year 2021 for further education and training (FET) providers and certain higher education (HE) providers, by NFQ level, class, field of learning and provider type. The analysis includes trends and information on each of the ETBs, apprenticeships and learner profile. It details how the overall number of awards made by QQI in 2020 and 2021 was affected by COVID-19 restrictions.

QQI is the only body currently awarding FET qualifications that are included in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

QQI awards, however, account for a relatively small fraction of the HE awards made each year that are included in the NFQ.

The analysis of QQI minor awards for a given year does not include some of the components that were achieved in that year to qualify for the linked major award earned in that year. QQI is currently reviewing this approach so that the reporting of minor awards is clearer.

The analysis does not report numbers ≤ 5 .

For further information visit: <https://infographics.qqi.ie/>

ABSTRACT

The impact of COVID-19 was significant. The analysis of QQI awards made in 2021 and trends reveal that:

- In 2020 it accelerated the general downward trend observed in the number of FET learners receiving QQI awards; and decelerated the upward trend in the HE sector.
- In 2021, things stabilised. Growth in overall HE certification numbers increased in 2021, and FET overall certification totals were similar to 2020.

These are some of the highlights:

- The number of QQI FET major awards made at the lower levels of the NFQ (levels 2 to 4) grew in 2021 by 28% on average from 2020.
- The number of QQI HE major awards made declined at levels 6 and 7 in 2021 by 3% and 14% from 2020, continuing the downward trend observed in 2020 at these NFQ levels.
- The popularity of small qualifications (sometimes called micro-credentials) observed in 2020, continued in 2021. The increase was particularly high for special purpose and supplemental awards in FET and minor and special purpose awards in HE. It should be noted that small-volume qualifications have long been a feature of FET in Ireland.
- The share of major awards issued by QQI provider-type grew by 6 percentage points for private providers and declined by 5 percentage points for the ETBs between 2019 and 2021.
- Craft apprenticeship certification was hit hard by COVID-19 and certification in 2021 was 19% below pre-COVID levels.
- The share of female learners attaining QQI awards has grown 2 percentage points year on year since 2019.
- The age distribution of learners receiving QQI awards is more evenly distributed for FET than for HE. Those achieving HE awards are younger than those receiving FET awards, particularly at levels 8 and 9, where a quarter of awards achieved in 2021 were by learners aged 20-29.
- The proportion of providers who issued QQI awards to 100 learners or more per year has grown (in 2014, the proportion was 29% while in 2021 it was 39%).

ABSTRACT (continued)

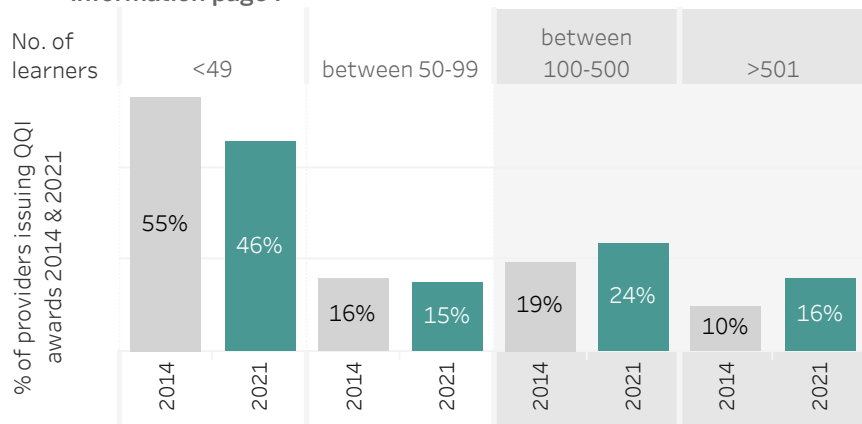
Looking at the time series in the report you can see that the number of active providers, FET learners achieving certification and FET certificates awarded have fallen significantly since 2014. Many factors are involved, and we plan to discuss the reasons for these trends in a future publication. For now, we offer some reasons for the decline in the number of active providers:

- **Business factors:** which include cost/benefit analysis of accessing the NFQ and re-engagement, focus on core business and/or insufficient demand for the programmes being offered.
- **Partnerships / Consolidation:** providers have sought other routes to validation and certification: e.g. making arrangements with a larger provider to operate under its quality assurance and programme development capacity. In this scenario, the number of providers is reduced but the level of certification may not be impacted and may even increase.
- **Public funding:** this was a factor for many smaller community sector providers.
- **Sectoral developments:** some providers were impacted when particular QQI awards lost regulatory significance e.g. Occupational First Aid.

OVERVIEW - AWARDS MADE BY QQI IN 2021

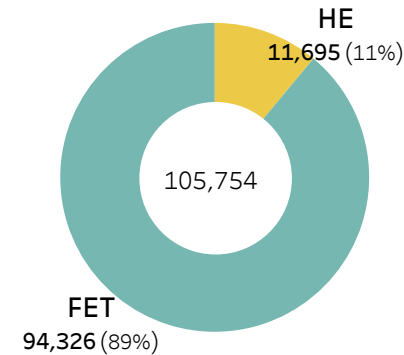


272 active providers* (down 7% from 2020); 40% of these providers issued QOI awards for 100 or more learners (in 2014 the proportion was 29%) – further information page 7



*74% of all providers registered with QQI were 'active' in 2021 (there were 372 registered providers).

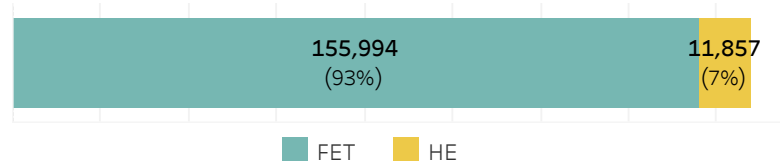
105,754 learners received QOI awards (down 1% from 2020)



167,851 awards were made by QOI (down 0.2% from 2020)

- 155,994 in FET, 93% of all awards made (down 1% from 2020).

- 11,857 in HE, 7% of all awards made (up 3% from 2020).



NFQ Level 5 accounted for the largest number of awards achieved by NFQ level (i.e. 50% of all awards achieved were made at this level).

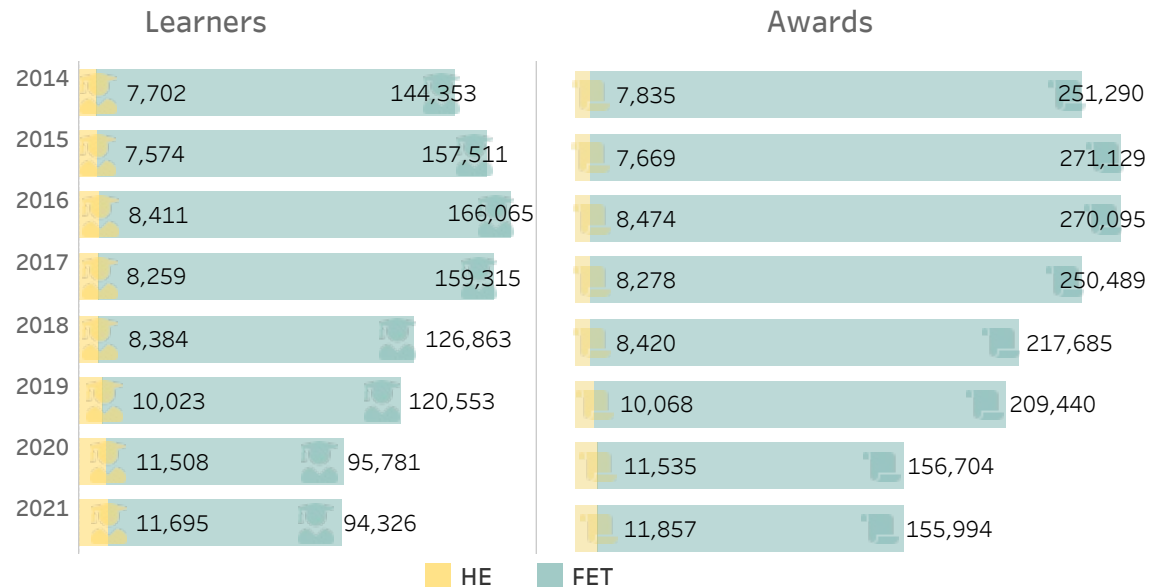


7,586 learners received awards at two or more NFQ levels in 2021 (up 20% from 2020)

267 learners received both FET and HE awards in 2021 (up 6% from 2020) - further information page 18

2,045 QOI major awards to apprentices were made in 2021 (down 19% from 2020), mainly at NFQ Level 6 in the FET sector - further information pages 19 and 20

NUMBER OF LEARNERS RECEIVING QQI AWARDS - TRENDS 2014-2021



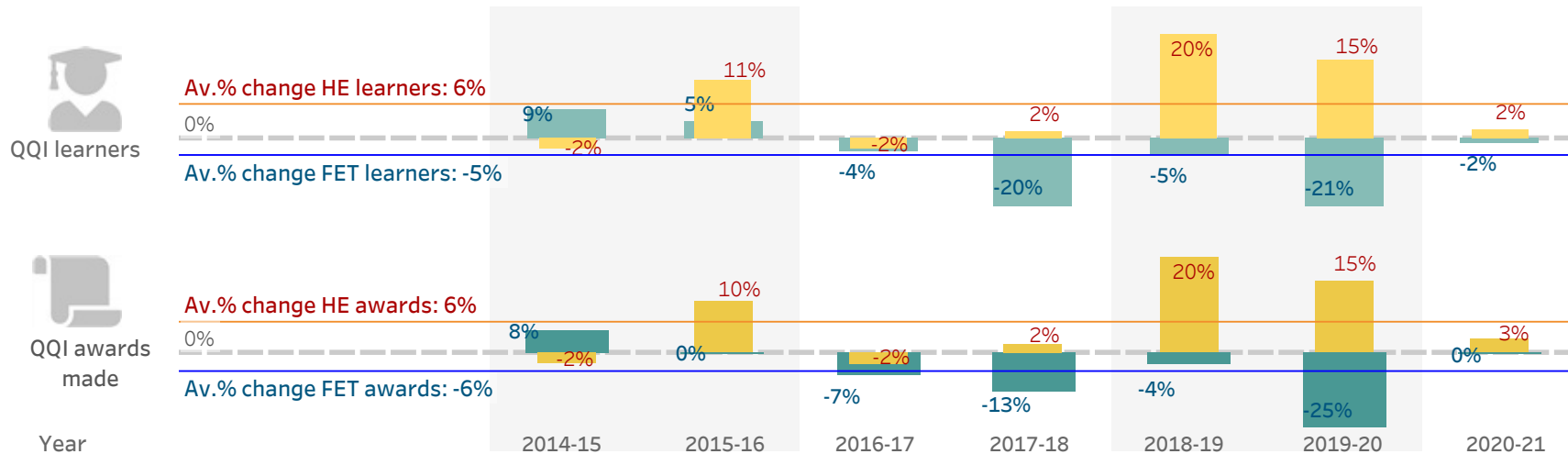
The number of **learners receiving FET awards from QQI** has declined since it peaked in 2016, when 166,065 learners received 270,095 awards. The number of **HE learners receiving QQI awards** has increased since 2016.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** and related restrictions disrupted education and training in 2020, affecting the number of QQI learners and awards achieved: it accelerated the general downward trend in number of FET learners receiving QQI awards; and slowed the upward trend in HE sector.

See <https://www.qqi.ie/news/qqi-awards-in-further-education-and-training-recover-from-pandemic-impact> for further information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The number of **QQI FET learners and awards** has declined year on year since 2015, by an average of 5% and 6% respectively. The largest drop in numbers occurred in 2020 when learners declined by 21% and awards by 25%. In 2021, the number of learners remained stable and awards dropped by just 2%, the lowest decline since 2016.

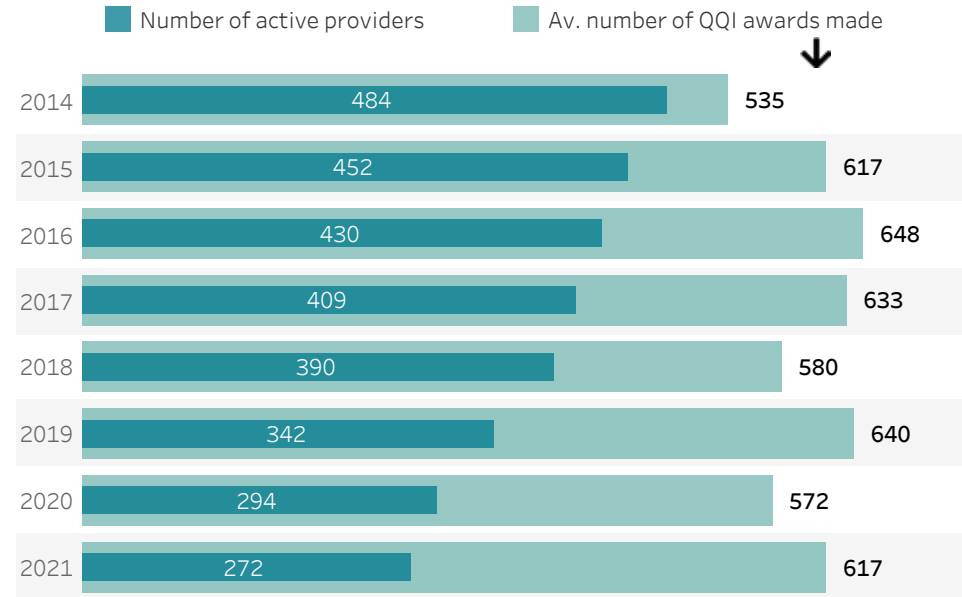
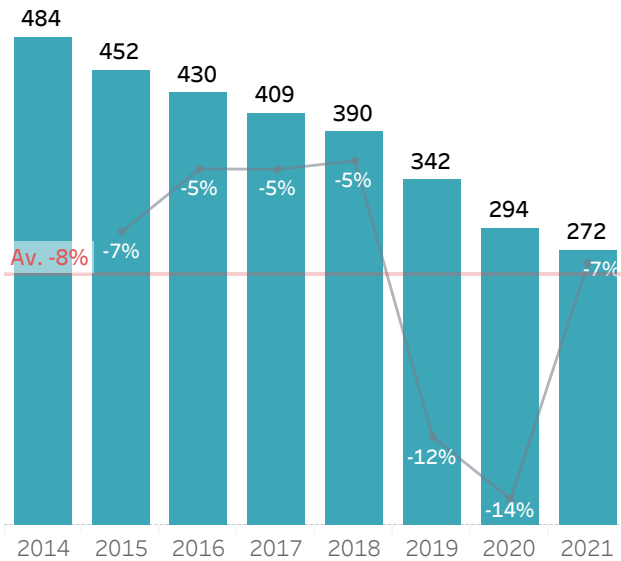
The number of **HE learners receiving QQI awards** has been growing since 2016. Year on year, the average increase in the number of HE learners is 5% and awards 6%. This upward trend peaked in 2019 and slowed in 2021 below average by 2% in the number of learners and 3% in the number of awards.



PROVIDERS: NUMBER OF QQI AWARDS MADE & LEARNERS - TRENDS 2014 - 2021



There were **272 active providers*** in 2021. The number of active providers has been decreasing year on year since 2014, by 8% on average. These providers issued **617 QQI awards on average** in 2021.



| ↑ up 6 percentage points 2014-2017 | | ↑ up 10 percentage points 2014-2021 | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2014 | 2016 | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
| 29% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 34% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 34% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 32% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 39% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners |
| 2015 | 2017 | 2019 | | |
| 32% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 35% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | 37% issued QQI awards for >=100 learners | | |

The proportion of active providers who issued QQI awards to 100 or more learners has increased since 2014 by approximately 2 percentage points year on year.

In 2021, almost 2 in 5 of all providers issued QQI awards for 100 or more learners.

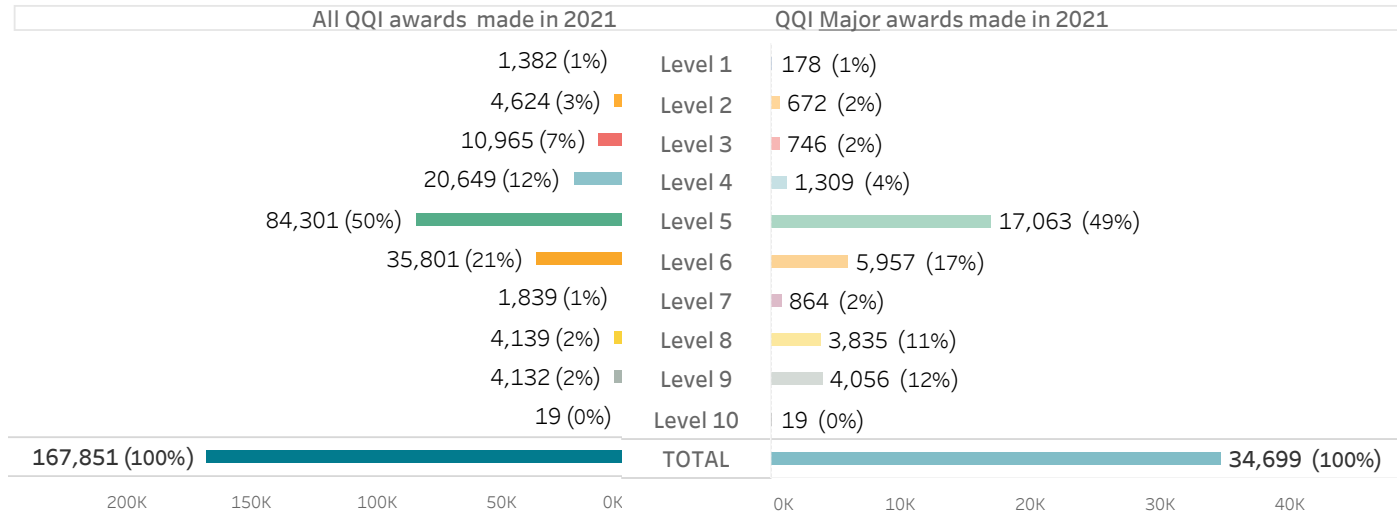


*74% of all providers registered with QQI were 'active' in 2021 (there were 372 registered providers); i.e., they certified QQI awards in 2021. In 2020, the average was 87%.

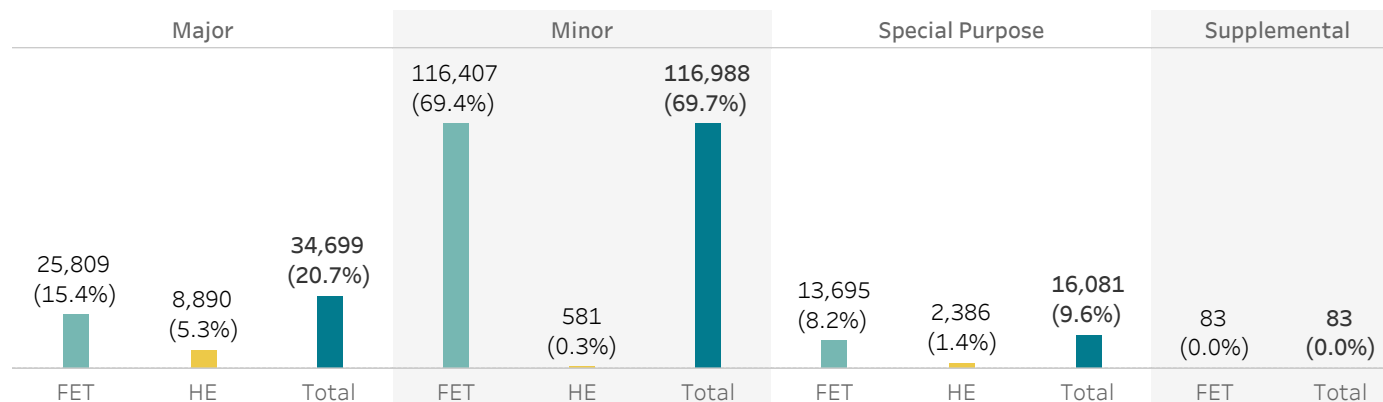
NUMBERS OF QQI AWARDS BY NFQ LEVEL & CLASS IN 2021



84,301 or 50% of all awards made by QQI in 2021 were at **NFQ level 5** (down 4% from 2020 when 87,706 awards were made at this level).
17,063 or 49% of major awards made by QQI in 2021 were at NFQ level 5 (down 2% from 2020 when 17,480 major awards were made at this level).



116,407 or 70% of all awards made by QQI in 2021 were **minor awards*** (down 1% from 2020 when 117,661 minor awards were made).



*The analysis of QQI minor awards for a given year include some of the components that were achieved in that year to qualify for the related major award earned in that year. The current QQI certification dataset, on which this analysis is based, suppresses the information on components. It provides only information on the major awards achieved at the end of the year. QQI is currently reviewing this approach so that the reporting of minor awards is clearer.

NUMBER OF QQI AWARDS BY SECTOR (FET/HE), NFQ LEVEL AND CLASS



25,809 FET major awards made by QQI in 2021, mostly at NFQ level 5 (down 2% from 2020). In 2021, for the first time, a supplemental award was made at Level 5 (in previous years all QQI supplemental awards were made only at level 6).

8,890 or the majority of **HE awards made** by QQI in 2021 were **major awards**, mostly at NFQ levels 8 (up 3% from 2020) and 9 (up 0.5% from 2020).

| FET AWARDS TOTAL | | 155,994 |
|------------------|---------|---------|
| Major | TOTAL | 25,809 |
| | Level 1 | 178 |
| | Level 2 | 672 |
| | Level 3 | 746 |
| | Level 4 | 1,309 |
| | Level 5 | 17,063 |
| | Level 6 | 5,841 |
| Minor | TOTAL | 116,407 |
| | Level 1 | 1,204 |
| | Level 2 | 3,952 |
| | Level 3 | 10,211 |
| | Level 4 | 19,135 |
| | Level 5 | 58,676 |
| | Level 6 | 23,229 |
| Special Purpose | TOTAL | 13,695 |
| | Level 3 | 8 |
| | Level 4 | 205 |
| | Level 5 | 8,542 |
| | Level 6 | 4,940 |
| Supplem.. | TOTAL | 83 |
| | Level 5 | 20 |
| | Level 6 | 63 |

| HE AWARDS TOTAL | | 11,857 |
|-----------------|----------|--------|
| Major | TOTAL | 8,890 |
| | Level 6 | 116 |
| | Level 7 | 864 |
| | Level 8 | 3,835 |
| | Level 9 | 4,056 |
| | Level 10 | 19 |
| HE Minor | TOTAL | 581 |
| | Level 6 | 471 |
| | Level 7 | 26 |
| | Level 8 | 49 |
| | Level 9 | 35 |
| Special Purpose | TOTAL | 2,386 |
| | Level 6 | 1,141 |
| | Level 7 | 949 |
| | Level 8 | 255 |
| | Level 9 | 41 |

NUMBER OF QQI AWARDS - COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS 2019, 2020 AND 2021



The number of QQI FET major and minor awards made in 2021 stabilized after the dramatic drop as a result of the **COVID-19 pandemic** and related restrictions in 2020: they declined marginally in 2021 from 2020: by 1% and 0.6% respectively.

The number of HE major awards made in 2021 grew at a slower pace than in previous years.

The COVID-19 pandemic boosted the popularity of **micro-credentials** (small qualifications included in the NFQ) in 2020. This trend continued in 2021: the increase in the number of QQI awards made was particularly high for FET special purpose and supplemental awards and HE minor and special purpose awards.

| | | 2019 | % change 2019-2020 | 2020 | % change 2020-2021 | 2021 |
|-----------------|-----|---------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| ALL | FET | 209,440 | FET: ↓ 25% | 156,704 | FET: ↓ 0.4% | 155,994 |
| | HET | 10,068 | HE: ↑ 15% | 11,535 | HE: ↑ 3% | 11,857 |
| TOTAL | | 219,508 | ↓ 24% | 168,239 | ↓ 0.2% | 167,851 |
| Major | FET | 29,538 | FET: ↓ 12% | 26,085 | FET: ↓ 1% | 25,809 |
| | HET | 7,804 | HE: ↑ 14% | 8,903 | HE: ↑ 0.2% | 8,890 |
| Minor | FET | 161,310 | FET: ↓ 27% | 117,192 | FET: ↓ 1% | 116,407 |
| | HET | 390 | HE: ↑ 1% | 372 | HE: ↑ 56% | 581 |
| Special Purpose | FET | 18,530 | FET: ↓ 27% | 13,370 | FET: ↑ 3% | 13,695 |
| | HET | 1,874 | HE: ↑ 1% | 2,260 | HE: ↑ 6% | 2,386 |
| Suppleme.. | FET | 62 | FET: ↓ 8% | 57 | FET: ↑ 46% | 83 |

The number of **QQI FET major awards** made at the lower levels of the NFQ (levels 2 to 4) grew in 2021 by 28% on average from 2020, suggesting recovery from the impact of the pandemic. Level 1 didn't share the increase and declined further in 2021.

The number of **QQI HE major awards** made declined at levels 6 and 7 in 2021 by 3% and 14%, continuing the downward trend observed in 2020 at these NFQ levels.

| | | 2019 | % change 2019-2020 | 2020 | % change 2020-2021 | 2021 |
|----------|---------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Level 1 | | 390 | ↓ 31% | 271 | ↓ 34% | 178 |
| Level 2 | | 1,123 | ↓ 85% | 469 | ↑ 44% | 672 |
| Level 3 | | 1,377 | ↓ 52% | 660 | ↑ 13% | 746 |
| Level 4 | | 1,735 | ↓ 41% | 1,032 | ↑ 27% | 1,309 |
| Level 5 | | 19,466 | ↓ 10% | 17,480 | ↓ 3% | 17,063 |
| HE - FET | Level 6 | 139 | ↓ 13%; ↑ 13% | 120 | ↓ 3%; ↓ 5% | 116 |
| | Level 7 | 5,447 | | 6,173 | | 5,841 |
| Level 7 | | 1,048 | ↓ 4% | 1,004 | ↓ 14% | 864 |
| Level 8 | | 3,262 | ↑ 14% | 3,722 | ↑ 3% | 3,835 |
| Level 9 | | 3,323 | ↑ 21% | 4,038 | ↑ 1% | 4,056 |
| Level 10 | | 32 | ↑ 41% | 19 | 0% | 19 |

NUMBER OF MAJOR AWARDS BY FIELD OF LEARNING (ISCED) & SECTOR IN 2021



8,716 or 34% of all **FET major awards made by QQI in 2021** were in the Health & welfare field of learning*; followed by Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary; Business, administration & law; and Arts & humanities.

The Education field of learning experienced the highest percentage increase of QQI FET major awards made, up 17% from 2020. The largest percentage decrease occurred in the Engineering, manufacturing & construction field of learning, down 21% from 2020.

4,219 or 47% of all **HE awards made by QQI in 2021** were in the Business, administration & law field of learning; followed by ICTs; Education; and Health & welfare.

Numbers of HE QQI major awards increased from 2020 in the Arts & humanities; Business, administration & law; and Education fields of learning. The largest percentage decrease occurred in the Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics, down 62% from 2020.

| | 2021 | | | | | | | | | | | | TOTAL Major awards made |
|------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|--|--------------|---|--------------|-------------------------|
| | Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary | Arts & humanities | Business, administration & law | Education | Engineering, manufacturing & construction | Generic programmes & qualifications | Health & welfare | ICTs | Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics | Services | Social sciences, journalism & information | UNCLASSIFIED | |
| FET | | | | | | | 8,716 34% | 704 3% | 417 2% | 1,917 7% | 902 3% | | 25,809 100% |
| | 3,342 13% | 2,920 11% | 3,196 12% | 112 0% | 2,248 9% | 1,335 5% | | | | | | | |
| HE | | 235 3% | 4,219 47% | 1,170 13% | 138 2% | | 747 8% | 1,939 22% | 89 1% | 26 0% | 315 4% | 12 0% | 8,890 100% |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2,997 12% | 2,795 4% | 3,438 -7% | 96 17% | 2,854 -21% | 1,183 13% | 8,576 2% | 680 4% | 433 -4% | 2,075 -8% | 958 -6% | | 26,085 -1% |
| 2020 %change from 2021 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FET | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HE | | 194 21% | 3,785 11% | 1,027 14% | 221 -38% | | 813 -8% | 2,165 -10% | 232 -62% | 38 -32% | 404 -22% | 24 -50% | 8,903 0% |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*A large number of awards for 'childcare and youth services' (e.g. Early Learning and Care-related awards) are classified under, 'Healthcare and welfare' field of learning (see [ISCED classification](#)). However, there is an argument that these awards should be included in the 'Education' field instead.

NUMBER OF ALL AWARDS BY FIELD OF LEARNING (ISCED), NFQ LEVEL & CLASS OF AWARDS IN 2021



Field of Learning by NFQ Level

In the FET sector: in all but one field of learning, the majority of QQI awards (counting all classes) made were at level 5; the exception is Education, where the majority of awards made were at level 6.

In the HE sector: the largest number of QQI HE awards (2,563 awards, up 12% from 2020) were made in the Business, administration & law field at level 8

Fields of Learning by Class of Awards

In the FET sector: QQI made more FET minor awards than major or special purpose awards; except in the Engineering, manufacturing & construction field where more special purpose awards were made.

In the HE sector: QQI made more major than minor or special purpose awards; except in the Engineering, manufacturing & construction field where more special purpose awards were made.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|--|----------|---|--------------|--|
| FET | Level 1 | 14 | 113 | | | | 1,253 | | | | | | | |
| | Level 2 | 56 | 207 | | | | 4,312 | | | 49 | | | | |
| | Level 3 | 437 | 1,868 | 1,907 | 47 | 243 | 3,257 | 162 | 1,256 | 24 | 1,758 | 6 | | |
| | Level 4 | 2,543 | 1,965 | 2,999 | | 312 | 6,419 | 232 | 146 | 320 | 5,687 | 26 | | |
| | Level 5 | 6,461 | 4,491 | 13,015 | 138 | 5,418 | 8,953 | 28,997 | 1,350 | 1,555 | 12,288 | 1,635 | | |
| | Level 6 | 3,570 | 1,496 | 6,530 | 5,763 | 2,896 | 2,382 | 8,779 | 672 | 147 | 1,728 | 110 | | |
| HE | Level 6 | | 85 | 981 | 185 | | | 216 | 25 | | 233 | | | |
| | Level 7 | | 116 | 546 | 87 | 260 | | 297 | 419 | | 16 | | 95 | |
| | Level 8 | | 99 | 2,563 | 161 | 35 | | 200 | 849 | | | 232 | | |
| | Level 9 | | 20 | 1,612 | 959 | | | 326 | 1,048 | 89 | | 78 | | |
| Level 10 | | | 7 | | | | | | | | | | 12 | |
| | | Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary | Arts & humanities | Business, administration & law | Education | Engineering, manufacturing & construction | Generic programmes & qualifications | Health & welfare | ICTs | Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics | Services | Social sciences, journalism & information | UNCLASSIFIED | |
| FET | Major | 3,342 | 2,920 | 3,196 | 112 | 2,248 | 1,335 | 8,716 | 704 | 417 | 1,917 | 902 | | |
| | Minor | 8,154 | 7,212 | 21,222 | 3,345 | 2,851 | 25,241 | 29,430 | 2,720 | 1,666 | 13,691 | 875 | | |
| | Special Purpose | 1,585 | 8 | 33 | 2,491 | 3,707 | | | | 14 | 5,853 | | | |
| | Supplemental | | | | | 63 | | 20 | | | | | | |
| HE | HE Minor | | 48 | 225 | 17 | | | 69 | 47 | | 175 | | | |
| | Major | | 235 | 4,219 | 1,170 | 138 | | 747 | 1,939 | 89 | 26 | 315 | 12 | |
| | Special Purpose | | 37 | 1,265 | 205 | 158 | | 223 | 355 | | 48 | | 95 | |

TOP 15 AWARDS BY CLASS & NFQ LEVEL IN 2021



14,895 or 43% of all **QQI major awards** made in 2021 were in the top 15 awards, mainly at NFQ level 5.

TOP 15 QQI Major awards

| | | | |
|--------------|---------|---|---------------|
| 5M4339 | Level 5 | Healthcare Support | 2,159 |
| 5M2009 | Level 5 | Early Childhood Care & Education | 1,738 |
| 5M20454 | Level 5 | Agriculture | 1,715 |
| 6M2007 | Level 6 | Early Childhood Care & Education | 1,525 |
| 5M4349 | Level 5 | Nursing Studies | 1,259 |
| 5M4468 | Level 5 | Community Health Services | 891 |
| 5M2102 | Level 5 | Business Studies | 795 |
| 9M18014 | Level 9 | Professional Master of Education in Primary E.. | 717 |
| P2GL0 | Level 2 | General Learning | 672 |
| 5M3782 | Level 5 | Health Service Skills | 626 |
| 4M2010 | Level 4 | General Learning | 609 |
| 5M5146 | Level 5 | Sports, Recreation and Exercise | 606 |
| 5M1997 | Level 5 | Office Administration | 563 |
| 5M2468 | Level 5 | Business Administration | 519 |
| 5M2181 | Level 5 | Applied Social Studies | 501 |
| TOTAL | | | 14,895 |

TRENDS TOP 15 QQI AWARDS

These **Top 15 minor, major and special purpose** awards have been consistently the most popular awards over since 2014, and together they represent 36% of all awards awarded by QQI in 2021.

All major awards in the Top 15 are FET awards, except for the QQI award '**Professional Master of Education in Primary Education**', which is made in HE. It was introduced in 2016 as the minimum legal requirement for those wishing to work as registered teachers. This explains the higher numbers of awards made in this QQI HE award.

In 2021, a **new QQI supplemental award 'Certificate in Dementia Care'** at level 5 was certified and achieved by 20 learners. It was made for Midland Energy Training and Assessment Centre Ltd (METAC), QQI provider type: Employer-based learning.

QQI Supplemental awards

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------|------------------------------|-----------|
| 6U16018 & 6U20556 | Level 6 | Domestic Gas Safety | 63 |
| 5U21414 | Level 5 | Certificate in Dementia Care | 20 |
| TOTAL | | | 83 |

36,737 or 31% of all **QQI minor awards** made in 2021 were in the top 15 awards, mainly at NFQ Level 5. All 15 were made in FET.

TOP 15 QQI Minor awards

| | | | |
|--------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 5N0690 | Level 5 | Communications | 4,493 |
| 5N1786 | Level 5 | Special Needs Assisting | 3,851 |
| 6N1957 | Level 6 | Special Needs Assisting | 3,628 |
| 4N1118 | Level 4 | Guarding Skills | 3,263 |
| 5N2770 | Level 5 | Care Skills | 3,211 |
| 5N2706 | Level 5 | Care of the Older Person | 3,050 |
| 6N3326 | Level 6 | Training Delivery and Evaluation | 2,250 |
| 5N1794 | Level 5 | Safety and Health at Work | 2,178 |
| 5N3734 | Level 5 | Infection Prevention and Control | 2,002 |
| 5N1356 | Level 5 | Work Experience | 1,868 |
| 5N1358 | Level 5 | Word Processing | 1,718 |
| 4N1125 | Level 4 | Information Technology Skills | 1,429 |
| 5N0758 | Level 5 | Care Support | 1,369 |
| 6N3945 | Level 6 | Managing People | 1,245 |
| 5N1546 | Level 5 | Payroll Manual and Computerised | 1,182 |
| TOTAL | | | 36,737 |

11,383 or 71% of all QQI **special purpose** awards made in 2021 were in the top 15 awards, mainly at NFQ Levels 5 and 6.

TOP 15 QQI Special Purpose awards

| | | | |
|--------------|---------|---|---------------|
| 6S20487 | Level 6 | Farming | 1,428 |
| 6S0242 | Level 6 | Manual Handling Instruction | 1,258 |
| 820105 | Level 5 | 360° Excavator Operations | 1,161 |
| 824905 | Level 5 | Signing, Lighting and Guarding at Roadwor.. | 1,042 |
| 821905 | Level 5 | Front Loading Site Dumper Operations | 1,025 |
| 823405 | Level 5 | Slinger and Signaller Operations | 962 |
| 823505 | Level 5 | Telescopic Handler Operations | 915 |
| 6S3372 | Level 6 | Training and Development | 894 |
| 824405 | Level 5 | Locating and Avoiding Underground Servic.. | 727 |
| 826005 | Level 5 | Mobile Access Tower Operations | 401 |
| 5S20009 | Level 5 | Implementing Food Safety Management Sy.. | 395 |
| 824305 | Level 5 | Health & Safety at Roadworks | 392 |
| 6S20722 | Level 6 | Certificate in Payroll Techniques | 299 |
| 820305 | Level 5 | Articulated Dumper Operations | 280 |
| 823105 | Level 5 | Scaffolding Up to Seven Metres | 204 |
| TOTAL | | | 11,383 |

NUMBER OF QQI AWARDS MADE BY TYPE OF PROVIDER IN 2021



91,150 QQI FET awards were made for the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in 2021 (down 7% from 2020). These represent 58% of all FET awards made in 2021.

49,940 QQI awards were made for the second biggest group: private providers (PRC) (up 11% from 2020), mostly in FET.

| | Major | Minor | Special Purpose | Supplemental | TOTAL |
|-----|--------|--------|-----------------|--------------|--------|
| CVS | 663 | 6,200 | 141 | | 7,004 |
| EMP | 131 | 942 | 118 | 20 | 1,211 |
| ETB | 18,034 | 71,933 | 1,178 | | 91,150 |
| HOS | 61 | 168 | | | 229 |
| PRC | 2,564 | 32,220 | 3,260 | 58 | 38,102 |
| PSA | 17 | 550 | 67 | | 634 |
| SCS | 615 | 1,738 | | | 2,354 |
| SOL | 3,724 | 2,656 | 8,930 | | 15,310 |
| IOT | 19 | | | | 19 |
| PRC | 8,871 | 581 | 2,386 | | 11,838 |

CVS: Community / Voluntary Sector Organisation
EMP: Employer-based learning
ETB: Education and Training Board
HOS: Hospital CNE
IOT: Institutes of Technology
PRC: Private Provider
PSA: Public Service Agency
SCS: Voluntary Secondary School
SOL: SOLAS

DISTRIBUTION OF QQI AWARDS MADE BY TYPE OF PROVIDER & NFQ LEVEL

The **ETBs** accounted for the largest number of QQI awards made at NFQ Levels 1-5: on average, three quarters of all awards made by QQI at Levels 1-3 are for ETBs, and 67% at Levels 4 and 5.

In HE, QQI awards made for **PRCs** are larger than for any other provider type at Levels 6 to 9 inclusive.

| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 6 | Level 7 | Level 8 | Level 9 | Level 10 |
|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| CVS | 267 | 1,019 | 1,220 | 618 | 2,798 | 1,082 | | | | |
| EMP | | | | | 978 | 233 | | | | |
| ETB | 1,037 | 3,349 | 7,954 | 13,916 | 52,184 | 12,710 | | | | |
| HOS | | | | | 208 | 21 | | | | |
| PRC | 18 | 111 | 1,470 | 6,078 | 15,703 | 14,722 | | | | |
| PSA | | | | | 135 | 499 | | | | |
| SCS | 60 | 145 | 321 | 37 | 1,333 | 458 | | | | |
| SOL | | | | | 10,962 | 4,348 | | | | |
| IOT | | | | | | | | | | 19 |
| PRC | | | | | | 1,728 | 1,839 | 4,139 | 4,132 | |

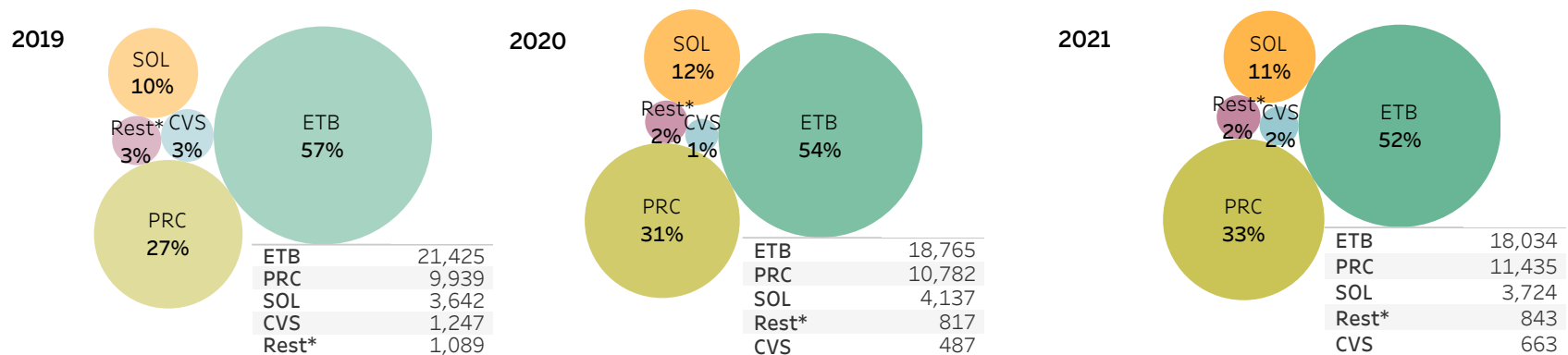
FOUR PROVIDER TYPES BY QQI AWARDS MADE IN 2021



163,404 awards or 97% of all QQI awards made in 2021 were issued for four types of provider: Community/Voluntary Sector Organisation (CVS), Education and Training Board (ETB), Private Provider (PRC) and SOLAS (SOL). The majority were minor awards at NFQ Level 5.

| | | Major | Minor | Special Purpose | Supplemental | TOTAL |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| CVS | Level 1 | 61 | 206 | | | 267 |
| | Level 2 | 226 | 793 | | | 1,019 |
| | Level 3 | 109 | 1,111 | | | 1,220 |
| | Level 4 | | 607 | 8 | | 618 |
| | Level 5 | 195 | 2,603 | | | 2,798 |
| | Level 6 | 69 | 880 | 133 | | 1,082 |
| | TOTAL | 663 | 6,200 | 141 | | 7,004 |
| ETB | Level 1 | 73 | 964 | | | 1,037 |
| | Level 2 | 367 | 2,982 | | | 3,349 |
| | Level 3 | 571 | 7,375 | 8 | | 7,954 |
| | Level 4 | 1,265 | 12,568 | 83 | | 13,916 |
| | Level 5 | 13,185 | 38,845 | 154 | | 52,184 |
| | Level 6 | 2,573 | 9,199 | 933 | | 12,710 |
| | TOTAL | 18,034 | 71,933 | 1,178 | | 91,150 |
| PRC | Level 1 | | 17 | | | 18 |
| | Level 2 | 21 | 90 | | | 111 |
| | Level 3 | 45 | 1,425 | | | 1,470 |
| | Level 4 | 40 | 5,924 | 114 | | 6,078 |
| | Level 5 | 1,566 | 13,686 | 451 | | 15,703 |
| | Level 6 | 1,007 | 11,549 | 3,836 | 58 | 16,450 |
| | Level 7 | 864 | 26 | 949 | | 1,839 |
| | Level 8 | 3,835 | 49 | 255 | | 4,139 |
| | Level 9 | 4,056 | 35 | 41 | | 4,132 |
| | TOTAL | 11,435 | 32,801 | 5,646 | 58 | 49,940 |
| SOL | Level 5 | 1,531 | 1,530 | 7,901 | | 10,962 |
| | Level 6 | 2,193 | 1,126 | 1,029 | | 4,348 |
| | TOTAL | 3,724 | 2,656 | 8,930 | | 15,310 |
| TOTAL | 33,856 | 113,590 | 15,895 | 63 | 163,404 | |

The provision-share of major awards made by QQI provider type between 2019 and 2021 grew 6 percentage points for PRC and declined 5 percentage points for ETBs.



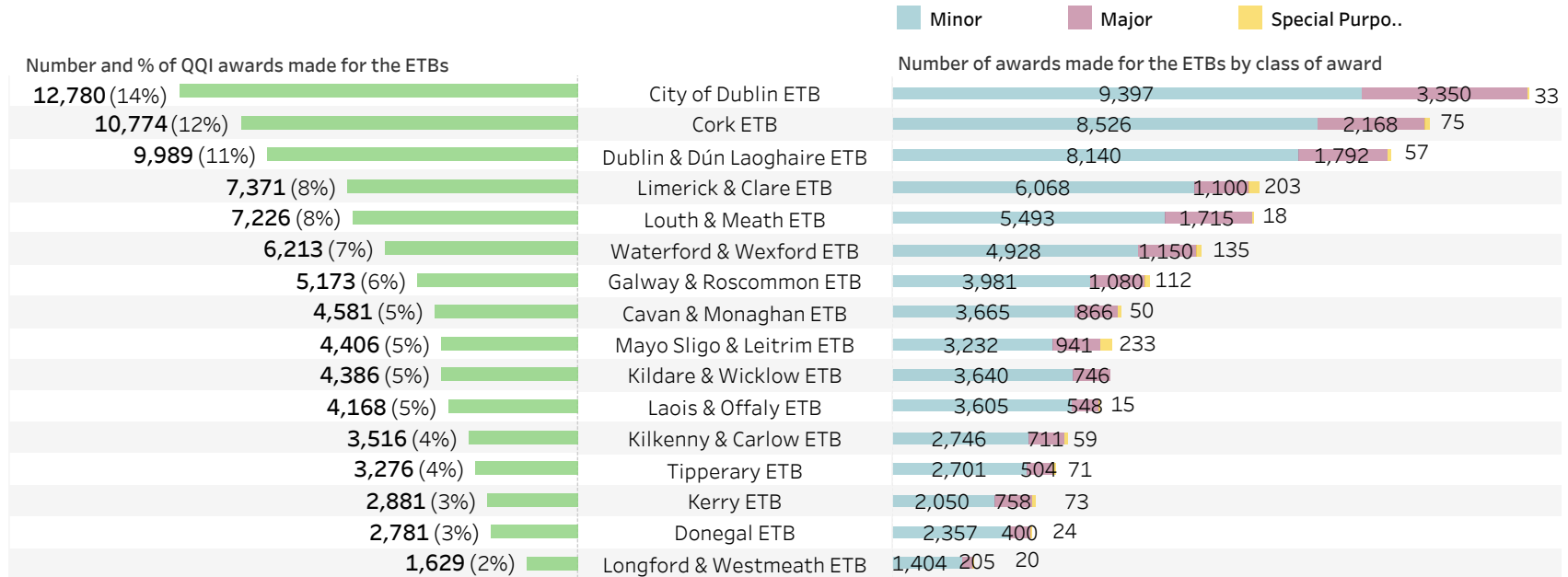
* Rest are provider type: EMP, HOS, IOT, PSA, SCS

QQI AWARDS MADE FOR THE EDUCATION & TRAINING BOARDS (ETBs) IN 2021



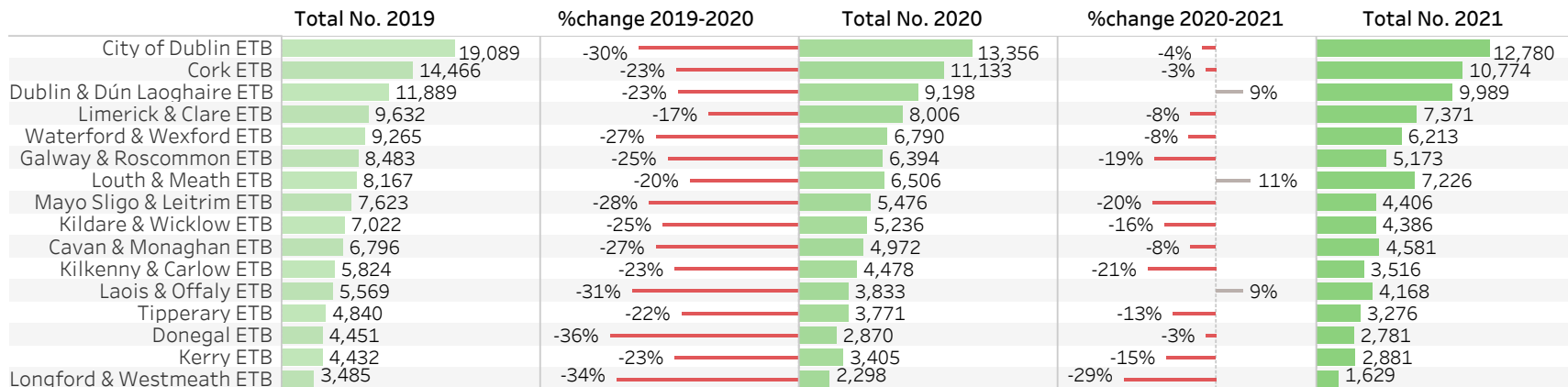
12,780 QQI awards were made for the City of Dublin ETB (down 4% from 2021); followed by Cork ETB (10,774 awards, down 3%) and Dublin & Dún Laoghaire (9,989 up 9%). One in three of all awards made for the ETBs were accounted for by these three ETBs.

The majority of awards made for the ETBs are **minor awards** (on average 80% of all awards), followed by major awards (on average 19%). These averages were the same in 2020.



NUMBER AND % CHANGE OF QQI AWARDS MADE FOR ETBS - 2019, 2020, 2021

The numbers of awards made between 2020 and 2021 increased only in three ETBs: Dublin & Dún Laoghaire, Louth & Meath and Laois & Offaly.



DISTRIBUTION OF AWARDS MADE BY QQI FOR THE ETBs BY NFQ LEVELS



On average, almost three in four of all awards made by the ETBs are in Business, administration & law; Generic programmes & qualifications; or Health & welfare field of learning.

On average, almost 60% of all awards made by the ETBs are at level 5. ETBs with one or more than one standard deviation below this mean: Longford & Westmeath ETB (39% were made at level 5) and Laois & Offaly ETB (42%); and with one or more than one standard deviation above this mean: Kilkenny & Carlow ETB (65%) and marginally Louth & Meath ETB (64%).

| | | | | | | | | | | | ETB | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|------|--|----------|---|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | | | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 6 | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary | Arts & humanities | Business, administration & law | Education | Engineering, manufacturing & construction | Generic programmes & qualifications | Health & welfare | ICTs | Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics | Services | Social sciences, journalism & information | Standard Deviation | 2% | 3% | 3% | 5% | 7% | 5% |
| 4% | 9% | 20% | 1% | 2% | 23% | 23% | 3% | 2% | 10% | 2% | AVERAGE DISTRIBUTION | 1% | 4% | 9% | 15% | 57% | 14% |
| 2% | 6% | 22% | 2% | 3% | 26% | 22% | 2% | 2% | 11% | 1% | Cavan & Monaghan ETB | | 7% | 8% | 17% | 52% | 15% |
| 3% | 13% | 17% | 1% | 1% | 23% | 17% | 5% | 3% | 14% | 3% | City of Dublin ETB | | 3% | 9% | 17% | 60% | 12% |
| 5% | 10% | 20% | 2% | 1% | 20% | 25% | 4% | 3% | 8% | 2% | Cork ETB | 0% | 3% | 8% | 14% | 56% | 19% |
| 1% | 5% | 11% | 1% | 1% | 36% | 35% | 3% | 0% | 6% | | Donegal ETB | 4% | 13% | 14% | 9% | 53% | 6% |
| 3% | 9% | 25% | 2% | 1% | 23% | 24% | 3% | 2% | 6% | 2% | Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB | | 3% | 7% | 14% | 57% | 20% |
| 6% | 8% | 19% | 1% | 4% | 19% | 23% | 2% | 1% | 14% | 2% | Galway & Roscommon ETB | | 1% | 7% | 18% | 63% | 12% |
| 3% | 10% | 23% | 2% | 3% | 20% | 20% | 2% | 2% | 12% | 2% | Kerry ETB | | 2% | 8% | 15% | 61% | 13% |
| 5% | 8% | 26% | 1% | 3% | 22% | 21% | 5% | 2% | 8% | 1% | Kildare & Wicklow ETB | 0% | 2% | 12% | 18% | 56% | 12% |
| 6% | 11% | 16% | 2% | 2% | 24% | 23% | 3% | 2% | 10% | 2% | Kilkenny & Carlow ETB | 2% | 3% | 9% | 11% | 65% | 10% |
| 1% | 8% | 21% | 0% | 2% | 29% | 22% | 2% | 1% | 12% | 1% | Laois & Offaly ETB | 6% | 5% | 13% | 19% | 42% | 15% |
| 5% | 8% | 19% | 2% | 4% | 20% | 27% | 2% | 2% | 9% | 2% | Limerick & Clare ETB | 2% | 3% | 7% | 12% | 57% | 19% |
| 2% | 6% | 26% | 2% | 5% | 26% | 12% | 3% | 0% | 15% | 2% | Longford & Westmeath ETB | 2% | 7% | 18% | 24% | 39% | 10% |
| 3% | 8% | 20% | 1% | 2% | 27% | 23% | 3% | 2% | 10% | 2% | Louth & Meath ETB | 3% | 7% | 7% | 12% | 64% | 6% |
| 10% | 4% | 20% | 0% | 2% | 20% | 25% | 4% | 1% | 12% | 2% | Mayo Sligo & Leitrim ETB | 1% | 2% | 7% | 11% | 60% | 19% |
| 6% | 8% | 18% | 2% | 2% | 26% | 24% | 1% | 1% | 13% | 1% | Tipperary ETB | 4% | 3% | 6% | 27% | 50% | 10% |
| 7% | 7% | 20% | 1% | 4% | 25% | 19% | 2% | 1% | 12% | 1% | Waterford & Wexford ETB | 1% | 4% | 10% | 18% | 59% | 10% |

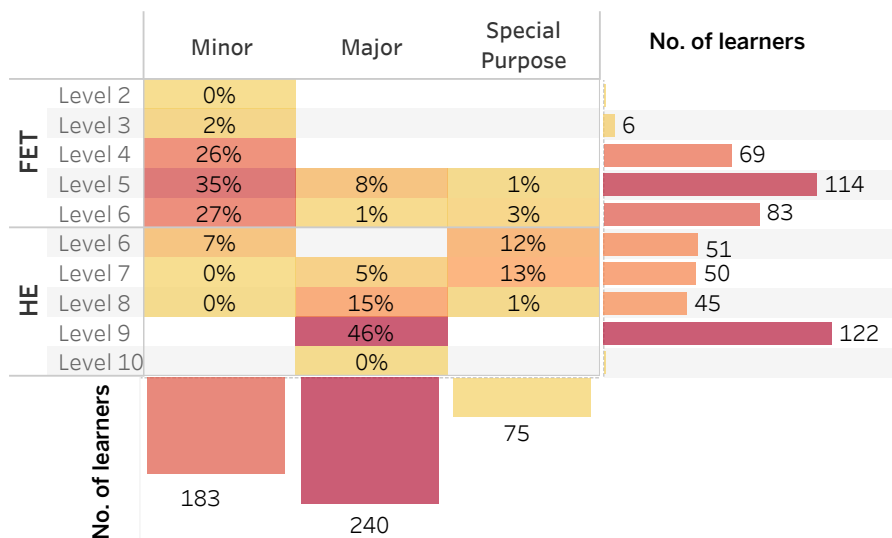
FOCUSED ANALYSIS OF QQI LEARNERS ACHIEVING BOTH FET & HE AWARDS IN 2021



267 learners received both FET and HE awards in 2021 (up 6% from 2020). QQI is currently the only awarding body making FET awards that are included in the NFQ but QQI HE awards account for a relatively small fraction of all HE awards in the NFQ: in 2021, only 5% of all awards in the HE sector were made by QQI.

As the fraction of QQI awards made in HE is very small, this analysis only provides a glimpse into the extent and characteristics of QQI learners completing both FET and HE awards in the same academic year. This type represents 2.3% of all QQI HE learners in 2021. If the same percentage of HEI graduates represented by Higher Education Authority (HEA) statistics achieved FET qualifications, the number of learners would be in the region of 6000, the 2.3% proportion of all HE learners. Numbers are based on and only include enrolment figures 2020/21 provided by the HEA. For further information on the HE sector, visit:

<https://hea.ie/statistics/publications/>



Among the QQI learners who completed both FET and HE awards:

- the most popular combination in 2021 was completing a HE major award at level 9 together with a FET minor award, by order of frequency, at level 5, 6 or 4.
- Award 'Guarding Skills' at level 4 was achieved by a large proportion together with a master's degree.
- Most of these learners attended a PRC (Private provider) type of provider.

TOP 15 awards achieved by learners who completed both QQI FET and HE and provider type in 2021

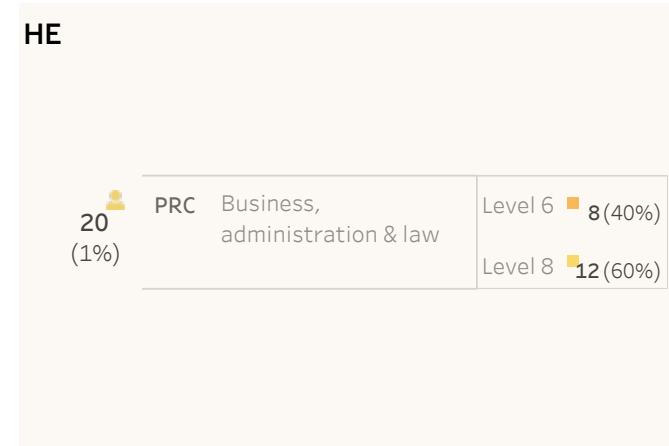
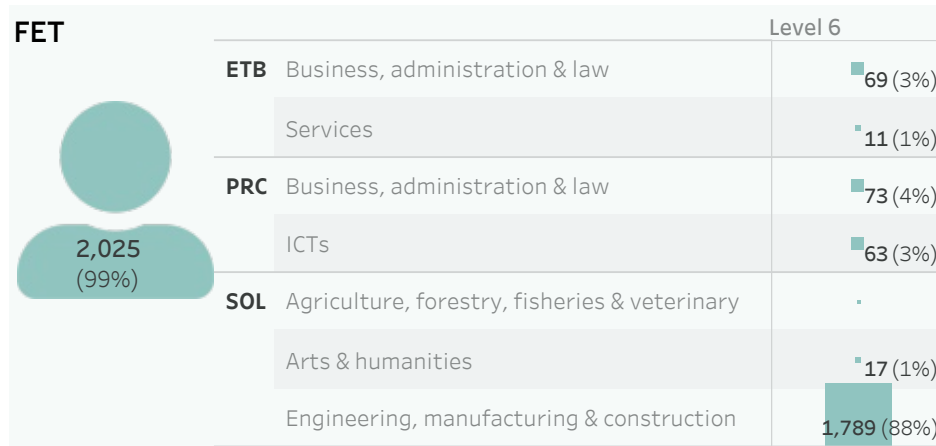
| Level | Purpose | No. of learners | Provider Type |
|---------|--|-----------------|--|
| Level 4 | Guarding Skills | 122 | FET: PRC: 84%, EMP: 8%, ETB: 4%, CVS: 4% |
| Level 5 | Care Skills | 76 | |
| Level 5 | Care of the Older Person | 72 | |
| Level 6 | Training Delivery and Evaluation | 40 | |
| Level 5 | Healthcare Support | 26 | |
| Level 6 | Managing People | 22 | |
| Level 5 | Palliative Care Support | 22 | HET: PRC: 100% |
| Level 9 | Master of Science in International Business Management | 34 | |
| Level 9 | Master of Arts in Human Resource Management | 26 | |
| Level 9 | Master of Science in Data Analytics | 22 | |
| Level 8 | Bachelor of Business (Honours) in International Business | 22 | |
| Level 6 | Special P.. Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Studies | 22 | |
| Level 6 | Special P.. Certificate in Payroll Techniques | 22 | |
| Level 9 | Master of Business Administration | 20 | |
| Level 9 | Master of Science in International Business | 18 | |

QQI MAJOR AWARDS TO APPRENTICES - COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS 2019, 2020 and 2021



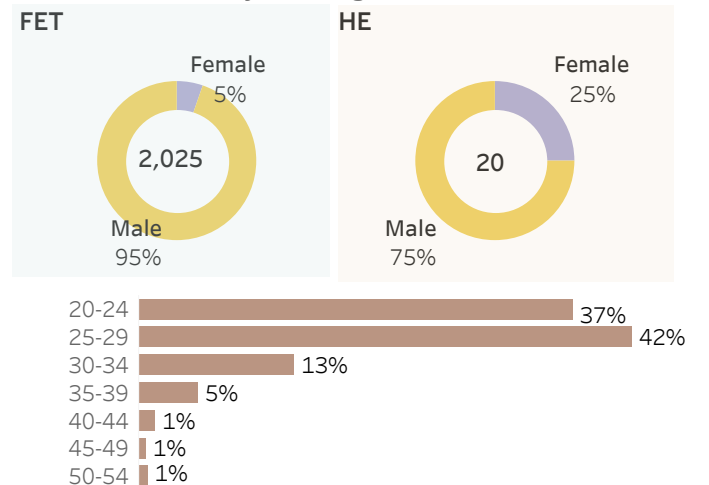
2,045 QQI major awards to apprentices were made in 2021 (down 19% from 2020), 99% at NFQ level 6 in the FET sector. SOLAS is the relevant provider for craft apprenticeships. A number of new apprenticeships have been validated by QQI since 2019 but are not all included in this analysis as some have not yet graduated their first cohort.

QQI apprenticeship awards were made in four learning areas, the majority in the 'Engineering, manufacturing & construction' field. However, the number of apprenticeships is growing and it is expected to expand into new fields in the future.



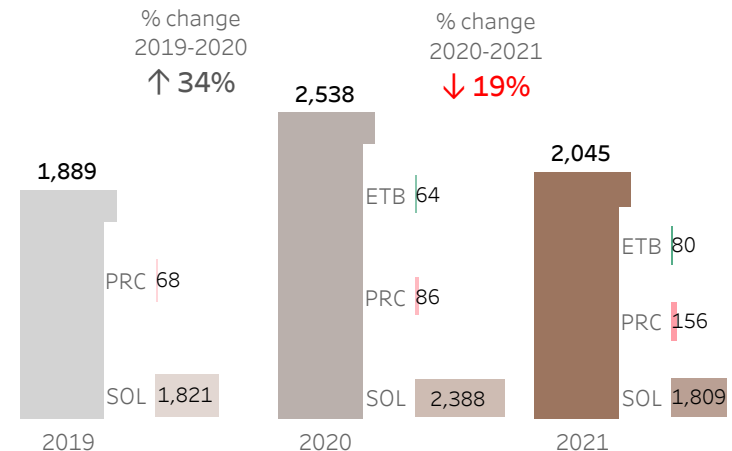
On average, more than 85% of apprentices who achieved QQI major awards in 2021 were male. The gender gap is wider in the FET than in the HE sector.

On average more than 79% of apprentices who achieved QQI major awards in 2020 were between 20-29 years of age.



TRENDS

2,045 QQI major awards to apprentices were made in 2021, down 19% from 2020 but up 8% from 2019. The reduction in 2021 from 2020 was for SOLAS craft apprenticeships; which were hard hit by COVID-19 related restrictions.

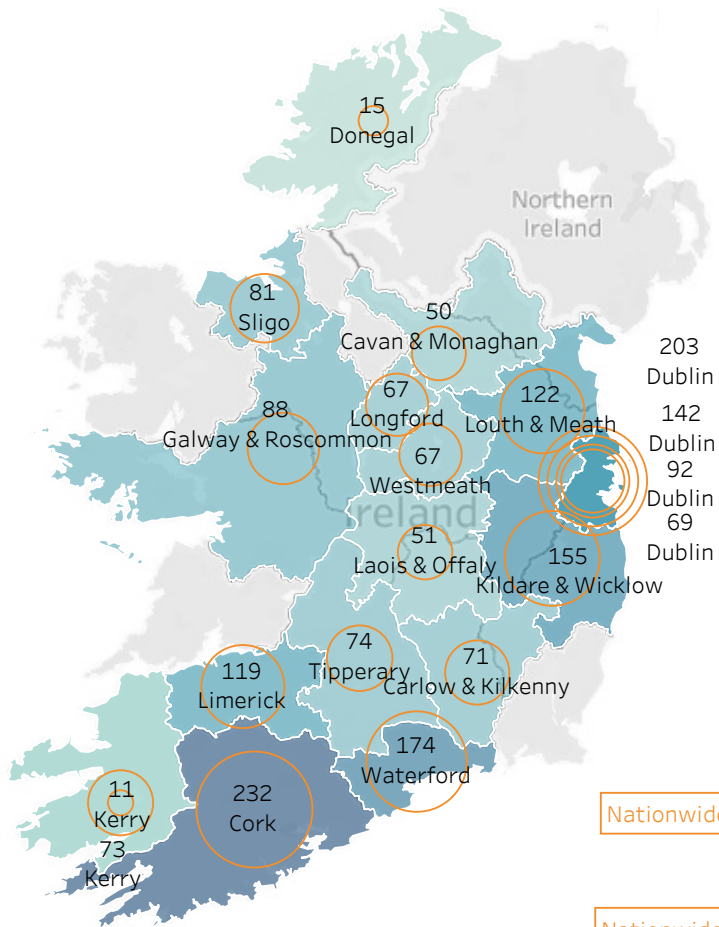


QQI MAJOR AWARDS TO APPRENTICES - GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION 2021



506 or one quarter of all QQI major awards to apprentices were made by FET providers based in Dublin, and 232 or 11% in Cork.

Most centres experienced a decrease in the number of QQI major awards made to apprentices between 2020 and 2021. COVID-19 related restrictions substantially impacted this cohort of learners.



| | | | 2020 | 2021 | % change |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-------|----------|
| TOTAL | | | 2,538 | 2,045 | -19% |
| DDLETB Training Centre Loughlinstown (Apprenticeship) | SOL | FET | 328 | 203 | -38% |
| Cork ETB Training Centre (Apprenticeship) | SOL | FET | 274 | 232 | -15% |
| CDETB Ballyfermot Apprenticeships | SOL | FET | 234 | 142 | -39% |
| WWETB Waterford Training Centre (Apprenticeships) | SOL | FET | 206 | 174 | -16% |
| Limerick Training Centre (Apprenticeships) | SOL | FET | 200 | 119 | -41% |
| LMETB Regional Skills & Training Centre (Apprenticeship) | SOL | FET | 164 | 122 | -26% |
| KWETB Apprenticeship | SOL | FET | 124 | 155 | 25% |
| DDLETB Training Centre Baldoyle (Apprenticeship) | SOL | FET | 120 | 92 | -23% |
| MSL ETB Sligo Training Centre | SOL | FET | 118 | 81 | -31% |
| GRETB Training Centre (Apprenticeships) | SOL | FET | 116 | 88 | -24% |
| Kilkenny Carlow ETB Apprenticeships | SOL | FET | 119 | 71 | -40% |
| SOLAS Apprenticeship (Kerry ETB Training Centre) | SOL | FET | 75 | 73 | -3% |
| Tipperary ETB Training Services (Apprenticeships) | SOL | FET | 72 | 74 | 3% |
| CMETB Apprenticeship Training | SOL | FET | 81 | 50 | -38% |
| LWETB Athlone Training Centre (Apprenticeships) | SOL | FET | 57 | 67 | 18% |
| Nationwide Accounting Technicians Ireland | PRC | FET | 56 | 73 | 30% |
| LOETB Apprenticeships Centre | SOL | FET | 73 | 51 | -30% |
| City of Dublin ETB Coordinating Provider | ETB | FET | 48 | 69 | 44% |
| Nationwide Fast Track into Information Technology | PRC | FET | 8 | 63 | 688% |
| SOLAS Apprenticeship (Donegal ETB Training Centre) | SOL | FET | 27 | 15 | -44% |
| Nationwide National College of Ireland | PRC | HE | 22 | 20 | -9% |
| Kerry College of Further Education & Training, Monavalley.. | ETB | FET | 16 | 11 | -31% |

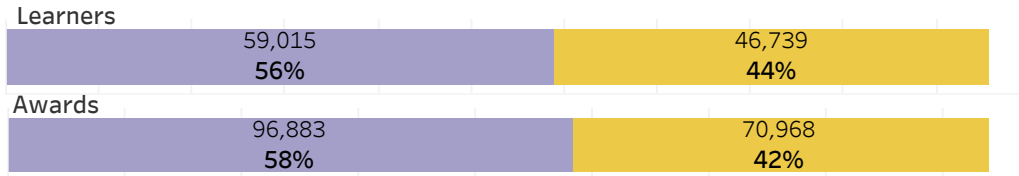
NUMBER OF LEARNERS RECEIVING A QQI AWARD BY GENDER & AGE IN 2021



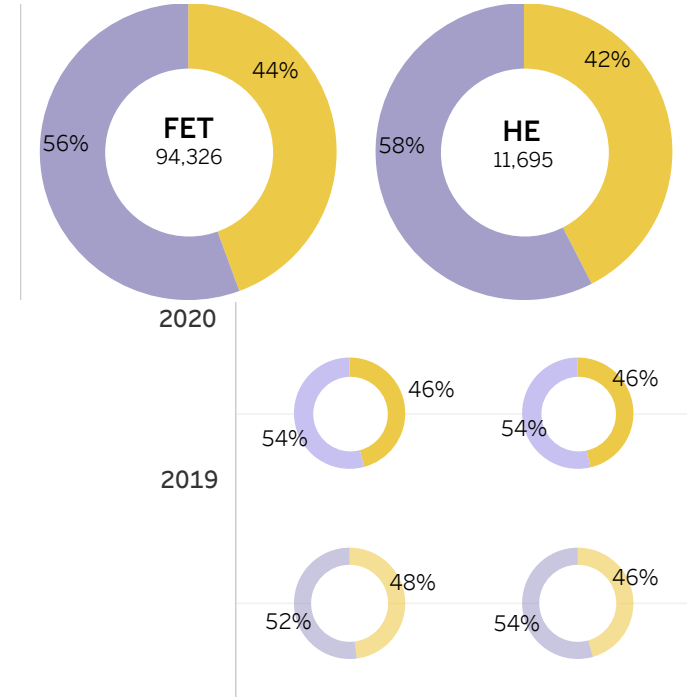
59,015 learners achieving QQI awards in 2021 were female (56%, up 2 percentage points from 2020). 96,883 awards were achieved by these female learners (58% of all awards made).



46,739 were male learners (44%, down 2 percentage points from 2020). 70,968 awards were achieved by these male learners (42% of all awards made and down 2 percentage points from 2020).



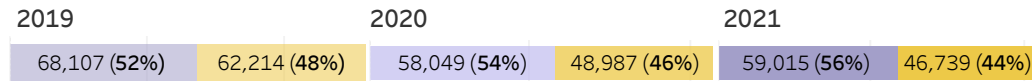
The gender distribution is similar in FET and HE. In 2021, the gender gap was wider in HE than in FET; and than in 2020 and 2019.



TRENDS 2019 - 2020

The share of female learners attaining QQI awards has grown 2 percentage points year on year since 2019 against counterparts.

In 2021, the number of female learners increased by 2% from 2020 and male learners decreased by 5%.



For all classes of QQI awards, the **proportion of the overall total number of QQI awards** made is higher for female than for male learners.

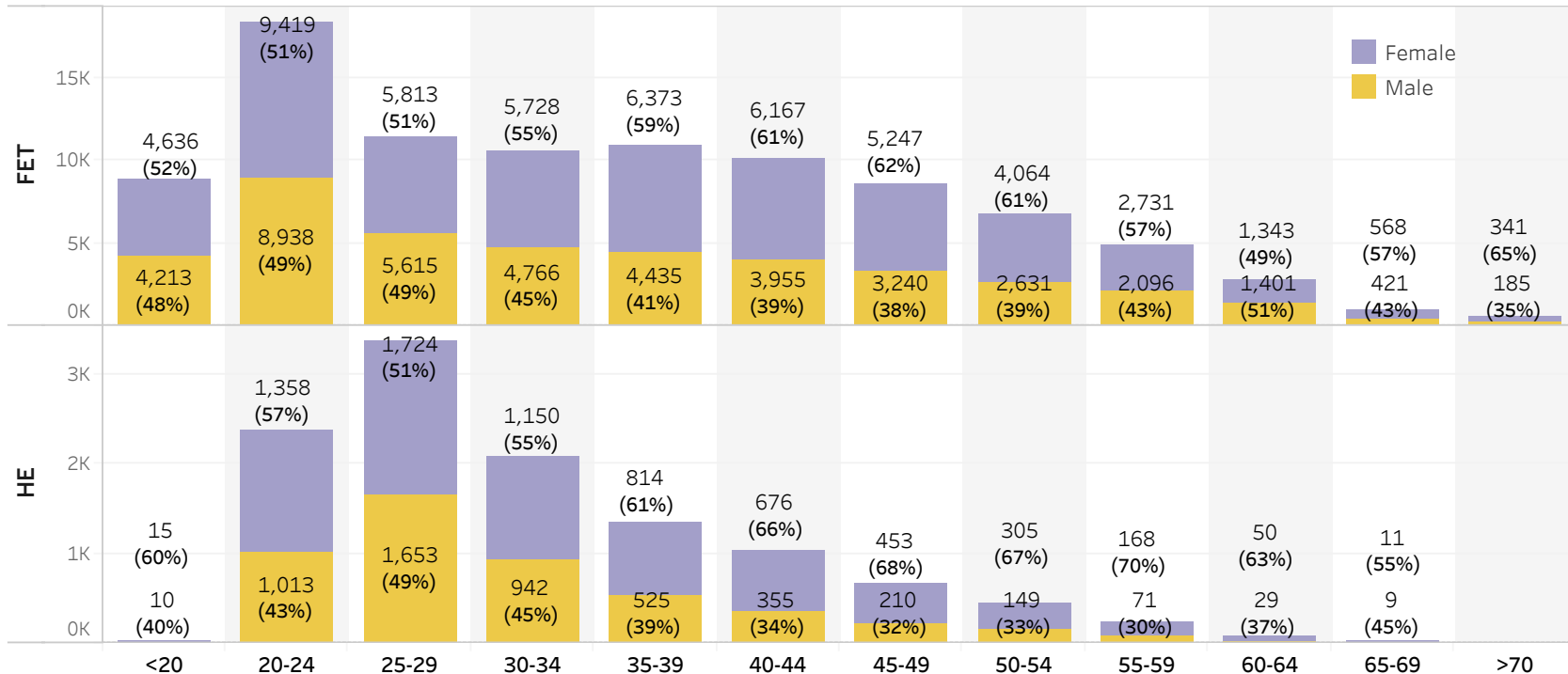
| | FET | | HE | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Major | 59% | 41% | 55% | 45% |
| Minor | 62% | 38% | 57% | 43% |
| Special Purpose | 19% | 81% | 67% | 33% |
| Supplemental | 23% | 77% | | |

| | FET | | HE | |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Level 1 | 46% | 54% | 70% | 30% |
| Level 2 | 56% | 44% | 55% | 45% |
| Level 3 | 54% | 46% | 57% | 43% |
| Level 4 | 38% | 62% | 54% | 46% |
| Level 5 | 58% | 42% | 63% | 37% |
| Level 6 | 60% | 40% | | |

DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNERS RECEIVING A QQI AWARD BY AGE IN 2021

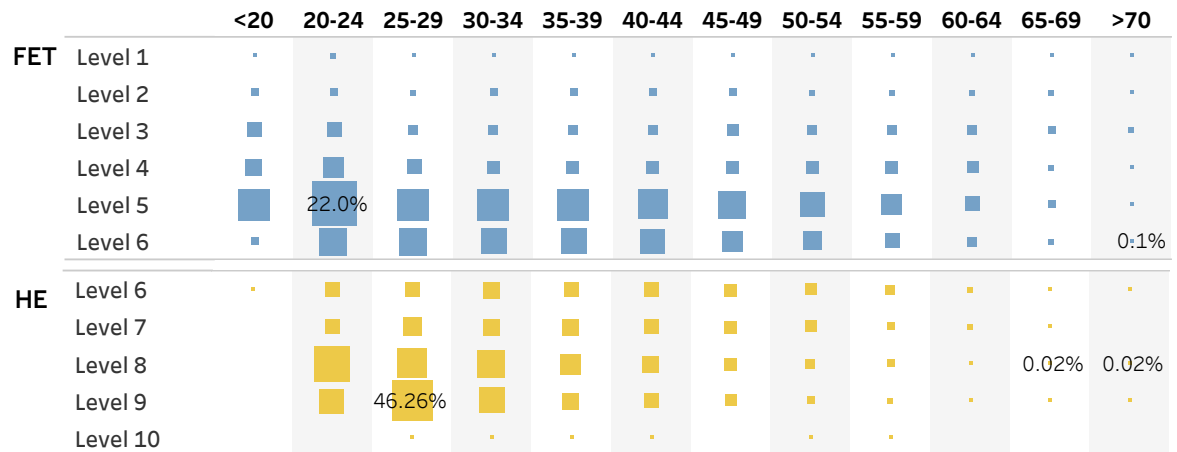


Overall, **learners in the 20-24 age band** received a greater number of QQI awards in 2020 than learners in any other band. However, for HE awards the peak was in the **25-29 age band**.



The **age distribution of learners receiving QQI awards** is more even for FET than for HE.

Those achieving HE awards are younger than those receiving FET awards, particularly at Levels 8 and 9, where approximately a quarter of awards achieved were by learners aged 20-29.





QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann