



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland

# QAI AWARDS STANDARDS.

Fine Arts Craft and Design

December 2023





# Foreword

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012 requires QQI to ‘determine the standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired, and where appropriate, demonstrated, by a learner before an award may be made by the Authority’. QQI award standards are based on the level indicators and award type descriptors of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and are governed by QQI Policy for the Determination of Award Standards.

Based on systematic engagement with subject matter expertise and public consultation, award standards for certain broad fields of learning were developed for QQI awards at level 1-4 on the NFQ. These standards represent an elaboration of the generic descriptors of the NFQ. They should facilitate experts in particular fields of learning to create the link between their programmes’ intended learning outcomes and the NFQ. Each award standard is cumulative, the statements of knowledge, skill and competence at NFQ levels 2, 3 and 4, build on the attainment of standards at lower levels, which are not necessarily reproduced at the higher level(s). The implementation and use of these standards is subject to QQI Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes and QQI Policy for the Making of Awards. Whenever an award standard changes, programmes must be updated and validated against the new standards.

These standards are not programme specifications. It is through these, however, that the relationship between a programme, its component parts and the NFQ should be evident. The standards are a reference point and a point of comparison against which individual programmes may be justified.

They are intended to provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with a particular field of learning. In designing programmes, providers must take cognisance of the standards for specific fields of learning where they generally relate to the programme being developed. It is, however, recognised that there is a significant growth in multi-disciplinary/inter-disciplinary programmes; there are emerging fields of learning; and in addition, within each field there is the vast spectrum of programmes possible based on a wide range of purpose. In this context, it is not possible to have a standard, or multiple standards, that cater for the complete range of programmes possible. It is therefore expected that the standards for specific fields of learning will be used as reference points for the design of programmes. In designing programmes, providers can draw from more than one standard.

In drafting the standards every effort has been made to ensure that they will provide for flexibility and variety in the design of programmes and therefore encourage innovation within an overall agreed framework. It is not expected that all programmes will include every learning outcome identified in a standard. It is, however, expected that many programmes will include learning outcomes that are not included in the relevant standard.

When designing a programme, each learning outcome in the standard should be considered. Where departure from these is necessary, it should be justified in the context of the specific orientation of the programme and other facts pertaining to it. Each programme provider should be able to demonstrate how the design and content of its own programmes has been informed by the standard.

The level descriptors of the Framework, the award type descriptors and consequently the standards for the specific fields of learning are divided into three different types of learning outcomes - knowledge, skill and competence. These strands are further subdivided into eight sub-strands. Each strand/sub-strand is important. The relative weighting of each strand in a programme will vary from programme to programme. The weighting will be determined by many factors, including for example, the practical nature of a programme, or otherwise.

Each strand/sub-strand should be addressed appropriately in every programme. Where a programme is multidisciplinary or inter-disciplinary in nature, the use of more than one standard may be necessary. In such cases, the scope, depth and balance of knowledge, skill and competence should be attended to.

The titles of awards made by QQI on foot of these award standards shall be consistent with QQI Policy on the Making of Awards with an exception in the case of major awards where the named award stem shall have the following form: 'Level X Certificate in Lifelong Learning in' [specialisation].

These standards are determined by QQI under section 49(1) of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012.

## AWARD STANDARDS – FINE ARTS, CRAFTS AND DESIGN AT NFQ LEVELS 3 TO 4

### Purpose

The purpose of this broad award standard is to enable design of a variety of programmes enabling the learner to develop the relevant knowledge, skill and competence in Fine Arts, Crafts and Design at NFQ Levels 3 and 4.

### Note: The indicators at each level build on the skills from the previous one.

The outcomes at each NFQ level include those of all the lower levels in the same sub-strand unless stated otherwise.



## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Knowledge breadth	Knowledge moderately broad in range	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge kind	Mainly concrete in reference and with some comprehension of relationship between knowledge elements	Mainly concrete in reference and with some elements of abstraction or theory
	The learner should be able to show the following:	The learner should be able to show the following:
<b>Breadth</b>	Basic general knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual arts</li> <li>• crafts</li> <li>• design.</li> </ul>	Broad general knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual arts</li> <li>• crafts</li> <li>• design.</li> </ul>
<b>Social context and contribution</b>	Awareness of how creative activity is influenced by, and influences, society.  Basic general knowledge of some of the key people in fine arts, crafts and design and their impact on society.  Understand the significance of creative and artistic activity in personal, public and commercial settings.	Understand how creative activity is influenced by and influences society.  General knowledge of some of the key people in fine arts, crafts and design and their impact on society.  Awareness of how artists, craftspeople and designers make creative decisions in response to specific problems.
<b>Terminology</b>	Basic general knowledge of commonly used terms that apply to fine arts, crafts, and design.	General knowledge of commonly used terms that apply to fine arts, crafts, and design.
<b>Processes and tools</b>	Awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic tools and equipment used by artists in fine arts, crafts, and design</li> <li>• the creative process.</li> </ul>	General knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a broad range of tools and equipment used by artists in fine arts, crafts, and design</li> <li>• the creative process.</li> </ul>
<b>Aesthetics consciousness</b>	Awareness of and responses to expressions of beauty.	Awareness and appreciation of responses to expressions of beauty.



<b>Communications skills</b>	<p>Awareness of how communication skills contribute to successful engagement in fine arts, crafts, and design environments.</p> <p>This includes verbal and non-verbal skills.</p>	<p>Understand how communication skills contribute to successful engagement in fine arts, crafts, and design environments.</p> <p>This includes verbal and non-verbal skills.</p>
<b>Creative careers</b>	<p>Awareness of the career prospects for fine arts, crafts, and design practitioners.</p>	<p>Knowledge of the career prospects for fine arts, crafts, and design practitioners.</p>
<b>Understanding exemplars</b>	<p>Show knowledge of a limited number of pieces of work by specified artists. They should be familiar with their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lives</li><li>• techniques</li><li>• inspiration.</li></ul> <p>Learners should also be aware of the local and global events at the time the artists lived.</p> <p>They should also recognise the quality of craftsmanship its form and how well the design works.</p>	<p>Show a general knowledge of a number of artists, designers and craftspeople. This includes being familiar with their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lives</li><li>• techniques</li><li>• inspiration.</li></ul>



## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Know-how and skill range	Demonstrate a limited range or practical and cognitive skills and tools	Demonstrate a moderate range of practical and cognitive skills and tools
Know-how and skill selectivity	Select from a limited range of varied procedures and apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems	Select from a range of procedures and apply known solutions to a variety of predictable problems
<b>Craft and technical</b>	<p>The learner should show ability to use (under direction) a range of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fine arts</li> <li>• crafts</li> <li>• design</li> <li>• equipment.</li> </ul> <p>They should be able to create a collection of artefacts in a given discipline using these materials and equipment.</p>	<p>The learner should show ability to use a range of techniques and equipment associated with specific processes relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fine art</li> <li>• craft</li> <li>• design.</li> </ul> <p>They should be able to produce artistic and creative artefacts using a range of fine arts, crafts, design materials and equipment.</p>
<b>Art</b>	<p>The learner should be able to create a limited range of basic artistic artefacts.</p> <p>They should be able to use basic elements of art to create simple artefacts. These elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• colour</li> <li>• line</li> <li>• pattern</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• form</li> <li>• light.</li> </ul>	<p>The learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a range of artistic artefacts.</li> <li>• use the elements of art to create artefacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<p>The learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a range of artistic artefacts.</li> <li>• use the elements of art to create artefacts.</li> </ul>	<p>The learner should be able to use a range of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• craft procedures to understand how design solutions are created</li> <li>• design elements to make a craft item or a set of samples.</li> </ul>



<b>Generate ideas and creative responses to surroundings</b>	<p>The learner should be able to do the following:</p> <p>Apply a limited range of creative processes, procedures and solutions to predictable fine art, craft, and design problems.</p> <p>Produce a limited range of artefacts that show creative responses to observations.</p> <p>Use the basic principles and elements of fine arts, crafts, and design. They should know how to use these to investigate and develop insights and solutions to a variety of predictable tasks and problems.</p> <p>Respond creatively to problems, feelings and challenges in given situations.</p> <p>Generate ideas using a limited range of known techniques for promoting creativity while thinking about design.</p>	<p>The learner should be able to do the following:</p> <p>Apply a broad range of creative processes, procedures and solutions to predictable fine art, craft, and design problems.</p> <p>Produce a range of artefacts that show creative responses to observations.</p> <p>Use the principles and five elements (colour, line, pattern, texture, and form) of fine arts, crafts, and design. Know how to use these to investigate and develop insights and solutions to a variety of predictable tasks and problems.</p> <p>Produce a visual record of observations made using creative techniques.</p> <p>Generate ideas using a range of known techniques for promoting creativity while thinking about design.</p>
<b>Work safely</b>	<p>Under supervision, the learner should be able to carry out routine basic tasks safely and effectively in familiar settings. They should do this while correctly using relevant materials, tools, and equipment.</p> <p>The learner should follow good workshop practices.</p>	<p>Under supervision, the learner should be able to carry out routine tasks safely and effectively in familiar and unfamiliar settings. They should do this while correctly using relevant materials, tools, and equipment.</p>
<b>Communicate</b>	<p>The learner should be able to communicate using a limited range of materials and techniques in response to a limited selection of simple tasks.</p>	<p>The learner should be able to communicate by selecting and using a range of materials and techniques in response to a selection of predictable tasks or problems.</p>
<b>Store, present and display work</b>	<p>The learner should be able to store, present and display work appropriate to art, craft and design in familiar settings.</p>	<p>The learner should be able to store, present and display work appropriate to art, craft and design in familiar and unfamiliar settings.</p>
<b>Evaluate artefacts</b>	<p>The learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• compare their own work with others' work.</li><li>• explain why the work appeals or not.</li></ul>	<p>The learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• critique by reflecting on the quality of their own creative work and others' creative work.</li></ul>



## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence context	<b>Act within a limited range of contexts</b>	<b>Act in familiar and unfamiliar contexts</b>
	The learner should experience different fine arts, craft, and design settings.	The learner should independently explore fine arts, craft, and design settings.

## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence role	<b>Act under direction with limited autonomy; function within familiar, homogenous groups.</b>	<b>Act with considerable amount of responsibility and autonomy</b>
	Under direction, the learner should be able to take part effectively and safely in fine arts, crafts and design settings.	The learner should be able to take part effectively and safely in fine arts, crafts and design settings.





## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence learning to learn	<b>Learn to learn within a managed environment</b>	<b>Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a supervised environment</b>
	<p>Under supervision, the learner should engage actively in learning opportunities.</p> <p>They do this to increase their knowledge and skills in the fine arts, crafts, and design settings.</p>	<p>The learner should take responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learning</li><li>• personal development</li><li>• self-directed study</li><li>• practice.</li></ul>

## KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence insight	<b>Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour</b>	<b>Assume partial responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour</b>
	<p>The learner should show awareness of the role of their own and others' attitudes, values and behaviours in response to creative situations.</p>	<p>The learner should show awareness and recognise the influence and role of attitudes, values and behaviours in response to creative situations.</p>



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