QQI AWARDS STANDARDS.

Literacy Core Competence

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 – LITERACY (CORE COMPETENCE) AT NFQ LEVELS 1 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 identifying, understanding, expressing, creating and interpreting concepts, facts and opinions in both oral and written forms, using visual, sound/audio and digital materials across disciplines and contexts*.
References	Please note that the above standard is aligned to the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. This particular competence relates specifically to the "Core Competence in Literacy" European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Key competences for lifelong learning*, Publications Office, 2019 https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/291008
	Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence*
	This competence involves the knowledge of reading and writing, and a sound understanding of written information and thus requires an individual to have knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and the functions of language. It includes an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction, a range of literary and non-literary texts, and the main features of different styles and registers of language.
	Individuals should have the skills to communicate both orally and in writing in a variety of situations and to monitor and adapt their own communication to the requirements of the situation. This competence also includes the abilities to distinguish and use different types of sources, to search for, collect and process information, to use aids, and to formulate and express one's oral and written arguments in a convincing way appropriate to the context. It encompasses critical thinking and ability to assess and work with information.
	A positive attitude towards literacy involves a disposition to critical and constructive dialogue, an appreciation of aesthetic qualities and an interest in interaction with others. This implies an awareness of the impact of language on others and a need to understand and use language in a positive and socially responsible manner.
	*EU Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, Official Journal of the European Union, 2018
	C_2018189EN.01000101.xml (europa.eu)

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.
This standard needs to be read in conjunction with Broad Award Standard L1–4 Digital Core Competence and Broad Award Standard L1–L4 Mathematical and Numerical Core Competence.

KNOWLEDGE				
NFQ	**LEVEL 1**	**LEVEL 2**	**LEVEL 3**	**LEVEL 4**
Knowledge breadth	Elementary knowledge	Knowledge that is narrow in range	Knowledge moderately broad in range	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge kind	Demonstrable by recognition or recall	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension	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:	The learner should be able to show the following:	The learner should be able to show the following:
Knowledge	Knowledge of basic literacy norms, including: • routine spelling • grammar • phonetics • sentence formation • punctuation • pronunciation • text formation • common social and cultural norms (expectations) when communicating in the language • familiarity with the alphabet of the target language.	Knowledge of: • listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy in the target language • how to use everyday technology like smartphones and search engines or translators to communicate and access information • common social and cultural norms when communicating in the target language.	Knowledge of: • how to communicate in target language through listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy • how to use everyday technology like smartphones and search engines and translators to communicate and access information • limited range of social and cultural norms when communicating in the target language.	Knowledge and understanding of: • how to communicate in target language through listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy • how to use everyday technology like smartphones and search engines or translators to communicate and access information • different language registers (level of formality and style in speech or writing for example, formal language or informal language) • broad range of social and cultural norms when communicating in the target language.

KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Know-how and skill range	Demonstrate basic practical skills and carry out directed activity using basic tools	Demonstrate limited range of basic practical skills, including the use of relevant tools	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	Perform processes that are repetitive and predictable	Perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction	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
Reading skills	Able to identify a range of simple texts used in common personal and social settings.	Able to identify and describe: • a range of basic texts used in common personal, civic, social or work settings • audience and purpose.	Able to identify and interpret: • a limited range of texts used in common personal, civic, social and, or, work settings • different types of text and how to describe them • audience and purpose.	Able to interpret: • a broad range of texts used in personal, civic, social, work and academic settings • different types of text and how to describe them • audience and purpose.

Writing skills	Able to: • write simple texts and materials that clearly explain the topic • use text and language norms that are right for the audience and purpose • explain a simple idea, opinion, or facts in writing.	Able to: • write basic texts and materials for specific purposes that clearly explain the topic and its meaning • use text conventions and language norms that are right for the audience and purpose • convey intended meaning on familiar topics for a limited range of purposes and audiences • use simple rules and text norms that help make the meaning clear, for example, correct punctuation.	Able to: • write a limited range of texts and materials to communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly • use length, format and style that are right for the purpose and audience for different settings such as personal, civic, social or work settings • use words, grammar and punctuation that suit what is being written.	Able to: • write a broad range of texts and materials to communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively • use length, format and style that are right for the purpose, content and audience for different settings, such as personal, civic, social, work and academic settings.

Listening skills	Able to: • listen to simple aural, oral and audio materials in common personal and social settings • respond appropriately to simple aural, oral and audio materials in common personal and social settings through both verbal and non-verbal communication • listen for relevant information in basic oral texts across common settings • use listening and speaking skills in a simple way in a narrow range of settings, for example greeting a friend or asking for assistance from a doctor.	Able to: • listen to a limited range of aural, oral and audio materials used in personal and social settings • respond appropriately to these materials through both verbal and non-verbal communication • listen for relevant information and meaning in simple oral texts across common settings • use listening and speaking skills in a limited range of settings, such as chatting to a friend or taking part in a parent–teacher meeting.	Able to: • listen and understand meaning from a limited range of aural, oral and audio materials used in common personal, social and civic settings • respond appropriately to these materials through both verbal and non-verbal communication • listen for relevant information in oral texts across common settings • use listening and speaking skills in a competent way in all settings, for example personal health care, working life or financial transactions.	Able to: • listen to a broad range of aural, oral and audio materials used in all settings • respond appropriately to these materials through both verbal and non-verbal communication • listen for relevant information in oral texts. • use appropriate ways to find and understand main points from oral texts • use listening and speaking skills in a more complex way in all settings, for example personal health care, working life, financial transactions.

Speaking skills	Able to: • speak clearly to share feelings, ideas and opinions on matters of personal interest or everyday topics • give or draw basic information from short, simple speech.	Able to: • speak confidently and clearly to share ideas and feelings on everyday topics or topics of personal interest • have a discussion with one or more people in a common setting through both verbal and non-verbal communication.	Able to: • speak to share information, feelings and opinions on common topics in personal, civic, social or work settings • use right level of formality for different audiences in both face-to-face and remote settings • use speech to express how ideas and information connect in a style that is right for the audience and purpose • have a discussion with one or more people in a common setting to reach a shared understanding about common topics through both verbal and non-verbal communication.	Able to: • communicate straightforward and detailed information • communicate ideas and opinions clearly • adapt speech and content depending on listeners, media, purpose and setting • have discussions with one or more people in a variety of settings, making clear and effective contributions that produce outcomes appropriate to the purpose and topic.
Conversational skills	Able to: • share very basic relevant information across common settings • use appropriate non-verbal communication and basic vocabulary in a common setting.	Able to: • share basic relevant information across common settings • use appropriate non-verbal communication and simple vocabulary in a common setting.	Able to: • share relevant information across familiar settings • use appropriate non-verbal communication and vocabulary in mostly common settings.	Able to: • share relevant and more complex information across all settings • use appropriate non-verbal communication and vocabulary in all settings.

Vocabulary and grammar skills	Show limited vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and understanding of norms of written text.	Create common, simple text types using simple vocabulary, grammatical structures and norms.	Create common text types using everyday vocabulary, grammatical structures and norms.	Create more complex text types using a broader vocabulary, grammatical structures and norms.
Digital literacy skills* *For full details refer to Digital (Core Competence award standard.)*	Be aware of current electronic and social networking technologies for personal and educational use.	Able to access a limited range of current electronic and social networking technologies.	Able to: • connect with other users through a limited range of current electronic and social networking technologies • be aware of the benefits and risks of using digital technologies to communicate.	Able to: • connect with other users through a broader range of current electronic and social networking technologies • know the benefits and risks of using digital technologies to communicate.

KNOWLEDGE				
NFQ	**LEVEL 1**	**LEVEL 2**	**LEVEL 3**	**LEVEL 4**
Competence context	**Act in closely defined and highly structured contexts**	**Act in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts**	**Act within a limited range of contexts**	**Act in familiar and unfamiliar contexts**
	Communicate, with support, through a small number of media in clearly defined settings.	Communicate, with regular support, through a number of media in predictable and defined settings.	Communicate effectively in a range of settings through a range of media.	Communicate freely and effectively in all settings through a broad range of media.

KNOWLEDGE

NFQ	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Competence role	Act in a limited range of roles	Act in a range of roles under direction	Act under direction with limited autonomy; function within familiar, homogenous groups	Act with considerable amount of responsibility and autonomy
	Use literacy skills to: • express views on limited range of topics • use literacy skills to be able to connect with others on a regular basis.	Use literacy skills to: • recognise and acknowledge views of others • carry out simple interactions with a limited audience.	Use literacy skills to: • develop simple arguments • connect effectively with others in a familiar setting • express feelings and opinions.	Use literacy skills to: • express oral and written arguments in a convincing way that is right for each setting • connect effectively with others in an appropriate and creative way • identify sources of information to develop and express oral and written arguments that are convincing and appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE				
NFQ	**LEVEL 1**	**LEVEL 2**	**LEVEL 3**	**LEVEL 4**
Competence learning to learn	Learn to sequence learning tasks; learn to access and use a range of learning resources	Learn to learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment	Learn to learn within a managed environment	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a supervised environment
	Learner can identify their literacy strengths and weaknesses.	Learner can identify and express how to improve their literacy skills.	Learner can use a limited range of literacy skills to broaden their knowledge so they can progress and continue to learn.	Learner can recognise potential to develop further communication skills that contribute to an assigned role.

KNOWLEDGE				
NFQ	**LEVEL 1**	**LEVEL 2**	**LEVEL 3**	**LEVEL 4**
Competence insight	Begin to demonstrate awareness of independent role for self	Demonstrate awareness of independent role for self	Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour	Assume partial responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour
	Able to show a positive attitude towards how literacy and numeracy skills can improve life options.	Able to value literacy and numeracy skills as a stepping-stone towards independence.	Able to: • use literacy and numeracy skills to improve learning and well-being • use literacy and numeracy skills in useful and respectful ways.	Able to: • use personal and interpersonal communication skills along with skills that across different tasks and disciplines (transversal) to contribute to personal and social objectives • use literacy and numeracy skills as an active citizen to take part in democratic society.