



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cállochta agus Cállochtaí Éireann

AT A GLANCE...

Policy Impact Assessment of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)



BACKGROUND...

WHY?

Established in 2003, the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) was intended to bring greater coherence to our national system of education and training qualifications. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has a statutory function to promote, develop, implement and review the Irish NFQ.

Review Objectives:

- » Examine the actual effects and impact of the NFQ
- » Engage with a range of national stakeholders including policy makers
- » Inform future policy direction for the NFQ

WHEN?

[Dec 2016]

STAGE 1

Project
Inception

STAGE 2

Data Gathering and
Primary Research

STAGE 3

Data Analysis and
Report Drafting

[Dec 2017]

STAGE 4

Finalise
Report

HOW?

Phase 1: Independent expert paper on qualifications frameworks Reflections and Trajectories – Qualifications Policy Insights

Phase 2: QQI commissioned an independent Policy Impact Assessment of the NFQ

Mixed methods: Qualitative and Quantitative

- » An on-line survey of national stakeholders
- » Bilateral interviews with key representative bodies

In parallel: QQI continue to collect longitudinal data on public awareness levels of the NFQ

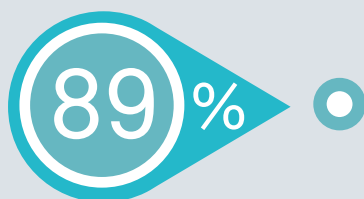
WHO?

Education and Training Providers, Social Partners, National Stakeholders including Policy Makers

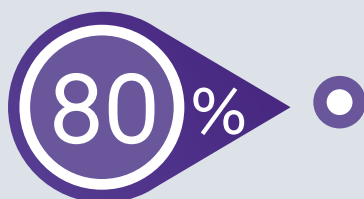
FINDINGS: THE NFQ IMPACT ON...

Transparency of Qualifications

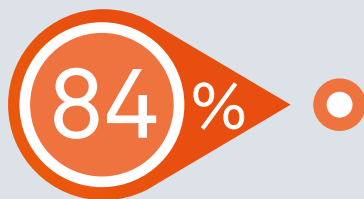
[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



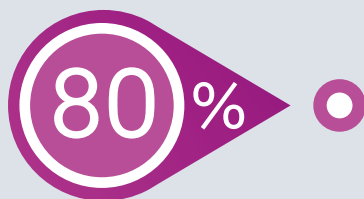
The NFQ has made qualification pathways easier to explain and understand.



The NFQ has made the skills and competence of qualifications more visible.



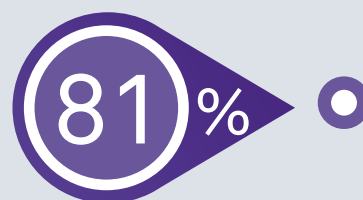
The NFQ has made it easier to see how qualifications relate to each other.



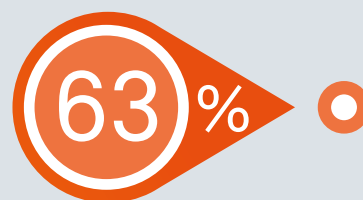
The NFQ has made it easier to evaluate qualifications for work or study.

Lifelong Learning, Progression and Mobility of Qualifications

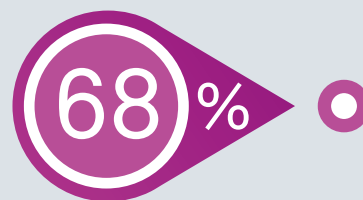
[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



The NFQ has improved progression between qualifications achieved in school, in further & in higher education and training.



The NFQ has made it easier to value and recognise learning and qualifications achieved outside of the formal/public education and training system.



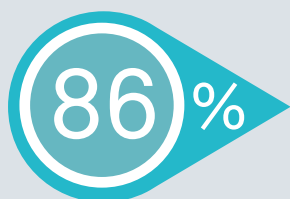
The NFQ has facilitated improved access to education and training courses.

67% respondents strongly agree/agree that the NFQ has contributed to improving Ireland's national performance in the area of Lifelong Learning.

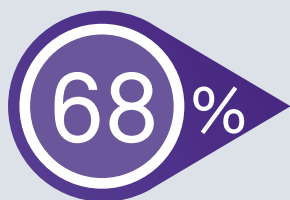
FINDINGS: THE NFQ IMPACT ON...

Quality of Qualifications

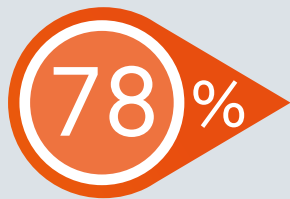
[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



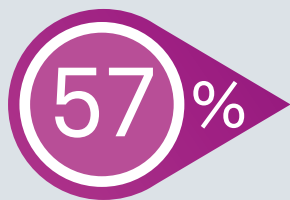
Qualifications included in the NFQ are relevant for users (learners, employers etc.)



Qualifications included in the NFQ are highly trusted, nationally and internationally.



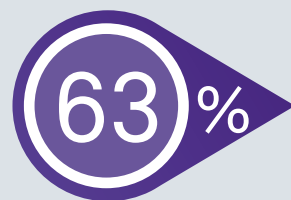
Overall, the NFQ has enhanced the quality of qualifications in Ireland.



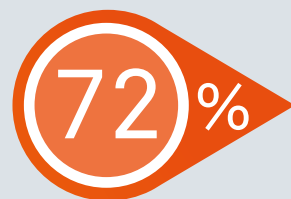
Qualifications included in the NFQ meet consistent quality standards wherever they are provided.

Employment/ Skills Matching

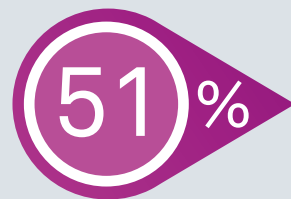
[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



The NFQ has improved the dialogue between the world of qualifications & the world of work.



Vocational qualifications included in the NFQ signal relevant skills and competencies required for particular occupations.



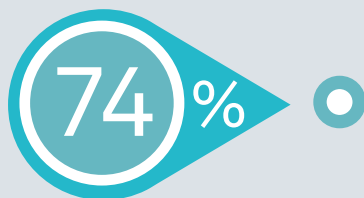
The NFQ has facilitated better matching between skills and job vacancies.

Public awareness levels of the NFQ are at their highest level since commencing a longitudinal survey in 2014. Today, one in three claim to be aware of the NFQ.

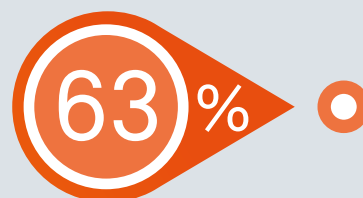
FINDINGS: THE NFQ IMPACT ON...

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Practice

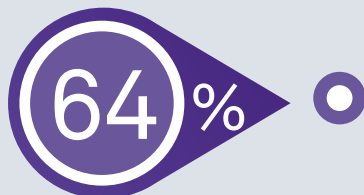
[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



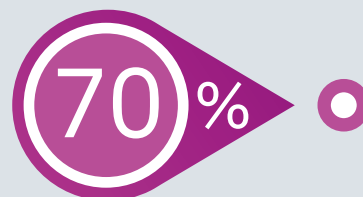
The learning outcomes approach of the NFQ has improved the practice of course and curricula design.



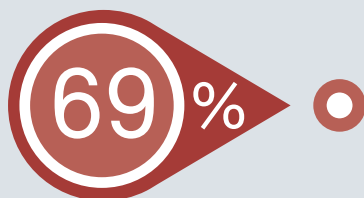
The learning outcomes approach of the NFQ has improved how standards of courses and curricula are monitored and maintained.



The learning outcomes approach of the NFQ has improved teaching and learning practice.



The NFQ has made a positive contribution to the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment.



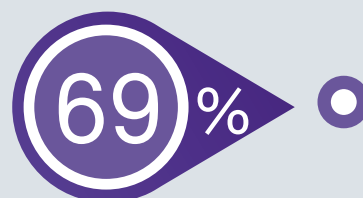
The learning outcomes approach of the NFQ has improved assessment practice.

Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Ireland and Irish Qualifications Abroad

[showing percentages of survey participants who strongly agreed/agreed with these statements]



The NFQ has made it easier for qualifications achieved in other countries to be understood, compared and recognised in Ireland.



The NFQ has made it easier for Irish qualifications to be understood, compared and valued in other countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS...

#1



Promote greater awareness, understanding and effective use of the NFQ

#2



Embed NFQ in quality assurance policy and practice

#3



Maintain and strengthen the international dimension of NFQ

#4



Position the NFQ as a mechanism to support lifelong learning and skills agendas

#5



Ensure that the development of the NFQ is informed by the best available evidence and supported by strong stakeholder engagement

KEY MILESTONES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NFQ...

2003



After an extensive period of public engagement and consultation, the NFQ was established as the single national entity through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other.

The NFQ was self-certified as compatible with the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF EHEA), the first national Qualification Framework to complete this exercise.



2006

2009



The NFQ was referenced to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning the first national Qualifications Framework to complete this exercise.

An international panel was commissioned to carry out a study on the impact and implementation of the Irish NFQ.

2012

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act reaffirms the statutory basis of the NFQ and entrusts maintenance and development of the NFQ to QQI.

2016

QQI publish Reflections and Trajectories - Qualifications Policy Insights as a companion paper to the Policy Impact Assessment of the NFQ.

2017

QQI publish NFQ Policy Impact Assessment.



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cállochta agus Cállochtal Éireann



Supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union