

# Qualifications Frameworks and Level Descriptors

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**Deafblind  
Studies**



DEAFBLIND  
·UK·



sense  
for deafblind people



DEAFBLIND  
·SCOTLAND·

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# Qualifications Frameworks and Levels

There are a number of academic scales that chart comparative values of qualifications across the UK. At Honours Degree level, there are no differences. However, below that level different frameworks are used for different parts of the education sector as well as in the different countries of the UK.

This can make it difficult to understand the value of an individual qualification in the wider educational context.

The following chart and information are provided to give a **rough** guide as to the undergraduate position of the Deafblind Studies qualifications in relation to these frameworks. (The correlation between frameworks isn't quite as direct as the chart suggests – hence 'rough guide'). More information can be found from a number of sources including:

- <http://www.qaa.org.uk/>
- <http://www.qca.org.uk/>
- <http://www.sqa.org.uk>
- <http://www.scqf.org.uk/>

A particularly helpful overview of qualifications and their associated definitions can be found at:

[http://www.qualifications-across-boundaries.org/compare/uk\\_ireland](http://www.qualifications-across-boundaries.org/compare/uk_ireland).

The course coordinator will be happy to discuss queries directly with prospective applicants or students on the course.

## Key

SCQF = Scottish Credit and Qualifications framework

QCF = Qualifications and Credit Framework (replacing National Qualifications Framework – NQF) a new framework for recognising and accrediting qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland  
FE – Further Education

FHEQ = Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Levels – England Wales and Northern Ireland

NICATS = Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System

CQFW = Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales Project

(For information only in the Republic of Ireland - National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland.)

In addition to the information provided by SCQF, QCA (the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority who look after the QCF) and the QAA (the Quality Assurance Agency who look after the FHEQ), SEEC provides information which goes some way to bridging the different frameworks. The information includes a useful set of levels descriptors which highlight the qualities to be expected of holders of particular levels of qualification. ("SEEC\* is a highly respected authority in the existing and developing field of Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CATS) at higher education levels. SEEC serves as a reference point on credit-based learning, structures and processes in the UK and, now, in the developing field of European credit." (\*Originally, the South East England Consortium for Credit Accumulation & Transfer, SEEC has grown to cover institutions in the south and southern midlands of the UK. NUCCAT is the corresponding consortium for the northern half of UK, although organisations can belong to both consortia. Taken from [www.seec.org.uk](http://www.seec.org.uk).)

<b>Deafblind Studies</b>	<b>SCQF Level</b>	<b>QCF Level (FE)</b>	<b>FHEQ Level</b>
	<b>5</b> SVQ 2 & Standard Grade	<b>2</b> NVQ 2 & GCSE	
	<b>6</b> SVQ3 & Highers	<b>3</b> NVQ 3 & A Level	
<b>Cert' in Deafblind Studies</b>	<b>7</b> Advanced Higher	<b>4</b> NVQ 4	<b>C/4</b> Certificate Level Certificates of Higher Education
<b>Dip' in Deafblind Studies</b>	<b>8</b> SVQ4 & Diploma	<b>5</b> NVQ 4	<b>I/5</b> Intermediate Level Diplomas of Higher Education, Foundation and Ordinary Degrees
	<b>9</b> Ordinary degree		
	<b>10</b> Honours Degree	<b>6</b> NVQ 4	<b>H/6</b> Honours degree
	<b>11</b> SVQ 5 & Masters Degree	<b>7</b> NVQ 5	<b>M/7</b> Masters Degree
	<b>12</b> Doctorate	<b>8</b> Higher Specialist Diploma	<b>D/8</b> Doctorate

## What does this mean for the Certificate and Diploma in Deafblind Studies?

Roughly, it means that:

**The Certificate in Deafblind Studies** is taught at a level which is:

- higher than A Levels;
- at about the same level as
  - an Advanced Higher (Scotland)
  - year one of a three year ordinary degree (England, Ireland and Wales)
  - year two of a four year degree (Scotland).

**The Diploma in Deafblind Studies** is taught at a level which is at about the same level as:

- year two of a three year ordinary degree (England, Ireland and Wales)
- year three of a four year degree (Scotland).

**Importantly - both qualifications are taught at undergraduate level.**

## What QAA and SEEC say about levels of study

The first of the two tables overleaf is based on text extracted and adapted from 'A brief guide to academic qualifications' by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) dated January 2001. The full version of this document gives detailed information about the qualities of holders of qualifications at the levels represented by the certificate and diploma. The full text is available from the QAA website at <http://www.qaa.org.uk/>.

The second table (extracted from SEEC) gives Qualifications descriptors under helpful headings.

<b>QAA - Certificate holders will:</b>	→	<b>QAA - Diploma holders will:</b>
have a sound knowledge of the basic concepts and principles	→	have a sound knowledge and critical understanding of the main concepts and principles
have an ability to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with the basic theories and concepts	→	have knowledge of the methods of enquiry in the subject, and use a range of techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, proposing solutions to problems arising from that analysis
be able to take different approaches to solving problems, being able to justify their decisions	→	demonstrate an ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems
can apply basic concepts and principles in the workplace	→	apply those concepts and principles more widely
evaluate and interpret underlying concepts and principles within the context of their studies	→	have an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations
be able to communicate accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments, to include the presentation, evaluation, and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data	→	effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
have the qualities and transferable skills needed for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility	→	have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

SEEC Level 4: HE Level 1 (Certificate)		→	SEEC Level 5: HE Level 2 (Diploma)	
<b>Development of Knowledge and Understanding (subject specific)</b>				
<p><b>Knowledge base:</b> has factual and/or conceptual knowledge base with emphasis on the nature of the field of study and appropriate terminology;</p> <p><b>Ethical issues:</b> can demonstrate awareness of ethical issues in area of study and is able to discuss these in relation to personal beliefs and values.</p>		→	<p><b>Knowledge base:</b> has a detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and an awareness of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p><b>Ethical issues:</b> aware of the wider social and environmental implications of area of study and able to debate issues in relation to more general ethical perspectives.</p>	
<b>Cognitive/Intellectual Skills (generic)</b>				
<p><b>Analysis:</b> can analyse with guidance using given classifications/principles.</p> <p><b>Synthesis:</b> can collect and categorise ideas and information in a predictable and standard format.</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> can evaluate the reliability of data using defined techniques and/or tutor guidance.</p> <p><b>Application:</b> can apply given tools/methods accurately and carefully to a well-defined problem and begin to appreciate complexity of the issues.</p>		→	<p><b>Analysis:</b> can analyse a range of information with minimum guidance using given classifications/principles; can compare alternative methods and techniques for obtaining data.</p> <p><b>Synthesis:</b> can reformat a range of ideas and information towards a given purpose.</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> can select appropriate techniques of evaluation and evaluate the relevance and significance of data collected.</p> <p><b>Application:</b> can identify key elements of problems; choose appropriate methods for their resolution in a considered manner.</p>	
<b>Practical Skills (subject specific)</b>				
<p><b>Application:</b> can operate in predictable, defined contexts that require use of a specified range of standard techniques.</p>		→	<p><b>Application of skills:</b> can operate in situations of varying complexity and predictability requiring application of a wide range of techniques.</p>	
<b>Practical Skills (subject specific) continued</b>				
<p><b>Autonomy in skill use:</b> is able to act with limited</p>		→	<p><b>Autonomy in skill use:</b> able to act with increasing</p>	

autonomy, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	autonomy, with reduced need for supervision and direction, within defined guidelines.
<b>Key/Transferable Skills (generic)</b>	
<p><b>Group working:</b> can work effectively with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers and colleagues).</p> <p><b>Learning resources:</b> can work within an appropriate ethos and can use and access a range of learning resources.</p> <p><b>Self evaluation:</b> can evaluate own strengths and weakness within criteria largely set by others.</p> <p><b>Management of information:</b> can manage information, collect appropriate data from a range of sources and undertake simple research tasks with external guidance.</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> can take responsibility for own learning with appropriate support.</p> <p><b>Communications:</b> can communicate effectively in a format appropriate to the discipline(s) and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner.</p> <p><b>Problem solving:</b> can apply given tools/methods accurately and carefully to a well-defined problem and begin to appreciate the complexity of the issues in the discipline.</p>	<p>→</p> <p><b>Group working:</b> can interact effectively within a team / learning group, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying responses where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Learning resources:</b> can manage learning using resources for the discipline. Can develop working relationships of a professional nature within the discipline(s)</p> <p><b>Self evaluation:</b> can evaluate own strengths and weakness, challenge received opinion and develop own criteria and judgement.</p> <p><b>Management of information:</b> can manage information; can select appropriate data from a range of sources and develop appropriate research strategies.</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> can take responsibility for own learning with minimum direction.</p> <p><b>Communications:</b> can communicate effectively in a manner appropriate to the discipline(s) and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner in a variety of formats.</p> <p><b>Problem solving:</b> can identify key areas of problems and choose appropriate tools/methods for their resolution in a considered manner.</p>

## Revisions and Corrections

The following allows you to make feedback to the course coordinator about issues/revisions/corrections etc.

The page is designed to be removed and returned by post or fax.

It will be helpful if you include your name on the feedback in case more information is needed.

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Page no	Para	Comment/Issue

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