Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, or SCQF, lets you compare Scottish qualifications in terms of:

- how difficult they are to achieve (described as an SCQF level); and
- how many hours of learning is required (described as SCQF credit points).

So, even when the content of courses is different, you can compare them by level and the number of credit points you get. This makes it easier to see how one course, or type of learning, relates to another. It also helps you to work out how to move on, or move between, qualifications and plan what you need to do next to get into the course or job you want to do.

Warning! SCQF credit points are not the same as UCAS tariff points.

Levels

There are 12 levels, ranging from level 1 for basic education to level 12 for very advanced education, such as a doctoral degree.

If you look at the table in the link below (under 'Framework') you will see that some very different qualifications are at the same level. For example, the Advanced Higher is level 7, and so is the Higher National Certificate (HNC). This doesn't mean they are the same. The content is different and they are assessed differently, but each is as hard to achieve as the other.

Credit Points

Each qualification is allocated a number of credit points. These points are for the amount of learning you have to do to get the qualification. One SCQF credit point represents ten hours of learning time. So some qualifications, at the same level, earn more points than others.

For example the Advanced Higher and the HNC are both at level 7, but each Advanced Higher is worth 32 credit points and each HNC is worth 96.

You can use your credit points to move on to courses at a higher level. Some colleges and universities now ask for a certain number of SCQF credit points for entry. Course information records on Planit list the SCQF level allocated to the course wherever possible.

You may also be able to transfer credit points from one course to another. For example, you may be able to transfer credit from a Higher National Diploma (HND) to an Honours degree programme. Visit the SCQF website for more information.

SCQF levels and points don't just apply to formal qualifications offered by colleges and universities. Many work based qualifications and even youth awards, such as Youth Achievement and ASDAN awards are also part of the SCQF.