

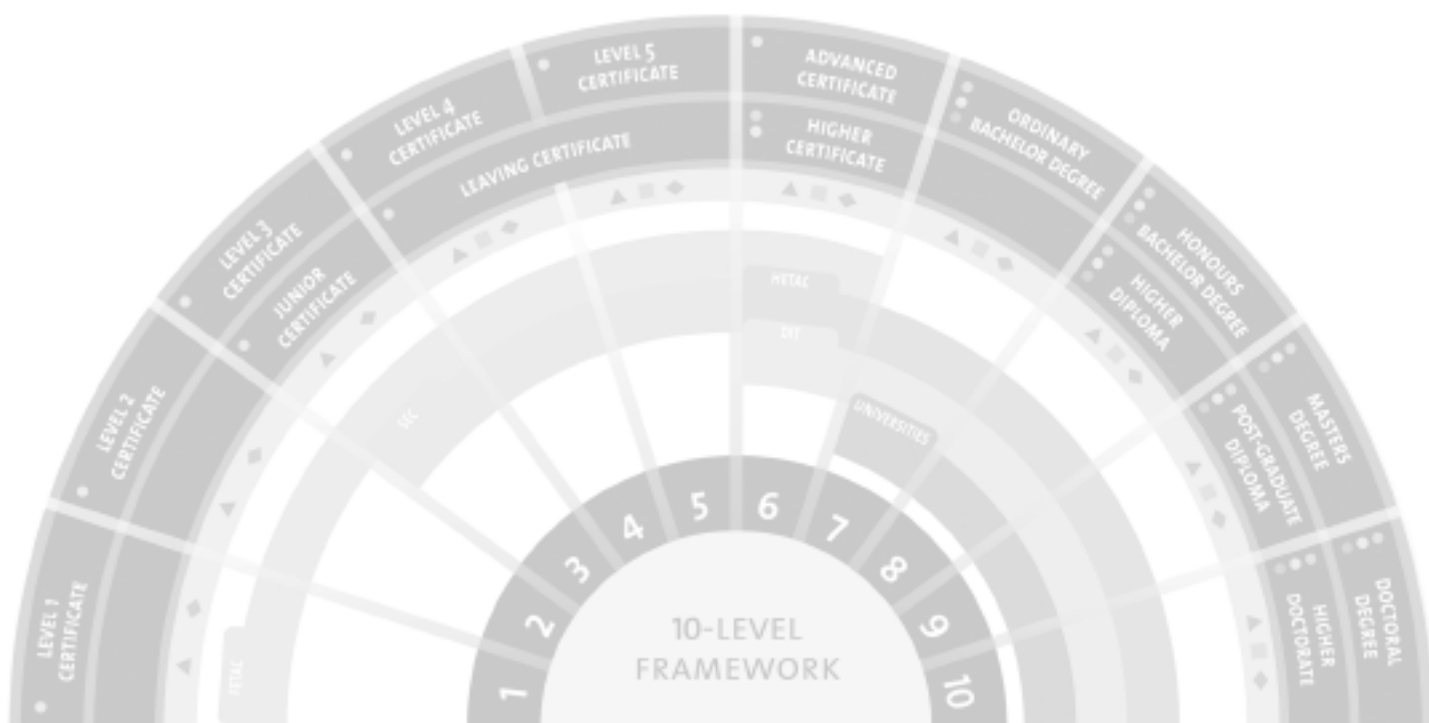
Accreditation and Assessment in Irish Higher Education – The Emerging Scenario



Higher Education Institutions Implementing the National Framework of Qualifications in Higher Education and the Bologna Agenda

Jointly Organised by National University of Ireland, Maynooth
(Departments of Education and Adult Education), the
Higher Education and Training Awards Council and the
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

25/26 January 2007, Maynooth



Údarás Náisiúnta
Cáilíochtaí na hÉireann
National Qualifications
Authority of Ireland



Higher Education Institutions are in the process of implementing a number of important changes taking place in the system of qualifications in Ireland. The changes arise from the implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications and the linked Bologna Agenda.

The Framework is a ten level system designed to meet the needs of learners by incorporating awards made for all kinds of learning, large and small, whether it be gained in schools, the workplace, the community, training centres, colleges or universities. As a result, it supports the national objective of moving towards a 'lifelong learning society'. The Framework is one of the first two Frameworks to be aligned with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The National Framework of Qualifications has become a key driver of academic change in Irish higher education. The Framework embeds learning outcomes into programme design and provides a mechanism for the development of credit accumulation and transfer arrangements. The learner is at the centre of the Framework's design. As a result, recognition of prior learning and increased transfer and progression opportunities for learners, are key areas in the development of a more cohesive education and training system.

This conference aims to provide an opportunity for those within higher education institutions in Ireland to share their experiences of these, and other issues arising, in their implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications and the linked Bologna agenda.

Conference Programme

Day 1

12 noon Pre-conference briefing meeting for all speakers, chairs and rapporteurs
1.00 pm Registration and light lunch

Session I

Chair Professor **Anne Ryan**, Department of Adult and Community Education, NUI Maynooth
2.00 pm Welcome to conference – Professor **John G. Hughes**, President, NUI Maynooth

Key note addresses: Scottish speaker, Dr **Alan Davidson**, Centre for Learning and Teaching, University of Dundee
Hungarian speaker, Dr **Éva Gönczi**, Programme Director, Collegium Budapest, Institute for Advanced Study and formerly Ministry adviser and Hungary's delegate to the Bologna Follow-Up Group

3.30 pm Tea/Coffee

Session II

4.00 pm Workshops

6.00 pm End of first day of conference

6.30 pm Conference reception & dinner

Day 2

Session III

9.00 am
Chair Dr **Bryan Maguire**, Director of Academic Affairs, Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Speaker: Dr **Jim Murray**, Development Project Leader, National Qualifications Authority of Ireland –
Outline of Links between Irish National Framework of Qualifications and European Meta-Frameworks

Session IV

9.30 am Workshops

11.30 am Tea/Coffee

Session V

12 noon
Chair Professor **Tom Collins**, Education Department, NUI Maynooth

Speakers to be invited: Dr **Richard Thorn**, Director, Institute of Technology, Sligo
Dr **David Redmond**, Registrar, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

1.00 pm Conference close and lunch

There will be two sets of workshops, with four workshops in each of the sessions. For each workshop there will be a chair, 2/3 speakers and a Rapporteur. The reports from the rapporteurs will be published after the conference. Speakers will speak for up to 10 minutes and give examples of the implementation of the Framework at institutional level.

Session II Workshops

Workshop A Programme Design and Credit

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the increasing development of learning outcomes as part of the design of programmes and the manner in which these developments link to the development of systems of credit accumulation and transfer by institutions in a manner consistent with the principles and operational guidelines for the implementation of a national approach to credit in Irish higher education and training which have been agreed.

- Chair – Mr David McCormack, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, NUI Maynooth
- Ms Elizabeth Noonan, Director of Academic Affairs, and Dr Bairbre Redmond, Vice-principal for Teaching and Learning, College of Human Sciences, University College Dublin
- Professor Paul Ryan, Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences, NUI Galway
- Professor Ciaran Brady, Department of Modern History, Trinity College Dublin
- Rapporteur – Ms Mary Sheridan, Head of Recognition and Information Management, Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Workshop B Joint degrees

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the increasing number of arrangements for joint degrees that are being put in place within Ireland and internationally.

- Chair – Mr Fergal Costello, Head of Institute of Technology Designation Unit, Higher Education Authority
- Mr Danny Brennan, Registrar, Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Mr Kevin Griffin, Director of Registry, Dublin City University
- Rapporteur – Dr Maeve Martin, Education Department, NUI Maynooth

Workshop C External Accreditation by Higher Education Institutions

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the accreditation by higher education institutions of programmes provided by linked institutions which lead to awards of the institutions themselves.

- Chair – Dr Ted Fleming, Department of Adult and Community Education, NUI Maynooth
- Ms Louise McDermott, Assistant Registrar, Dublin City University
- Professor Anne Moran, Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ulster
- Rapporteur – Ms Renee Reece, Head of Business Development, Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Workshop D Improving Progression Routes

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the development of progression routes into higher education institutions for holders of awards other than traditional school leaving awards.

- Chair – Ms Barbara Kelly, Director of Awards and Standards, Further Education and Training Awards Council
- Dr Diarmuid O'Callaghan, Registrar, IT Blanchardstown
- Mr John McGinnity, Admissions Officer and Assistant Registrar, NUI Maynooth

- Mr Colm Hamrogue, President, Union of Students Ireland
- Rapporteur – Dr Mary-Liz Trant, Head of the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education, Higher Education Authority

Session IV Workshops

Workshop E Award Classifications and External Examiners

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss issues in relation to the classification of Irish higher education awards. Issues arising include the extent to which there is a set of nationally understood arrangements in place, how institutional arrangements are underpinned on an external basis and what challenges need to be addressed.

- Chair – Dr Frank McMahon, Director of Academic Affairs, Dublin Institute of Technology
- Mr Denis Cummins, Director, Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Dr Attracta Halpin, Registrar, National University of Ireland
- Mr Stuart Garvie, Development Officer, National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
- Rapporteur – Ms Grace O'Grady, Education Department, NUI Maynooth

Workshop F Accreditation of Programmes and Quality Assurance

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues in relation to the arrangements that higher education institutions have in place, both within Departments and centrally within institution, to ensure that programmes lead to the awards and the learning outcomes that they are seeking to. It will also explore the range of ways in which this is linked to the general quality assurance systems of institutions.

- Chair – Dr Padraig Walsh, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Universities Quality Board
- Dr Norma Ryan, Director of Quality Promotion, University College Cork
- Dr Tom Duff, Academic Registrar, Dublin Institute of Technology
- Rapporteur – Mr Ian McKenna, Head of Capacity Building, Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Workshop G Smaller awards

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the clarity that is being introduced into the myriad of smaller awards arising from programmes in higher education institutions.

- Chair – Ms Caitriona Ryan, Head of Policy and Planning, Higher Education Authority
- Professor John Scattergood, School of English, Trinity College Dublin
- Dr Eamonn Conway, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, and Dr Michael Breen, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Rapporteur – Dr Ann Murphy, Dublin Institute of Technology

Workshop H The recognition of prior learning

This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to explore and discuss the issues arising from the implementation of the National Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning in Further and Higher Education and Training including in relation to: entry to a programme leading to an award; credit towards an award or exemption from some programme requirements, and; eligibility for a full award.

- Chair – Ms Rose Dolan, Education Department, NUI Maynooth
- Mr Dermot Coughlan, Department of Lifelong Learning and Outreach, University of Limerick
- Mr Ray Coughlan, Department of Education Development, Cork Institute of Technology
- Rapporteur – Ms Carmel Kelly, National Qualifications Authority of Ireland