

**Referencing of Irish National Framework of Qualifications to the  
European Qualifications Framework  
National Steering Committee  
Terms of Reference**

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland has been designated by the Department of Education and Science as the National Coordination Point in Ireland for the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). In this capacity, the Qualifications Authority is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the EQF in Ireland, a major element of which is the referencing of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) to the EQF. The Qualifications Authority has convened a Steering Committee to assist it in managing the referencing process.

**Committee Membership**

The Committee will have sectoral/awarding body representation as follows:

- General Education (Schools sector): nominee of National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
- Further/Vocational Education and Training: nominee of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)
- Higher Education and Training: nominees of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and the Irish Universities Association
- A technical consultant who will undertake the detailed comparison of the NFQ and EQF Level descriptors
- Three international experts: with expertise, inter alia, on the European overarching frameworks and the frameworks of the various United Kingdom jurisdictions
- Three members of the Qualifications Authority executive: one of whom will act as chair of the committee and one as secretary.

## **Role of the Committee**

The function of the Steering Committee will be to determine, and set out in a report, Ireland's response to each of the ten referencing criteria and procedures developed by the EQF Advisory Group.

## **Criteria and Procedures for Referencing the NFQ to EQF**

1. The responsibilities and/or legal competence of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process, including the National Coordination Point, are clearly determined and published by the competent public authorities.
2. There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.
3. The national framework or qualifications system and its qualifications are based on the principle and objective of learning outcomes and linked to arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where these exist, to credit systems.
4. The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national qualifications framework or for describing the place of qualifications in the national qualification system are transparent.
5. The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer (s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines (as indicated in annex 3 of the Recommendation).
6. The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies.
7. The referencing process shall involve international experts.
8. The competent national body or bodies shall certify the referencing of the national framework or system with the EQF. One comprehensive report, setting out the referencing and the evidence supporting it shall be published by the competent national bodies, including the National Coordination Point, and shall address separately each of the criteria.
9. The official EQF platform shall maintain a public listing of member states that have confirmed that they have completed the referencing process, including links to completed referencing reports.
10. Following the referencing process, and in line with the timelines set in the Recommendation, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities contain a clear reference, by way of national qualifications systems, to the appropriate European Qualifications Framework level.