

# SCQF UPDATE 19

spring/summer 2013





## A MESSAGE FROM THE SCQF PARTNERSHIP CHIEF EXECUTIVE, AILEEN PONTON

A very warm welcome to the Spring/Summer 2013 edition of Update. As always we have received a tremendous range of contributions for this edition and I hope that they bring the Framework to life for you and also give you some food for thought.

Skills Development Scotland share with us the rationale behind the development of the Certificate of Work Readiness and also explain why they decided to have this credit rated and what value that provided for the learners. There is a very interesting article from SQA showing how the Fire Services College has been working with them over a period of years to have credit rated a real variety of learning programmes and courses up to level 10 in the SCQF.

At last we have completed work on the My Skills My Future pack which is a tool using RPL and the SCQF Level Descriptors to support primarily young people aged 16-19 in understanding better the level of their learning and skills, and what this means in terms of making learning or employment choices. You can find out more about the pack and also the training available to support the use of this resource by visiting our website.

In addition, there is a strong international element to this edition including information on our joint conference with the Education Bureau in Hong Kong, the work Napier has been doing with Zagreb and the ProLeNE conference we ran in Glasgow in February 2013 which showcases a range of our projects with employers, colleges and the Community Learning and Development Sector.

Hopefully, as always, there will be at least one article that tells you something new about the SCQF or something new about the work that one of your partners is doing. Please keep all those interesting articles and case studies coming!



## SCQFP LAUNCHES THE SCQFfold FOR LEARNING

After much discussion and consultation, we have re-launched the Schools' Toolkit, an online toolkit full of resources for school management teams and community learning and development (CLD) practitioners, as the SCQFfold for Learning.

As regular readers of SCQF Update will recall, in 2012 we held a competition for teachers and workers in CLD settings to rename the useful resource for schools and the CLD sector. We received a number of entries from staff all over Scotland, and Steve Coyle, a full release mentor for probationary teachers from Aberdeen, came up trumps with his suggestion of SCQFfold for Learning. The winner was chosen by a panel of judges including representatives from the SCQFP, Skills Development Scotland, Education Scotland, SQA and the Scottish Parent Teacher Council (SPTC).

Steve was presented with his prize of £100 of Amazon vouchers by SCQFP Project Officer, Anthony O'Reilly, at a presentation at Kintore Primary School in Inverurie late last year. Commenting on his win, Steve said: *"The idea of "SCQFfold for Learning" jumped out at me because that's a big part of my job, talking with newly qualified teachers about how to scaffold learning as part of their differentiation strategy. I'm really pleased with my win, I think the last thing I won was when I had to share a ten shilling prize with another boy in a balloon race when I was at primary school! I'm going to use it to buy a soup making machine!"*

We at the SCQFP then decided to build upon the scaffold concept and developed graphics to more clearly illustrate this link with the name.

After being trialled with a number of schools in Glasgow and Ayrshire, many new tools and resources have been added to the online pack. Additions to the SCQFfold include Powerpoint presentations and a lesson plan designed for S4 pupils as an introduction to understanding SCQF levels and how to relate them to their own learning and pending SQA qualifications.

The SCQFfold for Learning, created in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, is available on the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk) and contains useful presentations and publications that will aid school management teams and learning communities in understanding how the SCQF supports the Curriculum for Excellence and in communicating the Framework to teachers, learners, parents and carers. It will continue to be updated and refreshed with new resources and the SCQF Partnership is keen for teachers and CLD practitioners who use the kit to provide feedback on how it could be improved.

For more information or to feed back any comments on the SCQFfold for Learning, contact [Anthony@scqf.org.uk](mailto:Anthony@scqf.org.uk).

## SCQF FORUM UPDATE



The most recent Forum meeting took place on 21 February 2013 in Glasgow. 12 Forum members attended along with two invited guests and two guest speakers.

As usual, Aileen Ponton welcomed members and guests and provided a brief overview of the highlights from the previous meeting of 28 August 2012 along with a snapshot of some of the work currently taking place and being managed by other groups within the SCQFP, including updates on capacity building workshops, Employer Engagement and NRQ projects, RPL workshops, Employer and School Toolkits and the ProLeNE and Learner research projects.

Karen Murray from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) then delivered a short presentation on the SDS Employability Fund explaining how this has emerged from the recent government updated employability strategy and providing some background on how the fund will operate. Karen pointed out that in future, for training to attract funding it must initially be levelled at SCQF level 3 or above and have a minimum of 18 credit points.

This was followed by a presentation from David Brooks of Ashbrook Research and Consultancy. In June 2012 SCQFP commissioned Ashbrook to carry out a piece of research to examine the impact and understanding of the SCQF among learners in all sectors and to evaluate perceptions of the SCQF among management and teaching staff in schools. The specific aim of the research was to evaluate the level of awareness, perceptions and understanding of the Framework among learners in Higher and Further Education, schools, workplaces and the community learning and development sectors. David's presentation provided a synopsis of the key findings of the research ahead of the production of a final report with conclusions and recommendations due later this year.

The third presentation was delivered by Andrew Comrie from Kerson Associates. Kerson were engaged to carry out a piece of research to establish levels and type of use of the SCQF RPL Toolkit, and to establish if improvements or changes are needed. The RPL Toolkit provides practical ideas and exercises for the facilitation of RPL. Andrew's presentation highlighted how Kerson's online survey indicated that use of the Toolkit is not widespread. Responses suggested that organisations are not ready to use such a resource due to many still trying to create the conditions required to implement RPL practice. Many also highlighted that the resource might be too general for their needs. For these reasons it was agreed to shift the focus of the research to understanding what barriers individuals and organisations face when it comes to creating the conditions for RPL. The research will explore whether a wrap-around guide which explores these more general issues which underpin RPL practice and signposts a number of different resources, including the RPL Toolkit, may better provide support for developing RPL.

The second part of the meeting was given over to the SCQF Executive Team providing an overview of new SCQF resources and seeking feedback from Forum members on how useful they considered these resources to be.

Julie Cavanagh introduced the "My Skills, My Future" resource pack. The SCQFP has been working in partnership with GCU Lead to develop this resource which is aimed at supporting young people in identifying the skills they have gained outwith formal qualifications.

Anthony O'Reilly provided an overview of SCQFfold for Learning - the re-branded Toolkit for Schools and Learning Communities. Created in partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the toolkit aims to assist schools and learning communities in understanding how the Framework supports Curriculum for Excellence and the recognition of achievement for young people and to help them to support parents and carers in understanding the SCQF.

Finally, Ryan Reed provided an overview of the Employer Toolkit. This resource aims to assist employers in understanding how the SCQF can be used as a tool to support effective recruitment, skills utilisation and workforce development. The intention is to redevelop this into a small number of concise guides, in response to direct employer feedback. The new guides will focus on the development of person specifications, the identification of skills across the workforce and in recruitment and will also provide a range of useful models to support employers in practice. Work is also being done on a set of contextualised SCQF Level Descriptors which can be used by employers to help them understand the link between job roles and skills requirements and job descriptions v person specifications.

There was some good positive feedback from members on the usefulness of these resources and the SCQF Executive Team will be engaging with Forum members in the coming months to look at how to promote and make best use of these and other SCQF resources.

The meeting was rounded off with a brief question and answer session and the next Forum meeting will take place in Glasgow on Tuesday 27 August from 12.30pm to 3.30pm.



## EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

Having reached the end of the second year in this three year programme of work supported by the Scottish Funding Council, the SCQF Partnership has been able to initiate and support a range of projects. We hope these projects will contribute to raising levels of awareness of the SCQF and help to bring together employers and FE and HE institutions to look at creating progression routes and improving skills utilisation in particular sectors.

This year we have been able to support projects with The Open University in Scotland, Robert Gordon University, The Royal Yachting Association Scotland and Edinburgh College, The Renewable Energy Skills Training Academy (TRESTA), the Articulate into Energy Project, in addition to reviewing SCQF Partnership's employer tools.

The research from both The Open University and Robert Gordon University is available on request and will be disseminated through our website and appropriate partners and stakeholders.

The Open University Research makes a number of observations around the provision of paralegal education in Scotland and in particular raises questions about access to this provision within particular practice areas and also by those not based near institutions in the central belt.

The Robert Gordon University Research outlines the experiences of the Aberdeen Business School in attempting to formalise a recognition of prior learning (RPL) process which recognises prior informal learning gained in the workplace. The research highlights some of the difficulties this presents, and makes a number of recommendations on issues such as programme design for RPL, managing learner expectation and institutional drivers for RPL.

The Royal Yachting Association Awards, Dinghy Instructor and Powerboat Instructor, have been credit rated on to the SCQF. Edinburgh College carried out the credit rating process. The Dinghy Instructor Award has been credit rated at SCQF Level 8 with 7 SCQF Credit Points, and the Powerboat Instructor Award also at SCQF Level 8 with 5 Credits. Jane Campbell Morrison, Development Manager of RYA Scotland commented on the wider benefits of credit rating in terms of improving the quality of RYA's already highly regarded training in Scotland:

*"I heard about the SCQF from SkillsActive Scotland, who approached me offering an opportunity to get some of our awards credit rated on to the SCQF. It seemed like a useful opportunity to learn more about how we could work with educational establishments and improve the quality of our training. This process has introduced a number of new areas of working that will require us to deliver workforce training and development, and fundamentally change the approach to delivering instructor training, which will then improve the quality of the proficiency training delivered in Scotland. [My] experience with the SCQF has been very, very positive."*

We continue to work with two other projects, both in the energy sector (particularly renewables), supporting them to provide the skills employers need to move forward in this emergent market in Scotland.

The Renewable Energy Skills Training Academy (TRESTA) runs a six week programme in partnership with Job Centre Plus which gives those new to the sector the fabrication skills employers are looking for, with some of those completing the programme being offered employment in TRESTA's parent company Steel Engineering Ltd based in Renfrew.

The Articulate into Energy Project has numerous partners which include colleges, universities and employers with an interest in the Energy sector. The project aims to support work based learning in the sector, in partnership with FE/HE institutions, leading to an award which meets the needs of employers in the sector and which potentially opens up progression routes in terms of further study. The SCQFP will be supporting the development of programme content by Forth Valley College who is a partner in the wider project.

Finally, the SCQF Partnership has been reviewing and rewriting its Employer Toolkit. The new concise guides for employers, which will replace the existing Toolkit, should be available under the employer section of the SCQF website by the end of May 2013. For more information on any of these projects please contact Ryan Reed at the SCQF Partnership at [R.Reed@SCQF.org.uk](mailto:R.Reed@SCQF.org.uk).

## SCQF EVENTS UPDATE

The SCQF Partnership was delighted to be invited to jointly host a major qualifications frameworks event with the Hong Kong Education Bureau in March 2013. The conference, entitled *Global Mobility – Making It Happen*, took place in Hong Kong on 18-19 March 2013.

The conference was opened by Hong Kong's Secretary for Education, Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim, who spoke about the Government's ambition to develop a lifelong and diversified learning culture for Hong Kong.

Chairman of the SCQFP, Sir Andrew Cubie, also officiated at the conference, commenting that, "QFs provide us with the means to have conversations with other countries about referencing and benchmarking of qualifications. We know that over 100 countries are developing or have developed Frameworks and therefore this conference is concentrating on some key topics related to the issues around referencing and alignment."

The conference signified the collaborative efforts referred to in the Memorandum of Understanding that the SCQFP signed with the Education Bureau in March 2012, the purpose of which is to stimulate ideas and forge partnership in Scotland, Hong Kong and other parts of the world in terms of learners' mobility and articulation. Speakers at the conference came from Australia, Hong Kong, Mainland China, Malaysia and the UK. Over 400 representatives from education institutions, training providers, trade associations, trade unions and Government departments attended the conference.

Back on home soil, we are still in the process of finalising dates and venues for SCQF events to be held in the year 2013-14, but can confirm that we will be running a number of Would You Credit It? and Building Capacity sessions, workshops on RPL and two events for Credit Rating Bodies. Details will be revealed on our website at [www.scqf.org.uk/News/Events](http://www.scqf.org.uk/News/Events).

## PROLENE



In recent editions of Update we have been advising you on the progress of project ProLeNE which has been running for the last year in collaboration with the West of Scotland Colleges Partnership (WoSCOP).

ProLeNE, which stands for Promoting the Recognition of Learning in National and European contexts, reached its conclusion with a dissemination event which took place in Glasgow on 8th February 2013. The event attracted over 100 delegates across a wide range of sectors and focused on the many projects and initiatives currently taking place to increase the amount of credit rated learning on the Framework and the promotion of its benefits to learners.

The event was opened by the Minister for Youth Employment, Angela Constance, and guest speakers included representatives from The Netherlands Qualifications Framework, the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework Secretariat and Youth Scotland among others. A number of workshops were delivered which covered areas such as the credit rating of non-recognised qualifications in the FE sector, credit rating in the Community Learning and Development sector and credit rating learner mobility.

A copy of the main presentations and a full conference report can be found on the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk/Education%20Providers%20and%20Advisers/Project%20ProLeNE](http://www.scqf.org.uk/Education%20Providers%20and%20Advisers/Project%20ProLeNE).

## SCQF PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES UPDATE

In response to a request from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in Scotland, we have been working with the SQA to develop a downloadable resource entitled Old V New. The pdf contains a table showing how current and old qualifications relate to one another in terms of their SCQF level. The table refers to qualifications which were available in Scotland from the 1960s onwards, although it should be noted that, for any awards delivered prior to the creation of the SCQF in 2001, all levels are approximate. This should help employers, and in particular small business owners, to understand and establish the comparable SCQF levels of older qualifications which potential employees may be presenting on their CVs. To download a copy, go to the Employers' section on our website at [www.scqf.org.uk/Resources](http://www.scqf.org.uk/Resources).

Earlier this year, with the help of SQA Dalkeith, we completed our annual mass distribution of the Achievement Counts leaflet to S4 –S6 pupils in all state and independent secondary schools in Scotland. If your school needs more copies, please contact Sam on 0141 225 2927.

In order to help our stakeholders keep up with the dynamic European educational landscape and the numerous initiatives developed to support lifelong learning and mobility, we have updated the European and International section of our website at [www.scqf.org.uk/Europe%20and%20International](http://www.scqf.org.uk/Europe%20and%20International).

Those of you who subscribe to the SCQF e-zine, In the Frame, will have noticed that we have had an upgrade and are now using a new and improved template which features links to all of our social media profiles. We'd love to know what you think of the new look, so please get in touch with Sam at [Samantha@scqf.org.uk](mailto:Samantha@scqf.org.uk) with any comments. If you or a colleague would like to be added to the mailing list for In the Frame, please email [subscribe@scqf.org.uk](mailto:subscribe@scqf.org.uk).

## INTERNATIONAL RETAILER IKEA HAS DESIGNS ON BORDERS COLLEGE AND THE SCQF



Borders College has become the first FE college to credit rate a Level 1 programme onto the SCQF. The programme is entitled "Ready for Retail" and takes between 9 and 12 months to complete. On successful completion, students are awarded 35 SCQF credit points. The programme is run in conjunction with the international retailer IKEA, with students being tutored and assessed in their Edinburgh store.

Susan Govan, the programme manager, welcomed the credit rating, stating that, *"It adds value to the programme and will help increase the employment prospects of the participants."* The programme has a mandatory section of three units and students then choose two options. The programme is aimed at people who have a learning disability and meets a significant gap in the qualifications market. David Killean, Vice Principal (Quality and Innovation), at Borders College says: *"We believe that there is currently a very limited range of vocational qualifications at these levels which does add to the barriers for someone with a disability trying to gain employment."*

The content of the programme covers basic tasks including maintaining self-appearance, preparing for and carrying out work tasks and reviewing your own performance. At this level, support for students is crucial and assessment recording includes detailing the amount of support that a student has received in completing the learning outcomes. The SCQF Partnership has been encouraging the development of qualifications at SCQF Levels 1 and 2 for some time and last year produced a publication entitled Guidance on using the Level 1 descriptor. Existing programmes at this level have all previously been developed and credit rated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

Borders College carried out its credit rating as part of a project funded through the SCQF Partnership in 2012-13 which ended in February 2013. The aim of the project was to support colleges in credit rating non-recognised qualifications (NRQs) onto the SCQF and a small financial grant was made available to the colleges involved.

Borders College has over 400 locally devised units at entry level which have not yet been credit rated, covering a wide range of topics. The college now has the potential to credit rate programmes in the areas of tenancy, catering and horticulture amongst others. As David says: *"This project has allowed us to credit rate 16 units so there is a bit of work to go if we ever contemplate doing them all!"*

The SCQF Partnership is supporting a similar project in 2013-14 for colleges interested in credit rating and hopes that more innovative programmes like this will be credit rated onto the Framework.

For more information about programmes on the SCQF database go to [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk) and click on Search the database.

## SCQF DATABASE SNAPSHOT

The SCQF database currently shows<sup>1</sup>: over 2,000 credit rated programmes on the SCQF (not counting degrees) 67 credit rating bodies<sup>2</sup> 167 different third-party organisations (not counting CRBs) who have between them submitted over 500 programmes for credit rating the top 3 most popular subject areas as Management, Health & Social Care and Computing

(Endnotes)

1 Data correct @ 15 March 2013 2 Credit rating bodies = CRBs



# SCQF CASE STUDY

CAPACITY BUILDING WITHIN SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES  
FOR CREDIT RATING – KILMARNOCK COLLEGE

## Background to the College

Kilmarnock College is set in the heart of East Ayrshire and is committed to working with learners, communities and business. The College has over 300 staff and offers over 350 courses which are available on a full-time, part-time, evening and flexible basis. Approximately 5,500 learners are enrolled at the College every year.

## Background to the Project

The SCQF wished to support colleges in developing the processes required to credit rate and to credit rate a programme which recognised the wider achievements of young people.

The project's four main aims were:

- to help overcome any perceived barriers to credit rating within colleges;
- to further assist in increasing capacity for credit rating within the Further Education sector;
- to increase the amount of youth centred programmes on the Framework; and, most importantly,
- the building of sustainability in credit rating within FE colleges in Scotland.

## Why did the College apply for the funding?

Kilmarnock College wanted to build a credit rating team after a number of staff experienced in this area had moved on which made the service less sustainable. In addition, the College wished to take the opportunity to credit rate a larger piece of learning than had been previously undertaken. By the end of the project, the College also hoped to have a well-trained, knowledgeable team able not only to credit rate, but also cascade credit rating training to other College staff.

## The Learning Programme

24/7 is a winter leavers' programme which aims to develop participants' self esteem, respect for others, communication skills and team work through practical activities. The programme consists of three component units: icapture; icreate; and ichoose.

Within these units, learners carry out 24 challenges which incorporate the seven essential skills:

- Communication;
- Information Technology;
- Numeracy;
- Problem Solving;
- Working with Others;
- Employability; and
- Enterprise.

## Benefits of the project

**Capacity building:** Kilmarnock College now has a team of eight staff able to credit rate programmes covering a wide range of subject areas. This gives the College the capacity to credit rate its own programmes and also offer a third party credit rating service to partners, which will add value to a range of projects.

**Improvement of credit rating and quality processes:** Staff within the Quality Enhancement Team used the project to monitor and review existing processes which led to the implementation of a number of changes in forms and streamlining of procedures used in credit rating, particularly the credit rating of larger pieces of learning. Staff now also record justification for credit rating at a particular level which will in future make it easier to feed back to teams the reasons for allocation of a particular SCQF level to a learning programme.

**Ensuring sustainability:** The College plans to introduce basic credit rating training and general SCQF information into mandatory staff training which will ensure that the SCQF becomes embedded into the culture of the College and is widely understood by staff and students.

For more detail on the SCQF and the benefits of having your learning programmes credit rated, visit [www.scqf.org.uk/Resources/](http://www.scqf.org.uk/Resources/) to read the Would You Credit It? leaflet.





## BUSINESSES TURN EXPERT EXPORT KNOWLEDGE INTO CREDIT



The recently re-launched Preparing to Export programme offered free to Scottish businesses by Scottish Development International (SDI) now has added value for participants. The programme has been credit rated into the SCQF by Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), meaning that students undertaking the learning gain a recognised qualification on completion of their studies.

SDI aims to assist in the growth of the Scottish economy, by encouraging inward investment and helping Scottish-based companies develop international trade. The organisation has been running the Preparing to Export programme for a number of years, but is delighted to now be able to recognise participants' efforts more formally with a credit rated award that carries a SCQF level and credit points that may be used by students to progress into further study at college or university. The programme has 3 strands: Preparing to Export - Introductory (SCQF level 7, 2 credit points), Intermediate (SCQF level 8, 8 credit points) and Preparing for International Growth – Advanced (SCQF level 9, 10 credit points).

Speaking about her experience of having the programme credit rated, Kristell Clunie, International Senior Executive, Trade & Investor Services at SDI, commented, *"It's imperative that we continue to support Scottish businesses to explore their overseas trade options. This is critical as we know exporting is still one of the best routes to business growth in the current economic climate. Having the knowledge and skills to export is key to success, and that's where our Preparing to Export Programme can really help in building these skills and confidence. Having this programme credit rated by SCQF as part of our Smart Exporter suite of services really highlights how powerful a tool this programme can be for participants."*

Vince Mills, Director of the Scottish Centre for Work based Learning at GCU, said, *"GCU was delighted to win the contract to credit rate this important programme. We believe that credit rating adds value in two ways: it helps assure the quality of the programme and it provides credit that may be used by participants who wish to pursue the areas covered in more depth."*

Talking about her participation in the Intermediate Programme, Karolina Kolodziejczak, International Business Development Manager at Gilden Photonics Ltd in Clydebank, said: *"The programme was tailored for the role I'm handling in the company. It gave me confidence and helped me develop an action plan on how to tackle the task of entering new markets. The credit rating has got me thinking about exploring further courses for career development."*

For more information on the Preparing to Export programme, visit the website at [www.sdi.co.uk/export-from-scotland/services/Preparing-to-export.aspx](http://www.sdi.co.uk/export-from-scotland/services/Preparing-to-export.aspx).

For more details on credit rating by Glasgow Caledonian University, contact Caroline Tuff at [c.tuff@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:c.tuff@gcu.ac.uk).

For more information on the benefits of having learning programmes credit rated, contact the SCQF Partnership on 0845 270 7371 or visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk/Employers/](http://www.scqf.org.uk/Employers/).



## FACING THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE

The SCQFP has been working in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University's Department for Learning Enhancement and Academic Development (LEAD) to develop a suite of resources aimed at supporting young people in identifying the skills they have gained outwith formal qualifications.

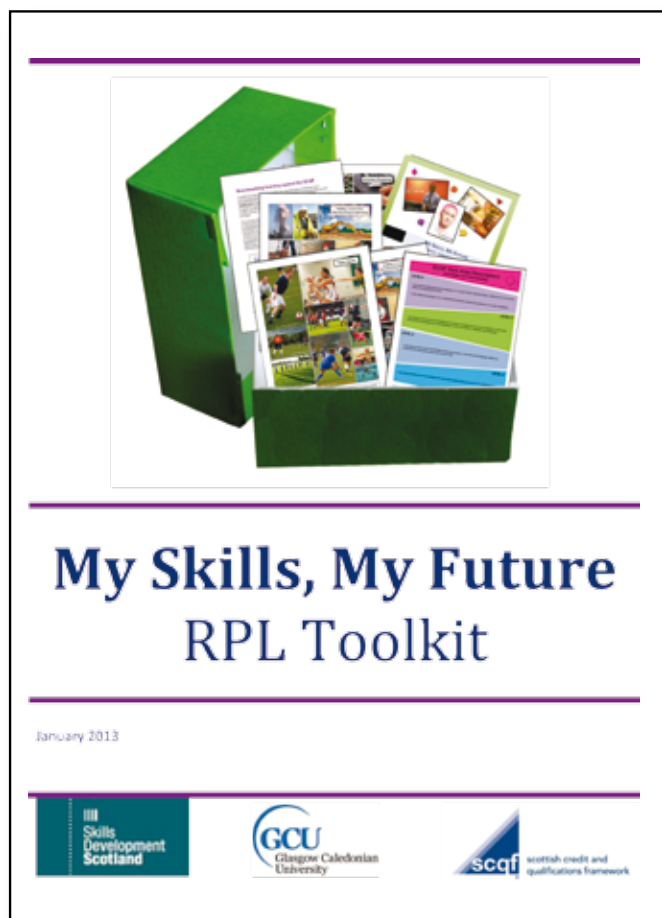
The pack, which is funded by Skills Development Scotland, is aimed primarily at young people who have left, or may be about to leave school with few or no formal qualifications. However, it can also be used with young people who may have been made redundant from their first job, adult returners or the long term unemployed.

Individuals work with advisers to identify their skills which are then benchmarked against the SCQF and the resource also helps them to develop a set of competency based statements that can be used in a CV or in job applications. Individuals then work with advisers to agree a future plan of action based on their strengths.

The resources have already been used with a range of young people including those leaving care (see page 11) which has identified a number of benefits:

- Helps individuals clearly understand their range of skills
- Helps in supporting a decision making process regarding future career or further training
- Helps individuals understand where their learning sits on the SCQF which helps build self-confidence and raises aspirations
- The resources are benchmarked against the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes
- Helps to generate evidence towards certain SQA awards such as the Employability Award at level 2 and some Personal Development Awards

Resource packs have now been produced and members of the team at SCQF Partnership and GCU LEAD will be running a number of free training sessions over the coming months to support advisers in using the pack. Dates for these will be available soon. Check the Events section of the SCQF website for further details - [www.scqf.org.uk/News/Events](http://www.scqf.org.uk/News/Events).





## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) USING THE MSMF TOOLKIT WITH LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE

CELCIS was commissioned by Education Scotland to carry out a pilot study and research evaluation between January and June 2012. The research showed that the My Skills My Future (MSMF) toolkit is a valuable resource for young people from a looked after background.

Young people who have been looked after frequently leave school with few or no formal qualifications, but these same young people often have full and varied life experiences. Their experiences may have led to maturity, independence and skills that cannot be assessed in the traditional way. It is important to recognise and build on these characteristics at the period of transition when young people prepare to leave school.

Professionals from a variety of backgrounds within children's services undertook multi-agency Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) advisor training using the MSMF toolkit at Glasgow Caledonian University. Eight advisors and eight young people completed the research evaluation, which used a combination of questionnaires, interviews and observation to address four main themes:

- Were advisors able to adapt effectively to the role of RPL advisor with the training and support given?
- What were the outcomes of undertaking RPL profiling?
- Did the young people find the profiling approach useful in clarifying learning and employment ambitions?
- Were the existing materials suitable for looked-after children?

Advisors were able to adapt to the role of RPL advisor, irrespective of their professional background. Benefits of RPL profiling for many of the young people included resilience-enhancing properties, such as engagement with an interested adult, recognition of skills and increased self-esteem. In addition, many advisors indicated an increased awareness of career options by the young people. Both advisors and young people stated that the materials would be suitable for use with looked after children. According to one advisor, *"It gives the worker a lot of information about them in a very natural way, and in a very non-threatening way. And if you've got a good memory... you can always use pieces of the interview to go back time and time again."*

By applying the toolkit in this way, the MSMF toolkit has the potential to benefit young people from a looked after background through a combination of resilience-enhancing properties and increased awareness of career options.

The full report can be found at

[www.celcis.org/resources/entry/recognition\\_of\\_prior\\_learning\\_and\\_looked\\_after\\_young\\_people](http://www.celcis.org/resources/entry/recognition_of_prior_learning_and_looked_after_young_people)

For details of advisor training days, please see

[www.celcis.org/training\\_and\\_events/learning\\_and\\_development](http://www.celcis.org/training_and_events/learning_and_development) and [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)



## THE CERTIFICATE OF WORK READINESS

The new Certificate of Work Readiness is a unique qualification that aims to help young people who are ready for their first experience of the world of work but need some guided support.

Skills Development Scotland developed the Certificate with input from business leaders. It includes an employer assessed “real life” work experience placement that gives young people a meaningful qualification and a credible standard that future employers can recognise and trust.

Successful completion of the award, credit rated by SQA, offers the young person greatly improved employability and transferable skills such as self evaluation, planning and goal setting that can be applied to any workplace.

In developing the Certificate of Work Readiness (CWR), Skills Development Scotland is helping young people gain valuable work experience while also responding to employers’ feedback that they need more work-ready young people for entry level jobs. A distinctive feature of the certificate is that it is supported and endorsed by employers and employers’ organisations.

Motherwell employer Kevin Battersby said: *“The CWR is excellent because it’s assessed by employers. They are the ones who see young people in the work environment and can give feedback about real, on-the-job attitude and things like time-keeping and attendance. It’s great to be able to encourage young people as they move from school and college to the world of work. It can be difficult for them at times but it’s important to give them the support they need.”*



Karen Murray from Skills Development Scotland who was involved in the development of the new Certificate, said: *“We created a customised work experience unit; Practical Work Place Skills (SCQF level 4), which is supported by four SQA National Units at SCQF level 4 and together this forms the Certificate of Work Readiness. The units are designed to support young people before they begin their work placement by helping them develop the generic skills and knowledge required by employers to sustain employment. The customised work experience unit provides a robust framework for ensuring that employers commit to a form of “contract” with learners which should set out expectations on both sides, including the criteria young people will be judged against.”*

Learning providers also have a role to play in ensuring each contract is appropriate and is shared with the learners before their placement begins. The agreement will influence the quality of the work experience placement and allows the employer to be part of the assessment process.

Young people will get a minimum of 190 hours work experience during which they will be given the opportunity to reflect on their performance before they are assessed by the employer. This approach means the Certificate will be well regarded by other employers as it is a form of portable reference.

The certificate is targeted at young people who are aged 16-19, have a positive “can do” attitude to get into work but need to develop extra skills, and could benefit from some help in getting and keeping work. They should be ready to start operating at SCQF level 4 in terms of their core skills and an entry requirement of SCQF level 3 in communication and numeracy is recommended. The programme is tailored to individual needs but on average it will take 10-12 weeks working five days a week.

Young people will start with two-three weeks with a learning provider to help them prepare for the work placement. They will then be with an employer, usually four days a week, and will spend the other day with their learning provider to further develop Employability and Career Management Skills.

The certificate fits well with provision requirements for Stage 3 of the strategic skills pipeline, and subject to eligibility, may be funded through the Employability Fund. The model could also be integrated into other programmes of learning and for different age groups of learners.

The CWR has been piloted in five areas of Scotland and evaluated externally. The response from employers and young people has been very positive. Aaron Shane, one of the first CWR graduates said: *“After I left school I did a bit of work experience but it wasn’t going anywhere. I am quite a motivated person but it can get really frustrating when you can’t find a job. The CWR is a great boost because it helps you with things like interview techniques and makes you realise the workplace is very different from school or college.”*

At the end of his placement, Aaron was taken on by leading electrical equipment supplier Edmundson Electrical as a warehousing assistant.

*“It’s a great opportunity and it would not have happened without the CWR.”* he explained.

Approval for this award is through SQA. For more information on the Certificate of Work Readiness, please contact Skills Development Scotland at [cwr@sds.co.uk](mailto:cwr@sds.co.uk)





## ADDITIONAL PLACES FOR ARTICULATION IN SCOTLAND

**Andrew Comrie, Director of the Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife and Borders Regional Articulation Hub (ELRAH) considers the value of the SCQF in delivering the additional 1,020 additional articulation places for the Scottish University Sector announced recently by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)**

The announcement of an additional 1020 articulation places made by the SFC in its circular on outcome agreement indicative funding for Scottish Universities for 2013-14 is good news for college students planning to use HN qualifications to gain entry to degree study at advanced levels.

For those HEIs that have been active in articulation for some time, the additional places are on top of the articulation places they already provide to the college sector. There are some 'new kids on the block' too who, until now, have not guaranteed articulation places to HN students wishing to enter degree study.

SFC guidance makes it clear that although the places are allocated to HEIs, it is on condition that the additional places are allocated to routes (programmes) delivered in collaboration with college partners with either the first and/or the second year of the programme being delivered by colleges. When students are recruited they know they're on a programme offering a guaranteed route to a degree programme with the partner HEI, albeit that in the first one and/or two years they may be following an HNC or HND programme. HEI partners are charged with ensuring that the programmes in the route are aligned. Experience shows that you can't leave this to chance. The alignment process needs college/HEI programme teams to work together to consider gaps in content between the two programmes, review learning and teaching methods, align assessment methods and ensure learners have the skills to study and succeed when they make the transition to SCQF levels 9 and 10. The SCQF gives us such an advantage in achieving this alignment. We start from a position of knowing the SCQF level of each qualification in the route. From here, the SCQF Level Descriptors provide a useful benchmark to help teams specify content at the right level and choose appropriate assessment methods. It also helps us to identify ways to embed and credit rate the development of academic skills in HN provision so necessary to enable a smooth transition to degree study. The misalignment of assessment has been a problem in 2+2 provision in the past and is something that is being reviewed currently by the SQA as part of their HN articulation enhancement project. In the future, it should be possible for college HN teams to work with their HEI counterparts to devise appropriate assessment at the correct SCQF level for HN programmes offering guaranteed routes to degrees.

Further details of the allocation of places and guidance can be obtained from the SFC website:

Guidance [www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Guidance\\_06032013\\_Articulation\\_scheme.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Guidance_06032013_Articulation_scheme.pdf)  
Indicative Funded Articulation Places for 2013-14  
[www.sfc.ac.uk/newsinformation/Circulars/2012/SFC1812.aspx](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/newsinformation/Circulars/2012/SFC1812.aspx)



## MEET THE EXECUTIVE TEAM – PART NINE

### **Katie McKenna:**

#### Communications & Marketing Support Officer

#### TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

My career started with what I thought was a temporary summer post as an administrator with the Automobile Association. Both my parents worked for the AA and I never imagined I'd find myself embarking upon a 15-year career there.

I worked in various departments but was always very keen to learn about PR and Communications. So, I spent early mornings, lunch hours and weekends learning the role of an Information Officer/Broadcaster within AA Roadwatch, and after 6 months of hard work I was offered a full time position broadcasting traffic and travel information to commuters across the country. After 4 years, I went on to become Senior Information Officer & Broadcaster until the company was bought over and operations in Scotland were closed down.

I spent the next 7 years with MindStore International, a training company which provides corporate and public personal development programmes. I was responsible for Marketing, Media Relations and Event Management. When Social Media was born I immersed myself in it and created online communities on Facebook and Twitter.

I've also spent the last year working on a part-time flexi basis with Inrix Media as a Broadcast Editor. In January this year I took up my part-time post with SCQF Partnership.

#### WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITHIN THE SCQFP?

My role within the SCQF is to support my colleague Sam Houten Feeley with a range of communications and marketing activities and to ensure that the SCQF is fully represented via social media.

#### TELL US SOMETHING INTERESTING ABOUT YOURSELF!

I have a diploma in Therapeutic Massage...so if you've ever got a sore back...

## UPDATE ON ECVET EXPERTS PROJECT

ECVET (the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) allows for the accumulation and transfer of credits gained through the recognition of learning outcomes in vocational education and training (VET) across Europe. The aim of ECVET is to facilitate the mobility of the workforce across Europe, giving individuals more control over their learning experiences. In 2012, the SCQFP was identified by Scottish Government as the National Contact Point (NCP) for ECVET for Scotland. It is working with the NCPs for England, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure a joined up approach for the duration of the project which runs until December 2013. Project activity so far has included:

Flyer - over 1,500 copies of the flyer have been distributed at over 30 different events. Copies are available by request.

Website - the website, [www.ecvetexperts.org.uk](http://www.ecvetexperts.org.uk), has received over 4000 page views since it was launched at the end of July 2012. It is updated every month with new documents and was revamped in 2013 to make it more user-friendly.

Guidance Materials - the guidance note was launched at the end of October 2012 and updated in April 2013. Over 850 hard copies have been distributed and over 600 copies have been sent electronically to stakeholders. It is available to download from the Project website at <http://www.ecvetexperts.org.uk/getting-started/>.

Four dedicated events - the first country specific event took place at Colleges Scotland on 5 December 2012. 21 delegates from colleges, VET providers and the SQA attended and feedback on the session was positive. The second event was held in Northern Ireland on 1 March 2013, with events in England and Wales to follow later this year.

We'd like to remind you that support is available for colleges and others interested in ECVET. This can be requested online at [www.ecvetexperts.org.uk/experts/](http://www.ecvetexperts.org.uk/experts/).

## ENGAGE FOR EDUCATION

The Scottish Government and partners are developing a new benchmarking tool to help local authorities and secondary schools to analyse, compare and improve the performance of pupils in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. A prototype will be available in the Summer to obtain user feedback prior to the launch of the tool in August 2014.

The new tool will:

- Be a new, easier to use system that will replace the current STACs (Standard Tables and Charts) and support the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Be available to a wider group of users in secondary schools including classroom teachers and users within special schools and school college partnerships.
- Include a wider range of SCQF credit-rated qualifications and learning programmes.

Support Curriculum for Excellence by developing greater understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in the senior phase. This will include promoting the use of a wide range of evidence of performance.

The tool is being developed through a Project Board involving Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority and representatives from local authorities and secondary schools. Engagement work is also taking place with a range of representatives from different sectors of education.

Future news and information gathering work for the project will be provided through Education Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence website and Engage for Education. The first tranche of resources placed on Education Scotland's website includes information about the national measures which will be included in the tool.

For more information visit the website at: [www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/howisprogressassessed/qualifications/benchmarking/index.asp](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/howisprogressassessed/qualifications/benchmarking/index.asp)

## LEADING FLEXIBLE LEARNING FRAMEWORKS IN NEW EU STATES



Edinburgh Napier University was recently invited to present to a number of pre-accession EU member states on the benefits and economic impact which can be achieved through more flexible use of learning frameworks in response to learner needs. Using their expertise as an SCQF Credit Rating Body, Edinburgh Napier is leading a project to embed and adopt Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in new learning frameworks from the outset.

At a joint conference in Zagreb in December 2012, Jamie Brogan from Edinburgh Napier presented around two hundred government, industry and educational experts from across Eastern Europe with the benefits of RPL based on SCQF principles. The presentation highlighted the benefits of RPL adoption to businesses and individuals as well as to education, society and the wider economy. The international RPL seminar was organised jointly by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the Institute for the Development of Education, and delivered as a joint event for the wider network of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERISEE).

The URPL project has highlighted the SCQF framework and its underlying principles for RPL as one of the critical success factors in enabling widespread and successful use of RPL in Scotland. The project has focused particularly on highlighting the needs of the learner and ensuring that the education system is flexible enough to support these. Pilot activities for RPL assessment will take place in Poland in 2013, and the project results presented at a joint conference with the European RPL network in Cracow in September. Of particular interest have been some of the cultural differences in trying to adopt a learner-centred approach and how to overcome these in practice.

To find out more about these partnerships please contact Jamie Brogan at Edinburgh Napier University, [j.brogan@napier.ac.uk](mailto:j.brogan@napier.ac.uk), or look at the URPL website [www.u-rpl.eu](http://www.u-rpl.eu).





## CLD CREDIT RATING PROJECT

The SCQFP, with funding from the Scottish Government, has reached the end of the first year (2012/13) of a three year project to support Community Learning and Development (CLD) organisations to have their learning programmes credit rated onto the SCQF.

The first year has seen a great deal of success with ten programmes being credit rated on to the Framework. This means that valuable learning gained in a community setting will now carry a formal SCQF level and a number of SCQF credit points. Those learners successfully completing the programmes will gain formal recognition for their learning and be able to compare this to other mainstream qualifications in Scotland, in turn allowing them to more effectively articulate the value of their achievement to others and to plan their next steps in learning. For some learners involved the award of SCQF credit could be the first formal recognition of their skills, allowing them to take pride in their achievements and perhaps re-engage them with learning.

The ten organisations supported in 2012/13 through the project are Moray Council, Children 1st, East Renfrewshire Council, The Boys Brigade, Glasgow Life, Rag Tag 'n' Textile, The Scottish Community Mediation Centre, Volunteer Centre Edinburgh, Renfrewshire Council and The Linked Work Training Trust. All of the learning programmes were selected with reference to criteria set down by the Scottish Government and also against the SCQF criteria for credit rating. All programmes are voluntary in terms of enrolment and non-formal in approach with learning influenced by learners' aspirations. All ten have been formally credit rated by either the SQA Credit Rating Service or Edinburgh Napier University's Centre for Credit Rating and for 2013/14 we will also be working with Kilmarnock College.

This year (2013/14) the SCQF Partnership, through a steering group, has selected a further ten programmes via an open application process and will be providing one-to-one support, guidance and training to ensure that all programmes can be successfully recognised on the SCQF. The SCQF Partnership will be using lessons learned from this project to inform conversations with the sector more widely and we hope to highlight the benefits of SCQF credit rating to others using a CLD approach to deliver learning programmes.

For more information on any of these projects please contact Ryan Reed at the SCQF Partnership: [R.Reed@SCQF.org.uk](mailto:R.Reed@SCQF.org.uk)

# DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING THE NEW NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is responsible for developing and delivering the new National Qualifications, which are being introduced to support Curriculum for Excellence. The new National 1 Units and National 2 to National 5 Courses will be introduced in schools and colleges in session 2013/14.

## SCQF ready reckoner

SQA's interactive ready reckoner has recently been updated to show when the new National Qualifications will be introduced and where they fit on the SCQF. You can access the ready reckoner at [www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner](http://www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner).

## National 4 Added Value Unit assessment

SQA is developing Unit assessments for National 4 Added Value Units. Use of these assessments will be mandatory for the first two sessions of the new qualifications in 2013/14 and 2014/15. The first and second releases are available and teachers and lecturers can arrange access to these documents through their SQA Co-ordinator. A further release will be available at the end of April 2013. To find out more about National 4 Added Value Unit assessment, visit the subject pages of SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects).

## National 5 coursework information

SQA has published its first and second release of coursework information to support teachers and lecturers and to help prepare candidates for the National 5 Course assessment.

They have been published in two parts: general assessment information and coursework assessment tasks. General assessment information is available on the subject pages of SQA's website at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects). Teachers and lecturers can arrange access to the candidate coursework assessment tasks by contacting their SQA Co-ordinator. A further release will be available at the end of April 2013.

## National 5 Specimen Question Papers

Specimen Question Papers for Courses at National 5 have been published on SQA's website for subjects that will include a question paper examination as part of the National 5 Course Assessment. These can be accessed via the subject pages at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects). The specimen papers illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the Question Papers that candidates will sit from Session 2013/14 as part of the National 5 Course, and also include marking instructions. They have been developed to help teachers and lecturers prepare candidates for the National 5 Course assessment.

## Unit Assessment Support for National 2 to National 5

SQA has published Unit Assessment Support packages for Units in the new National Courses from National 2 to National 5. The first and second packs are now available and teachers and lecturers can arrange access through their SQA Co-ordinator. The third Unit Assessment Support package for National 2 to National 5 will be published at the end of April 2013. Assessment support materials for the new Higher will be available by the end of April 2014. Further information on Unit Assessment Support can be found on each of the subject pages at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects).

## Advanced Higher

All final documents for the new Advanced Higher Courses will be published on SQA's website at the end of April 2013. The Course Specifications, Unit Specifications and Course Assessment Specifications will provide the mandatory Course content and assessment requirements for every new Course and the information required to deliver them. The Course and Unit Support Notes will provide practitioners with advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the new qualifications. The new Advanced Higher Courses will be introduced in 2015/16.

## Recognising Positive Achievement

SQA is putting in place arrangements to support candidates who don't achieve the external assessment of a National 5 Course, but who may be able to pass the Course at National 4 instead. These arrangements are referred to as Recognising Positive Achievement. A guide on these arrangements is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfedelivery](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfedelivery).

## SQA Co-ordinator conferences

SQA will hold six events across Scotland in June 2013 for SQA Co-ordinators and other associated representatives. These events will offer SQA Co-ordinators the opportunity to attend information sessions and training workshops, which will help support them with any changes to delivery processes during implementation of the new qualifications and the 2014 exams. Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfedelivery](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfedelivery).

## Support

SQA's Curriculum for Excellence Liaison Team is continuing to work with schools, colleges, local authorities, employers and training providers to provide information, support and guidance on all aspects of the development and implementation of the new National Qualifications (visit [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeteam](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeteam)).

You can keep in touch with SQA on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ScottishQualificationsAuthority](http://www.facebook.com/ScottishQualificationsAuthority), follow us on Twitter @sqanews, and subscribe to SQA's YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/user/SQAonline](http://www.youtube.com/user/SQAonline).

## SQA'S CREDIT RATING SERVICE – A CASE STUDY

At SQA we are proud of the relationships we build with our customers and are always keen to develop these further. One such customer is the Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC), one of the first organisations to use the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) credit rating service. The College took part in a pilot back in 2005 when they submitted the Firefighter Foundation Programme (FFFP) for credit rating. The feedback from the pilot helped to shape the credit rating service and its associated processes and procedures.

Through adhering to the SCQF requirement of receiving annual reports from those organisations with credit rated provision, the SQA has maintained good contact with the College over the intervening years. A good working relationship has been formed and we are able to progress submissions in a straight forward and timely manner.

In the 8 years since the SFSC made its first submission we have credit rated many of their programmes and continue to do so. The programmes already credit rated are listed opposite:

SCQF Level	Learning Programme
12	
11	
10	Scottish National Fire Investigator (12 Credit Points)
9	
8	Breathing Apparatus Instructor (11 Credit Points) Road Traffic Collision Instructor (10 Credit Points) Compartment Fire Behaviour Training Instructor (11 Credit Points)
7	ICL 1 Module A (6 Credit Points) ICL 1B (2 Credit Points) Rope Rescue Supervisor (3 Credit Points)
6	Rope Rescue Technician (6 Credit Points) FFFP Module 6 - Breathing Apparatus Training (9 Credit Points)
5	FFFP Module 1 - Support Elements (4 Credit Points) FFFP Module 7 - Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (5 Credit Points) FFFP Module 8 - Scenarios & Consolidation Exercise (4 Credit Points)
4	FFFP Module 2 - Task & Task Management (17 Credit Points) FFFP Module 4 - Road Traffic Collision (4 Credit Points) FFFP Module 5 - Community Fire Safety (3 Credit Points)
3	
2	
1	

## SCOTTISH FIRE SERVICES COLLEGE COMMENT

Jes Eckford, Head of Programme Delivery & Development at the College, said that *“The Scottish Fire Services College has placed an important emphasis on ensuring its programmes of learning are underpinned by cost effective 3rd party quality assurance to ensure the academic credibility of its teaching, learning and assessment processes. The above credit rating successes have contributed to ensuring a standardised training programme delivery to firefighters and fire officers across the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Moreover, the credit rating enables our students to understand and compare their successes with other Scottish learning programmes and qualifications on the SCQF. It assists our students and instructional staff in continuing to provide a high level service with the delivery of professionally recognised learning programmes. The recent successes in 2012/2013 have been achieved through working in partnership with Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, Skills for Fire & Rescue (Scotland), Strathclyde Fire & Rescue, the Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland and the SQA.*

*SCQF credit rating of further Incident Command and Tactical Ventilation (Instructors) programmes of learning are currently being progressed to support training and development across these specialist fire service areas within Scotland.*

*The new Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to maintain the credit rating of its learning programmes under the auspices of the Scottish Fire Service College delivering learning programmes across three training campuses in East, West and Northern Scotland.”*



# WE WANT YOUR COMMENTS

Please get in touch to let us know your thoughts on SCQF Update by contacting Sam Houten Feeley on [samantha@scqf.org.uk](mailto:samantha@scqf.org.uk)

We would also like to remind you to contact us if you have any interesting features or stories for the next edition of Update. All contributions gratefully received!

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