

Annex C: guidance for category assignment

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please step through the document from the beginning, answering the questions one by one. Once you have arrived at a qualification category use the description to check that the category is appropriate to the qualification. If you think that multiple categories may be appropriate for the qualification please use the category that appears first in the document.

Question 1:

Has the qualification or assessment been developed to specific **criteria or conditions in addition to the General Conditions of Recognition?**

Yes

No

- **Advanced Extension Award**
- **End-Point Assessment**
- **English For Speakers of Other Languages**
- **Essential Skills (Northern Ireland)**

- **Functional Skills**
- **GCE A level**
- **GCE AS level**
- **GCSE (9 to 1)**
- **GCSE (A* to G)**
- **Project**

Continue to the next page

Question 2:
Is the qualification of a category that is taken as the core of a learner's curriculum in mainstream secondary or tertiary education?

Yes

- Other General Qualification

These qualifications are academic in nature and are often taken in schools and colleges as part of secondary and tertiary education. Often the aim of these qualifications is to secure a body of knowledge and progress learners through to higher levels of academic study. Examples are baccalaureates, the Cambridge Pre-U, international GCSEs, free standing mathematics and entry level qualifications in academic subjects.

No

Continue to the next page

Question 3:

Is the qualification vocational in nature (does it relate to a particular job or subject area), or does it teach knowledge or skills that are essential for employment?

Yes

Continue to the next page

No

- Other Life Skills Qualification

These qualifications are not in academic subjects. They are not related to a particular area of work. They are often in life skills, literacy, numeracy, basic IT skills, preparation for working life, employability skills or citizenship but do not fall into another defined category (Functional Skills, ESOL or Essential Skills).

Question 4:
Is the qualification a performing arts graded examination?

Yes

- Performing Arts Graded Examination

These qualifications are in music, dance, speech, drama and musical theatre, and demonstrate competence and artistry in each specialism or discipline. They are concerned with progressive mastery in defined stages: Initial/Preparatory etc. (Entry Level), Grades 1-3 (Level 1), 4-5 (Level 2) and 6-8 (Level 3); and additionally, in dance, Intermediate Foundation (Level 2), Intermediate & Advanced Foundation (Level 3) and Advanced 1 & 2 (Level 4). They normally have three available passing grades (Pass, Merit, Distinction). They are externally assessed by means of a practical demonstration of the knowledge and skills required and a series of exercises or tasks, or a written examination in theory. Also included are performance and theory examinations which progress beyond the qualifications above to higher levels and are based on the same design principles.

No

Continue to the next page

Question 5:

Should a learner reasonably expect to move directly into employment **or progress significantly in employment** on completing the qualification?

Yes

No

- Occupational Qualification

These qualifications have a clear and direct link to one or more occupations, and an individual completing the qualifications could reasonably expect to have the knowledge, skills and understanding to move directly into skilled employment in the occupation **or make significant progression in employment** as a result. They are likely to be based on recognised occupational standards with at least some work based or simulated work based assessment.

Continue to the next page

Question 6:

Is the qualification in a particular vocational sector, providing a learner with an introduction **or** allowing them to develop some job-related skills?

Yes

- Vocationally-Related Qualification

These qualifications are broader in scope than Occupational Qualifications and may be introductions to an area of work without developing a recognised competence or often leading directly to employment. They often certificate taught programmes delivered in a classroom or workshop setting. Next steps might include **continuation in employment**, progression into employment in the related sector, apprenticeship or the development and certification of competence through occupational qualifications. Assessment often combines internal written or practical assignments with external written or on-screen tests.

No

- Other Vocational Qualification

These are qualifications in vocational subjects that are not Occupational Qualifications or Vocationally-Related Qualifications. Included are qualifications that are work-related but may be relevant across multiple vocations (health and safety, first aid, assessing competence at work), and those often taken by individuals in their spare time to support their hobbies.