

Overview of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

The existing national qualification frameworks (England)

	National Qualification Framework (NQF)	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
Level 8	Specialist award	Doctorate
Level 7	Diploma in translation	Masters degree
Level 6	Diploma in management	Honours degree
Level 5	Advanced diploma in administrative management	Intermediate – Foundation degree, Diploma of HE
Level 4	Certificate of school business management	Certificate of HE
Level 3	A Level Certificate in personnel practice	
Level 2	GCSE grade A*-C SWiS certificate	
Level 1	GCSE grade D-G NVQ in business administration	
Entry Level	Certificate in adult literacy	

Source: www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/nqf_changes.pdf



Existing qualification Types

- FE delivered:
 - Occupational
 - Vocationally related
- HE delivered:
 - Certificates/diplomas
 - Foundation degrees
 - Degrees
 - Postgraduate qualifications

Occupational Qualifications

- **Examples:**
 - Support Work in Schools qualifications; NVQs
- **Characteristics:**
 - Based on standards
 - Contain core and options
 - Assess – Train – Assess model
 - Assessed in the workplace
- **Suitable for those who:**
 - Are already in the role covered by the qualification
 - Want confirmation that they are working to nationally agreed standards
 - Have a school willing to provide a training mentor and development opportunities, and to support the assessment process

Vocationally related qualifications

- **Examples:**
 - Level 2 Certificate in Business Administration
- **Characteristics:**
 - Related to knowledge requirements of standards
 - Delivered via a taught programme
 - Assessment may include case studies, extended writing or tests
- **Suitable for those who:**
 - Are fairly new to a role and want to develop knowledge and understanding
 - Are already occupationally competent but want to deepen knowledge in a specialist area
 - Aspire to a new or more senior role
 - Have sufficient literacy and/or numerical skills to cope with the assessment

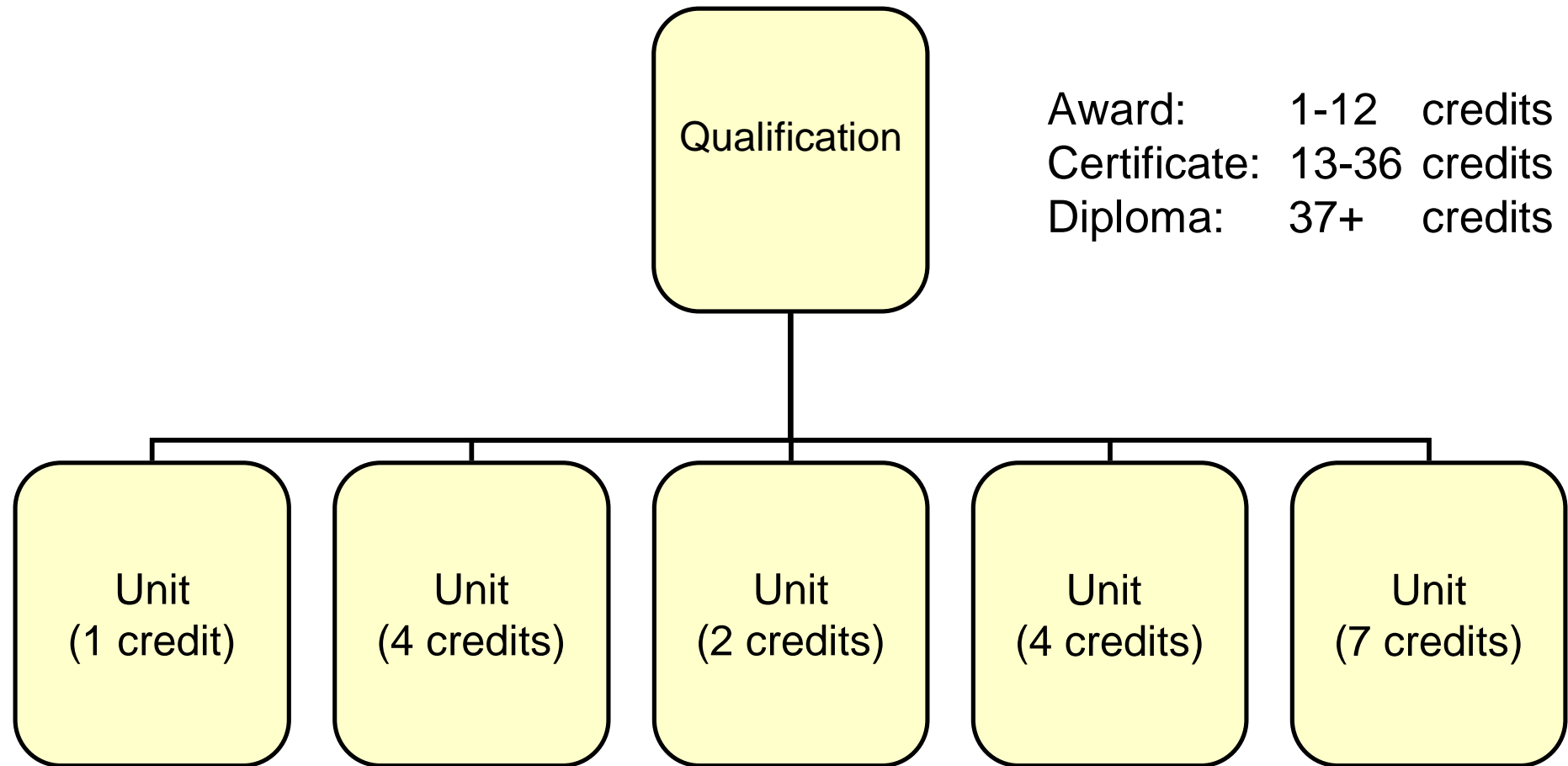
What's changing - the key elements of the QCF

- Qualifications composed of units, each worth a specific number of credits
- Rules of combination (mandatory and optional units combined into qualifications)
- Units may be shared across more than one qualification
- Qualifications no longer have to be either vocational or occupational but can be combined

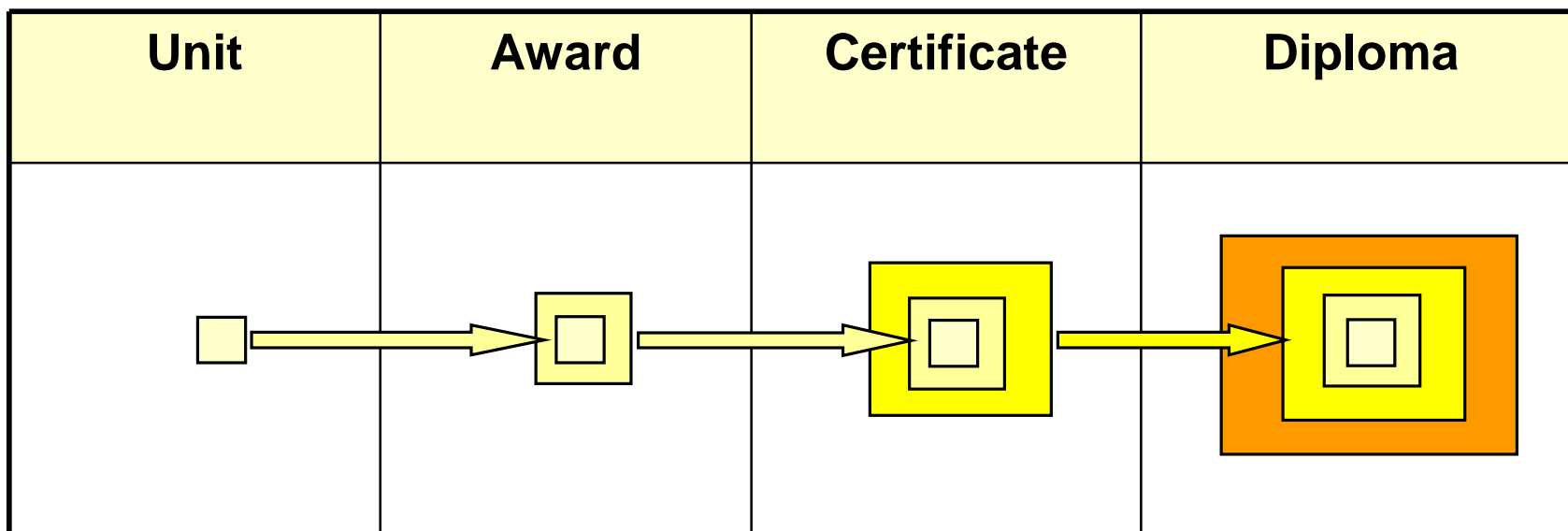
Size and level

- Every unit and qualification in the framework will have a credit value and a level
- **Three sizes of qualifications**
 - Award, certificate, diploma
- **Nine levels**
 - The level of a unit of qualification shows you how difficult it is
 - To help understand the levels useful to know: GCSEs (A*-C) are level 2, A levels are level 3 and a PhD degree is level 8
- **Credits**
 - 1 credit = 10 hours of learning time (the amount of time and effort it takes to complete)

Each qualification will be made up of units, each of which is worth a certain number of credits



How nested units work



Level and credit



The Learner Record

- **When a learner completes a unit they are awarded the relevant credit(s) which are recorded electronically on their learner record (LR)**
- **Learners can access their LR online to:**
 - **Track their progress towards achieving a qualification**
 - **Explore potential routes to achievement (find qualifications for which they have already achieved some credit)**
 - **Give permission to others (including employers and providers) to view the information contained within it.**

QCF Design Features

The QCF will be simpler to understand because:

- it introduces common vocabulary across qualifications
- it will reduce the amount of duplication within qualifications
- it will make it easier to compare how challenging a qualification is and how much work it involves
- it enables more approachable, incremental ways of learning and training

Benefits for Learners

- Offers more freedom, choice and flexibility
- Gives easy access to information about the commitment needed for different routes to achievement, letting learners balance that commitment with family, work and other responsibilities
- Allows them to build up credits at their own pace and combine them in a way that will help them get where they want to be
- Enables them to transfer credits between qualifications to avoid having to repeat their learning
- All their achievements recorded on an electronic learner record, encouraging them and others to value their past achievements



Benefits for learning providers

- Enables them to design more flexible programmes, suitable to the individual needs of learners
- Helps them improve retention and progression rates by recognising smaller steps of achievement more frequently
- Can track all learners' achievements through the use of a unique learner number (ULN) and an individual's electronic learner record, giving providers standard information about each learner's past achievements
- Helps them to describe achievements to employers and learners in a language that is easy to understand

Benefits for employers

- Helps them to measure quickly the level and size of achievements of prospective employees
- Enables them to get in-house training recognised within a national framework
- Describes levels of achievement in terms everyone can understand
- Makes training options and pathways clear, helping employees and employers find the right training for their learning and organisation's needs

Sector qualifications strategy for school support staff

TDA has proposed new competency-based qualifications to replace SWiS and the NVQ in supporting teaching and learning in schools. The new qualifications will:

- build on the best features of SWiS and NVQs
- be available at levels 2 and 3 of the framework and, potentially, in three sizes (award, certificate and diploma)
- be more flexible, enabling progression and transfer and recognise prior achievement
- meet Qualifications and Credit Framework criteria
- use common assessment criteria
- make use of units from other relevant sectors
- be available from 2010



STL 14 Support Individuals during therapy sessions

- This unit is for those who support pupils during therapy sessions such as speech and language or physiotherapy. It involves working under the direction of a qualified therapist to support him/her to run the therapy sessions and may involve supporting the pupil to practice therapy exercises between sessions run by the therapist
- Unit contains three elements
 - Prepare and maintain environments, equipment and materials prior to, during and after therapy sessions
 - Support individuals prior to and with therapy sessions
 - Observe and provide feedback on therapy sessions

STL 14 post December 2010

- At the end of February 2010 TDA advise that the sector skills body Skills for Care and Development are developing a unit based on the current STL 14.
- Once this is available TDA intend to incorporate the unit into the Supporting Teaching and Learning qualifications
- Teaching Assistants who already have NVQ Supporting Teaching and Learning could take this one unit as CPD and record it on their electronic learner record
- From September 2010 Teaching Assistants undertaking the new Award / Certificate Supporting Teaching and Learning (possibly through Hampshire Teaching and Leadership College) could chose this unit as an option
- Possibly involve therapists in training and assessment



Role profile LSA 3

- Hampshire already has a role profile for senior, highly skilled teaching assistants in LSA 3.
- Section 11 of the role profiles states
 - ‘An LSA 3, due to training and expertise, will normally carry a specific specialist responsibility (e.g Speech therapy) and support and develop other staff in the school when help is needed in this area. ‘
- It is not envisaged that the LSA 3 post holder would work exclusively within therapeutic fields, more they would support qualified therapists as part of an overall teaching and learning support role within the school

Summary

- New qualification structure from September 2010 would lend itself to accreditation against national occupational standards for teaching assistants undergoing training
- There is already a role profile within Hampshire schools that incorporates this area of work
- Early consultation with Headteacher groups advisable
- Scope for involvement of professionals from outside schools in delivery of training and assessment
- Cost implications

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