



**Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) response to the invitation of QQI to make a submission as
on the stakeholder perspective of the benefits and achievements of the NFQ.
(May 2023)**

Introduction

The TUI would like to thank QQI for the opportunity to make this submission on the topic of the stakeholder perspective of the benefits and achievements of the NFQ. The TUI represents teachers, lecturers and staff (21,000+) in Education and Training Boards (ETBs), voluntary secondary schools, Community and Comprehensive (C&C) schools, Youthreach, institutes of technology and technological universities and those working in out of school services.

Key Elements from a TUI Perspective

- There is an issue emerging of provision of levels 6 & 7.
- The Minister is indicating moving apprenticeships. Some TUs are reducing levels 6 & 7.
- There is terminology confusion between certs and higher certs. The Framework does need to be clarified in relation to these.
- Levels 7 upwards needs to be benchmarked internationally.
- There are four different qualification systems in the UK.
- The NFQ needs reform in its use of terminology and language.
- There are significant benefits of the NFQ overall.
- Levels 6 & 7 are valuable in differentiating between provision of qualifications in legacy universities and the IoT/TU sector.
- There is a danger of a new enrolment policy in TU Dublin homogenising different enrolment cohorts in different parts of the new TU.

- Education is a public good and should be available, at no cost, to all who wish to avail of it.
- Loss of identity in different institutions is a risk.
- There is a risk of courses vanishing.
- The provision to students is at risk.
- The points race focuses people's mind on the more points a course requires therefore it is in same way an automatically better course.
- There is a need to value apprenticeships.
- Benchmarking NFQ and EQF and even FE and HE can be complicated sometimes.
- Communication is needed around how NQF and EQF match up.
- The workings of the NFQ comes up in Teaching Council discussions when international qualifications may not match up with the Irish NFQ.
- RTCs were genuinely serving local need.

Conclusion

The NFQ has made a significant contribution to the Irish education system over the twenty years that the NFQ has been in existence. However, some changes are now timely.

Recommendations

The TUI would like to make the following recommendations to QQI:

- An update to the NFQ would be welcome.
- Clarity needs to be provided around the margins of Levels 5-7.
- Greater student and staff migration internationally means that closer alignment between the Irish NFQ and international models may now be beneficial.
- Regional provision needs to be valued.
- The core functions of the TU/IoT sector need to be valued.

Ends

David Duffy (Education/Research Officer, TUI), dduffy@tui.ie, 01 4922588