

REACH⁺

Senior Cycle

Career and College Preparation Programme

Classroom Workbook & E-Learning

Qualifications
and Levels

Qualifications and Levels

- Most qualifications available in Ireland fit into the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), which divides qualifications into **ten levels**. Entry at Level 1 is at the bottom and Level 10 is at the top.

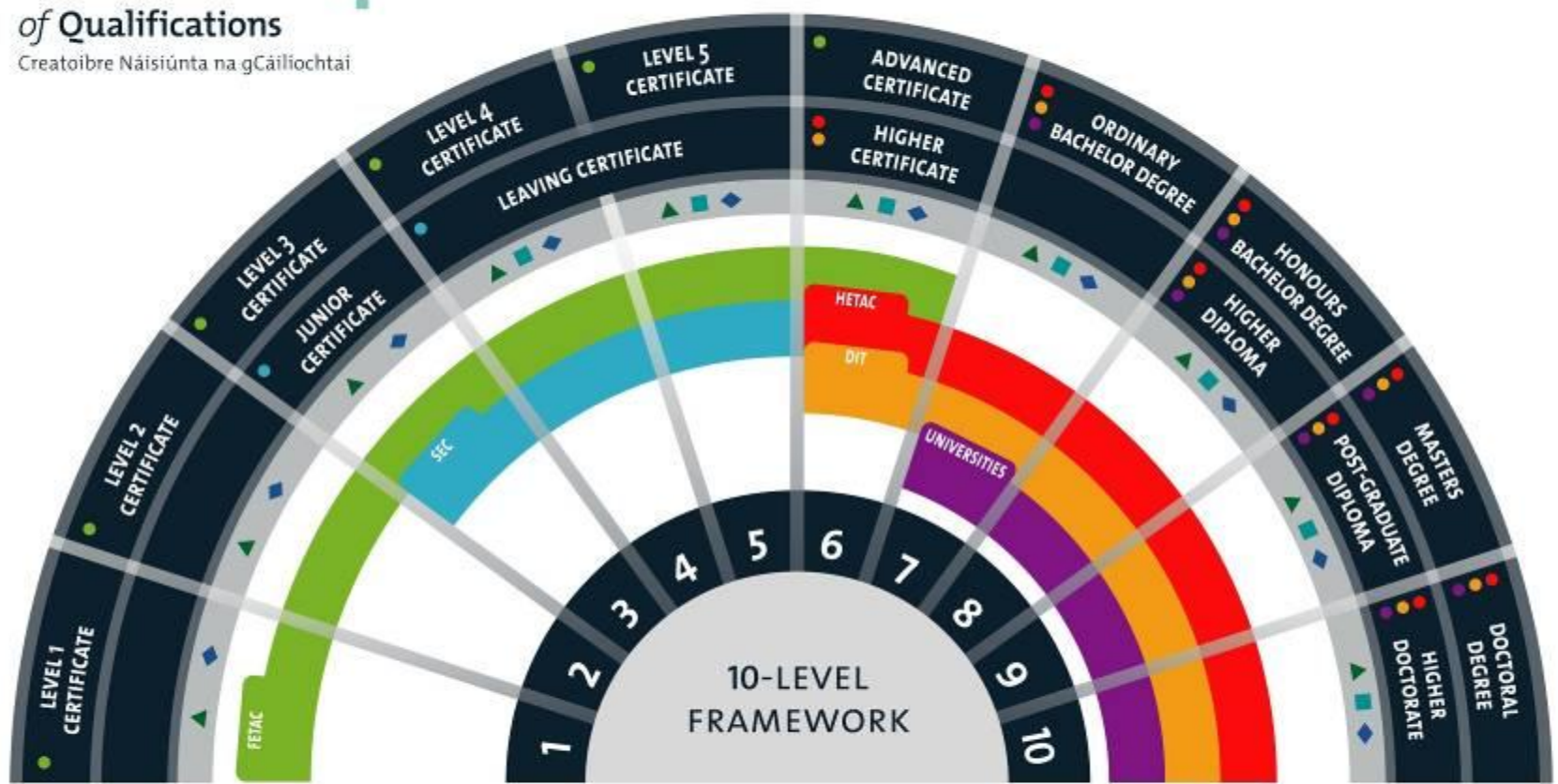


The levels are based on nationally agreed standards of **knowledge**, **skill**, and **competence**; i.e. what an individual is expected to know, understand and be able to do following successful completion of a process of learning.

The system of levels is arranged like a ladder. Completion of one level usually means you are able to move up to the next, or jump several if you commit to an agreed number of years study.

Progression

- For example, it is possible for you to progress from a good honours Leaving Cert (Level 5) directly to an Honours Bachelors Degree (Level 8) if you commit to the three/four years (sometimes more) of study required.
- You can choose to move one step at a time by selecting a Level 6 Higher Certificate in an Institute of Technology, then a Level 7 Ordinary Degree, and eventually a Level 8 Honours Degree in the same or a different institution.
- Progression Routes: The National Framework helps to improve access (entry) to education and training. It allows you to transfer and progress within and between courses and colleges nationally and internationally.

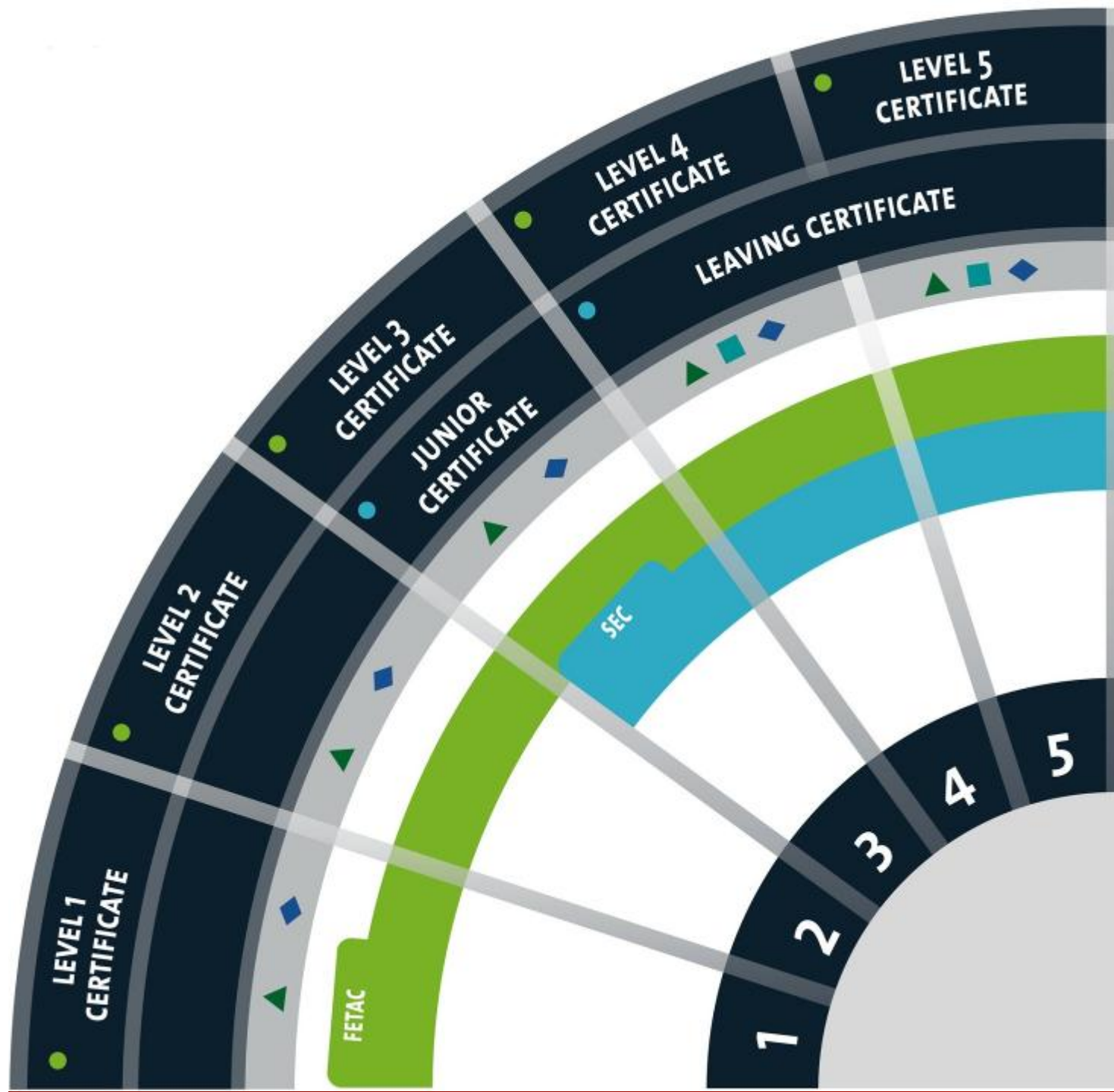


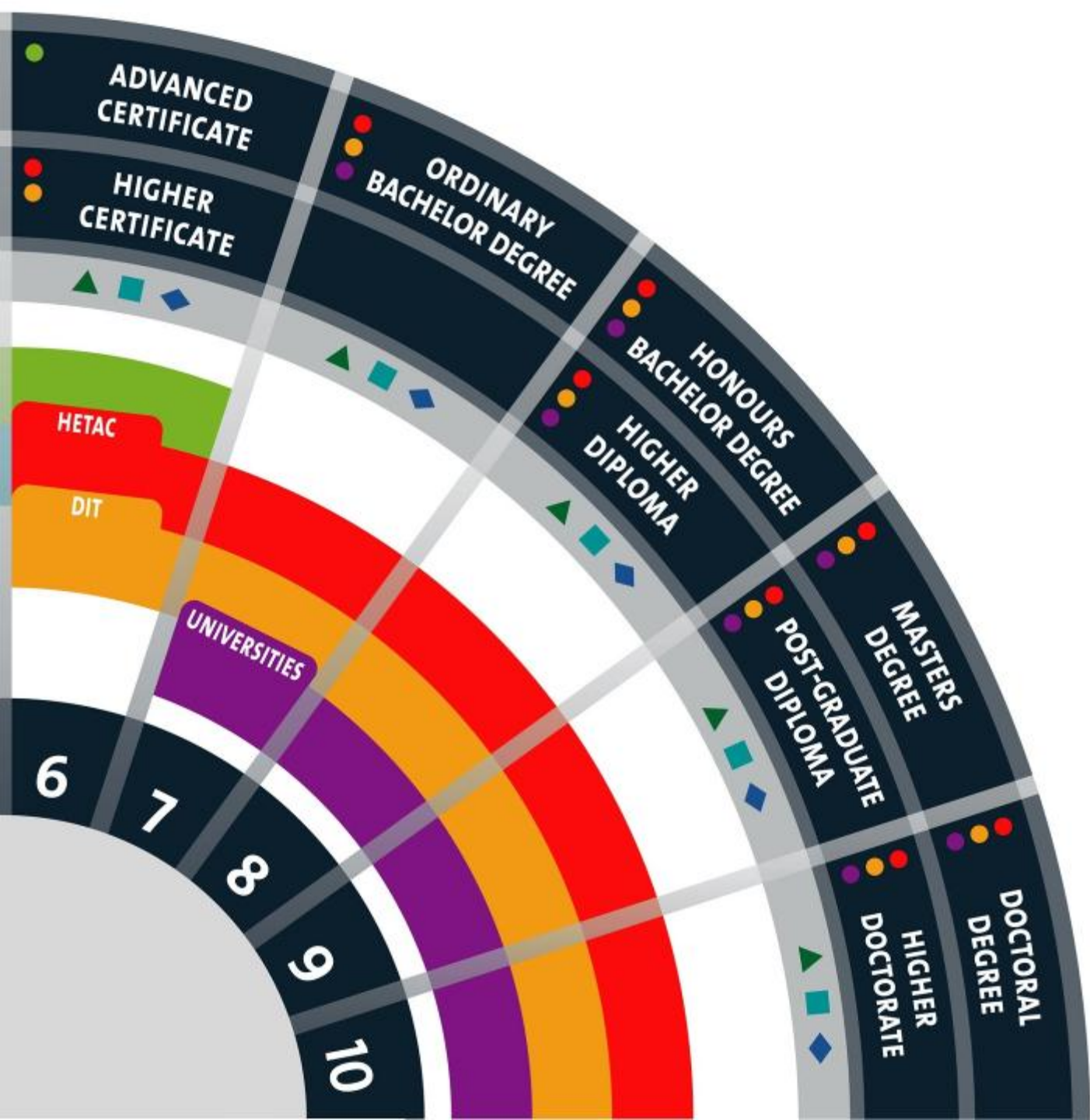
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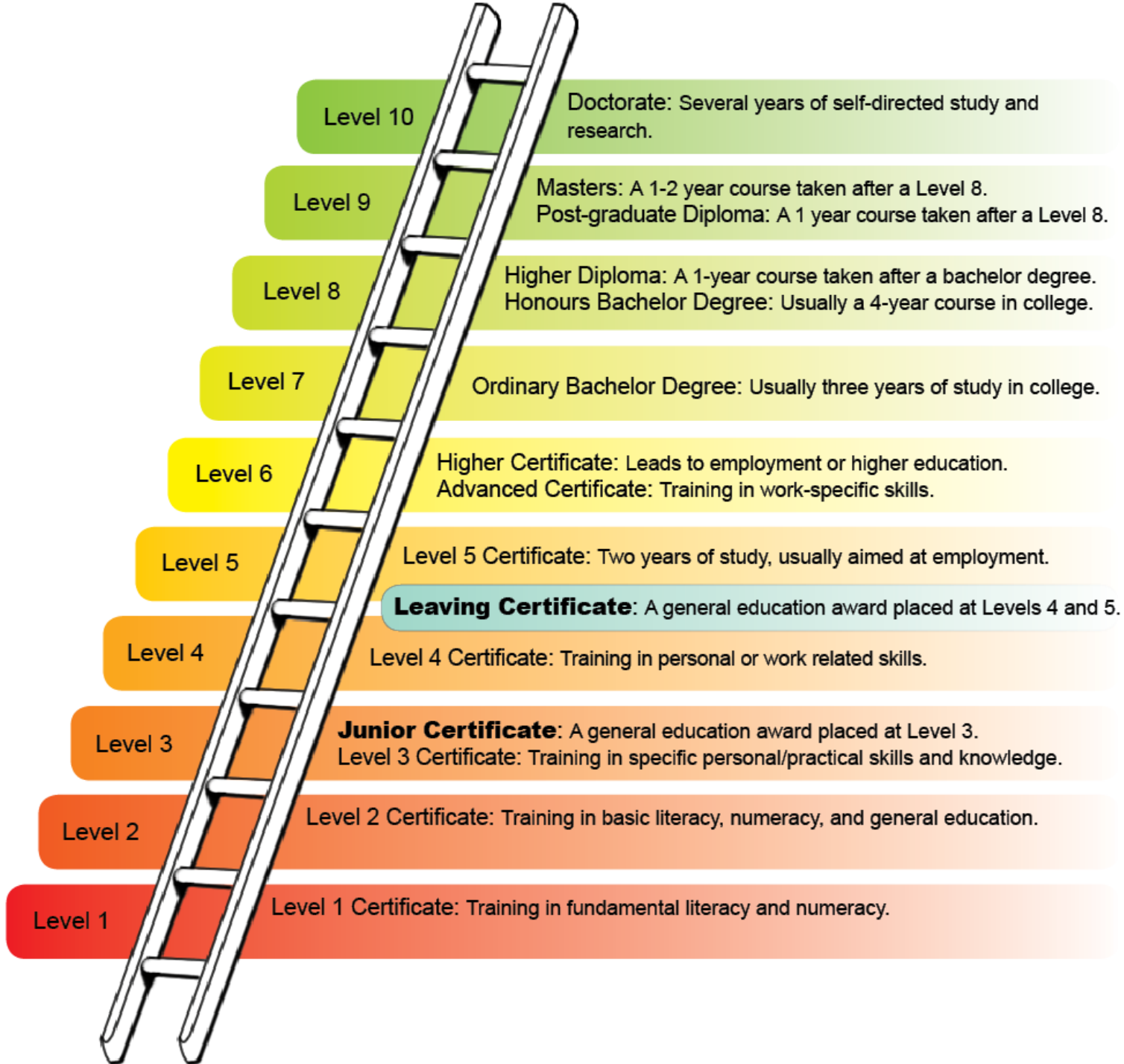
- FETAC - Further Education and Training Awards Council
- SEC - State Examinations Commission (Department of Education & Science)
- HETAC - Higher Education and Training Awards Council
- DIT - Dublin Institute of Technology
- Universities

AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK

- There are four types of award in the National Framework of Qualifications:
- ◐ **Major Awards:** are the principal class of awards made at a level
 - ▲ **Minor Awards:** are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award
 - **Supplemental Awards:** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award
 - ◆ **Special Purpose Awards:** are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement







Six good reasons why you should take qualifications seriously:

- #1. To give yourself a **choice of jobs**: increasingly many low-skilled jobs are being exported to foreign countries, or being automated by machines. As a result, there are few low-skilled jobs left to choose from.
- #2. To **get promoted**: it is difficult to move from unskilled labour to skilled labour without actually acquiring any skills. Qualifications are designed to give you the skills you need to move up.
- #3. To make **money**: on average, there is a huge pay gap between people with qualifications and people without. The highest paid jobs are usually those which take a lot of skill, and qualifications are there to teach those skills.
- #4. To **prove your competence**: qualifications are proof that you are capable of mastering a body of knowledge, and have the skills which employers value. Not only does a qualification show that you are good at what you do; it suggests that you are able to become even better!
- #5. To show **commitment**: your investment of time and effort in a qualification shows employers that you are serious about what you want to do, and that any further investments they make in your training will not go to waste.
- #6. To **enjoy yourself**: learning about something which you enjoy is fulfilling, boosts your self-confidence, and improves self-awareness.



Exercise: Qualifications and Jobs

Take a look at the list of jobs below, and fill in what you think would be the average level of education needed to get the job, and what wage levels that job usually earns. Do you notice any pattern in the answers? Your Guidance Counsellor will give you the correct answers when you're done.

Qualification levels:

“On the job” training: The job requires a low level of training given as part of the job.

Level 5/6 Certificate: The job requires a post-secondary vocational award or certificate.

Apprenticeship: The job requires apprenticeship training of at least 4 years.

Ordinary Bachelors Degree: The job requires at least a Level 7 Bachelors Degree

Honours Bachelors Degree: The job requires at least an Level 8 Bachelors Degree

Postgraduate Award: The job requires more than an Honours Bachelors Degree.

Wage levels:



Low: Earning €20,000 or less per year.

Average: Earning €20,000 – €35,000 per year.

High: Earning €35,000 – €50,000 per year.

Very High: Earning more than €50,000 per year.

Job Title:	Education:	Salary:	Correct?
<i>Advertising Manager:</i>			
<i>Bus Driver:</i>			
<i>Dental Hygienist:</i>			
<i>Hairdresser:</i>			
<i>Auditor:</i>			
<i>Database Administrator:</i>			
<i>Primary School Teacher:</i>			
<i>General Nurse:</i>			
<i>Legal Secretary:</i>			
<i>Shop Assistant:</i>			
<i>Mechanical Engineer:</i>			
<i>Human Resource Manager:</i>			
<i>Receptionist:</i>			
<i>Builders Labourer:</i>			
<i>Doctor:</i>			
<i>Software Developer:</i>			
<i>College Professor:</i>			
<i>Plumber:</i>			
<i>Bono (U2):</i>			
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Job Title:	Education:	Salary:	Correct?
<i>Advertising Manager:</i>	Ordinary (Level 7)	Very High: 55k - 60k	
<i>Bus Driver:</i>	On the job	Average: 20k - 35k	
<i>Dental Hygienist:</i>	Ordinary (Level 7)	Average: 21k - 36k	
<i>Hairdresser:</i>	On the job / Certificate (Level 5)	Low / Average: 16k - 27k	
<i>Auditor:</i>	Honours (Level 8)	High / V High: 40k - 60k	
<i>Database Administrator:</i>	Ordinary (Level 7)	High / V High: 30k - 60k	
<i>Primary School Teacher:</i>	Honours (Level 8)	Ave / High: 35k - 55k	
<i>General Nurse:</i>	Honours (Level 8)	Average / High: 28k - 43k	
<i>Legal Secretary:</i>	Certificate (Level 5)	Average: 22k - 30k	
<i>Shop Assistant:</i>	On the job	Low / Average: 17k - 22k	
<i>Mechanical Engineer:</i>	Honours (Level 8)	High / V High: 35k - 60k	
<i>Human Resource Manager:</i>	Honours (Level 8)	Very High: 55k - 70k	
<i>Receptionist:</i>	On the job	Average: 24k - 32k	
<i>Builders Labourer:</i>	On the job	Average / High: 30k - 37k	
<i>Doctor:</i>	Postgraduate (Level 10)	High / V High: 33k - 77k	
<i>Software Developer:</i>	Ordinary (Level 7)	Average / V High: 25k - 70k	
<i>College Professor:</i>	Postgraduate (Level 10)	Very High: 100k - 150k	
<i>Plumber:</i>	Apprenticeship (FAS)	High: 38k - 42k	
<i>Bono (U2):</i>	Leaving Cert.	Very Very High - ???	

Figures are based on typical earnings over a 40 hour week with at least 5 years experience in the job.

Some jobs typically work much longer hours, and with overtime will typically earn significantly more.

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