**Irish Education System**

**Further Education**

Further Education covers education and training which occurs after second level schooling but which is not part of the third level system. There are number of providers of Further and Adult Education and Training and a wide variety of schools, organisations and institutions, are involved in the delivery of continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults.

**Education and Training Boards (ETBs)**

* The 16 ETBs were established on 1st July 2013 following from the commencement of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013
* The ETBs have responsibility for the delivery of primary, post primary and further education in line with their predecessor VECs. The former training functions of FÁS have also been transferred to the ETBs.

**SOLAS**

SOLAS was established on 27 October 2013, following the commencement of the Further Education and Training Act 2013 SOLAS works with the ETBs to support the development of appropriate further education and training programmes and curricula and the sourcing of further education and training interventions from the private, public and not for profit sector.

Both of these organisations provide training in Tourism and Hospitality along with the new Apprenticeship in Culinary Arts. They provide courses up to level 6 QQI on the quality framework.

Higher Education (3rd Level system) in Ireland is provided mainly by 7 Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology, including the Dublin Institute of Technology and 7 Colleges of Education. In addition, a number of other third level institutions provide specialist education in such fields as art and design, medicine, business studies, rural development, theology, music and law.

8 of the Institutes of Technology provide Tourism, Hospitality and culinary arts programmes from level 6 Higher Certificates to Phd.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The HEA has wide advisory powers throughout the whole of the third-level education sector. In addition it is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and other designated higher education institutions.

**National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)**

Qualifications frameworks describe the qualifications of an education and training system and how they interlink. National qualifications frameworks describe what learners should know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification. These frameworks also show how learners can move from one qualification, or qualification level, to another within a system. Over 150 countries are now developing, or have developed, a national qualifications framework.

The Irish NFQ, established in 2003, is a framework through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way. The many different types and sizes of qualifications included in the NFQ, are organised based on their level of knowledge, skill and competence. Because all NFQ qualifications are quality assured, learners can be confident that they will be recognised at home and abroad.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has responsibility to develop, promote and maintain the Irish NFQ. QQI also facilitates the recognition of foreign qualifications.

