

**Joint Protocol for Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications in
Scotland and Ireland between the All Ireland Standards for Community Work
Education and Training (AIEB) and Community Learning and Development
Standards Council Scotland (CDLSC)**

1	Background
	<p>The All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training (AIEB) and Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland (CLD Standards Council) are the respective professional bodies for the island of Ireland and Scotland who each professionally endorse community work qualifications (community learning and development in Scotland).</p> <p>This Protocol has been developed and agreed to govern the process through which qualifications can be regarded as mutually acceptable and recognised, in order to promote transportability of qualifications throughout the three jurisdictions and two professional bodies. (Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland).</p>
2	Purpose
2.1	<p>The purpose of this Protocol is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to enable qualified practitioners to move between the constituent jurisdictions (Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and have their qualifications accepted at initial professional training level • to maintain mutual respect amongst validation/endorsement/approval bodies for the standard and rigour of the training providers' programmes
3	Basis for the Protocol
3.1	<p>It is recognised that qualifications are developed using common drivers, including the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Youth & Community Work, the All-Ireland Standards for Community Work and the Community Development National Occupational Standards.</p> <p>In addition, each jurisdiction develops its own requirements for professional approval/validation/endorsement based on the above documents and its own relevant policies.</p>
3.2	<p>Correspondence between the European, UK and Ireland qualifications frameworks is now well embedded (Appendix 1). The levels of the qualifications in each of the countries are equal at graduate, honours degree level (level 8 in Ireland, level 10 in Scotland, level 6 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and also at postgraduate level.</p>

4	Protocol Agreement
4.1	<p>As the common features outweigh any differences, we agree that each jurisdiction will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise as qualified practitioners those holding qualifications as set out in section 4.3 below • ensure current developments (National Occupational Standards, All Ireland Standards for Community Work, European Qualifications Framework and the Subject Benchmark Statement) are included in any revised approval/validation/endorsement criteria • in relation to mutuality of recognition take account of European, UK and Ireland qualifications frameworks, as set out in Appendix 1 • be the reference point for qualification status enquiries and keep a publicly available up to date list • detail the range of settings for fieldwork practice requirements of approved qualifying programmes
4.2	<p>To achieve mutual recognition two key components, need to be in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requirements and study programmes should be mutually acceptable • fieldwork practice must demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ for Community Work: assessed practice in a variety of community work settings ○ for CLD: assessed practice in a variety of CLD settings
4.3	<p>Through discussion and study of relevant documents sufficient congruence was found in the values, ethical base, required skills, competences, and fieldwork. Table 1 at the rear of this document details the general information and specific criteria to be included in submissions for endorsement/approval by each professional body .</p> <p>As such, Mutual Recognition applies to all historic awards that have been at any time approved, endorsed or validated and that have conferred professional community work and community learning and development work within any of the 3 jurisdictions; and to all awards that are currently so approved, endorsed or validated.</p> <p>The qualifications that are deemed mutually acceptable and recognised as conferring professional qualification are held by each jurisdiction’s professional body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training • CLD Standards Council
4.4	<p>The impact of each jurisdiction’s changes to its own requirements for professional approval/validation/endorsement should continue to be communicated between jurisdictions and monitored through annual review meetings between AIEB and CLDSC.</p>

4.5	<p>Queries should be put to the relevant officer within local jurisdictions in the first instance. See below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steven Maclennan (Contact@CLDStandardsCouncil.org.uk) • Ciara Shanahan (ciara.shanahan@aieb.ie)
5.0	Changes to Protocol Agreement
5.1	<p>AIEB and CLDSC must jointly agree significant changes to the Protocol for Mutual Recognition. Minor changes (such as the name of a member committee) may be notified between meetings and ratified at the following annual meeting of the two professional bodies. The Protocol is to be reviewed every 3 years.</p>

Date current version agreed: September 2024

Date to be reviewed: September 2027

Appendix 1

Within Europe, two overarching qualifications frameworks exist to which the national qualifications frameworks of the UK and Ireland relate.

- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) also known as the Bologna Framework.

Qualifications can Cross Boundaries: a guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland shows:

- correspondence of levels established between national qualifications and the European Quality Framework (EFQ)
- the outcome of verifying the compatibility of higher education frameworks for Scotland (FQHEIS/SCQF), for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and for the NFQ for Ireland (NFQ IE) with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA)

Table 1

Topic	Scotland	AIEB	Notes & Comments
1. Link to Relevant Guidelines	CLD Professional Approval	AIEB Guidelines for Endorsement	
2. Length of programme and/or level at which Professional qualification is awarded	<p>Ordinary Degree/ Honours Degree (3/4 years full time study)</p> <p>Postgraduate</p> <p>Any exit routes offered must be clear in submission and it must be made clear to students which route will provide a validated/ endorsed</p>	<p>3/4 years full time or P/T equivalent for undergraduate.</p> <p>2-year full time or P/T equivalent for postgraduate programme (Masters).</p> <p>Exit routes offered must be clearly laid out and students must be clearly informed what the professional endorsed qualification level is.</p>	
3. Title of Professional qualification	<p>Professional Community learning and Development qualification – flexibility over title following discussion</p> <p>Full details of title that would appear on validation/endorsement</p>	<p>The term ‘Community Work or ‘Community Development’ should be in the title distinguishing it as a qualification in a distinct discipline. The programme can be a dual qualification for example in in community work and youth work.</p> <p>Full details of the title would appear on endorsement.</p>	<p>Please note that all jurisdictions would expect to see appropriate reference to relevant NOS</p>
4. Fees for Validation	To be discussed during initial contact	To be discussed during initial contact	
5. APL & APEL	Encouraged for recording prior experience on entry and for enabling students to transfer between courses	APL/RPL and APEL is supported for admissions but not accepted against any element of fieldwork practice	
6. Fieldwork Arrangements and Hours	<p>Ordinary Degree / Honours - A minimum of 1440 hours of supervised practice placement across the whole of the programme. Practice must cover a range of context</p> <p>Postgraduate - A minimum of 480 hours of</p>	<p>Fieldwork practice should comprise at least 40 – 50% of the overall programme for the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.</p> <p>This must include a minimum of two block</p>	

	<p>supervised practice Must cover a range of context</p> <p>Supported by qualified CLD staff</p> <p>Lists of providers used to support practice must be made available and providers must be aware that they may be contacted by CLD of Standards Council</p>	<p>placements, in separate locations.</p> <p>For part-time in-service students there must be at least one placement external to one's own workplace.</p> <p>Written agreement required for own fieldwork placements.</p>	
7. Supervision Arrangements for Fieldwork	<p>A CLD Qualified Supervisor or mentor who is Registered with CLDSC must provide a sign off that Student CLD Practitioner has reached the standard required in order to practice effectively.</p> <p>Have undertaken supervision training & be supported by a member of the teaching staff.</p> <p>Agreed practice placement contract required.</p> <p>Practice Placement supervisors must be involved in the assessment procedures</p>	<p>Fieldwork supervisors are in the first instance supervised by a practitioner with a qualification and experience in the field of community work.</p> <p>Fieldwork supervisors are provided with support and training for their roles and receive guidance on the education providers expectations for the placement and the use of assessment tools for development and judgement of student.</p> <p>Fieldwork placement contracts are to be provided as part of the fieldwork placement handbook and are to be agreed between the student and fieldwork supervisor.</p>	
8. Staffing Arrangements	<p>Should be professionally trained in Community Learning and Development or have been granted recognition as a Registered Member of CLD Standards Council for Scotland and have recent and relevant experience.</p>	<p>Staff employed for the prime purpose of delivering community work/development modules should be professionally educated and trained in community work.</p> <p>Staff should have recent and relevant fieldwork practice experience and</p>	

	<p>Must be from a staff team that is predominantly CLD Qualified and the recommendation of a ratio of no less than 1 permanent member of teaching staff to 20 FTE students.</p>	<p>commitments and arrangements should be in place to ensure that staff have opportunities to maintain their professional practice.</p> <p>Staff student ratio must be outlined in the endorsement submission.</p>	
9. Assessment	<p>Nature of assessment</p> <p>Weighting</p> <p>Level of performance to be achieved</p> <p>No compensation between supervised practice and academic learning.</p> <p>Range of strategies to use.</p>	<p>There should be no compensation between fieldwork based learning and academic learning</p> <p>Manageable schedule of assignment tasks</p> <p>Range in the nature of assessment strategies used.</p> <p>Clear statement on the weighting of each assessment.</p> <p>A robust external examining process that secures professional competence</p> <p>At least two external examiners, one of whom must be an academic and the other must be a professionally qualified community work practitioner.</p> <p>Institutions will require full attendance and participation across all modules on the programme.</p> <p>All placements must be passed independently for successful completion of the programme.</p>	
10. Suitability for Community Work	<p>In Scotland the focus is on Community Learning and Development and the programme must cover</p>	<p>Any recruitment for professional formation programmes is balanced between an appropriate</p>	

	the range of context. For example, CLD-adult learning, CLD-youth work and CLD-community development	level of academic achievement and the possession of a working knowledge of and commitment to community work and communities All applicants should be interviewed before being accepted onto a course to establish their suitability.	
11. Any Country specific requirements	Registration i-develop Code of Ethics Relevant National Occupation Standards (NOS) SCQF levels CLD Values and principles evident throughout the programme. Mapping to CLD Competences	The All Ireland Standards for Community Work values must inform all aspects of the programme from design to recruitment to delivery.	