

Knowing the difference between awards, certificates, and degrees is one of the most difficult obstacles for learners of any age. They may sound similar as if they might be used alternately, but they both refer to a system for arranging criteria that you'll need to know before enrolling in a certain course.

To help you understand the differences, we've put together a comprehensive explanation of awards, certificates, and diplomas, explaining what they imply and how they may impact your distance learning experience.

---

## What is an Award Qualification?

Awards are the 'shortest' or 'smallest' credentials available in terms of the number of training hours required. Any qualification that takes up to 130 hours to accomplish and is worth up to 13 credits is classified as an Award. If you haven't understood it yet, one credit is about equal to 10 hours of learning.

We hear your question, "What are credits?" The Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) is a framework for indexing qualifications based on their size and level. Consider the RQF as a library, with each qualification's value, content, and purpose meticulously catalogued. More information on the RQF can be found [here](#).

Awards have the smallest amount of modules because they are the shortest form of a course. The Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH) – the number of hours spent being taught or supervised as part of a learning programme – are calculated using modules.

## What is a Certificate Qualification?

Certificates are the next level of qualification after Awards. TQT and GLH requirements vary widely, with some Certificates requiring only 130 hours (13 credits) and others requiring up to 370 hours (37 credits).

Certificates are frequently seen as a happy medium in the training field. They provide extensive course content to help you master a certain field of study, as well as all the knowledge you'll need to further your job or pursue additional education.

## What is a Diploma Qualification?

Diplomas are the longest and most comprehensive credentials possible within the RQF's limitations. They typically take about 370 hours of training to complete, which equates to 37 RQF credits.

Diplomas provide comprehensive coverage of the chosen subject area, as well as detailed training to help you develop your abilities to their full potential. Diplomas are in-depth and hard for learners of all ages, but they do provide advanced skills and information to assist push and propel your career forward.