

## **Statistics Bulletin**

Higher Qualifications Quarterly:

January – March 2013



June 2013

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## Executive summary

We regulate qualifications, exams and assessments in England, and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

This bulletin covers data on certificates for all types of qualifications at level 4 and above (equivalent to post-GCE A level) that we regulate. It does not include qualifications such as university degrees, which are regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Qualifications at level 4 and above are known as higher qualifications, and we analyse the number of certificates awarded in England, Wales and Northern Ireland up to January – March 2013; that is, quarter 1 (Q1). See Definitions (page 25) for the full range of quarters.

The key findings relating to higher qualifications in this quarter are:

- The number of certificates awarded in higher qualifications has decreased by 6 per cent but the number of available qualifications has increased by 15 per cent, compared with the same quarter in 2012.
- Almost 90 per cent of qualifications had fewer than 200 certificates awarded in the last 12 months, and, in January – March 2013, 93 per cent had fewer than 100 certificates awarded. Looking at the trend, there has been a continuous increase since 2009 Q4 and this may be because of the increase in qualifications available on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).
- From the 2,466 qualifications available this quarter, 1,328 didn't have any certificates awarded in the last 12 months (54 per cent). This is similar to previous quarters with about 50 per cent of qualifications without certificates in the preceding 12 months to quarter end.
- The qualification with the highest number of certificates is the City & Guilds Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF) (1,850 certificates).
- The two sector subject areas with the most certificates were business, administration, finance and law (50 per cent of all certificates) and education and training (28 per cent of all certificates). There was an increase of 2 per cent in the education and training sector (largely explained by the increased number of students undertaking the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification) whereas business, administration, finance and law declined in the number of certificates by 7 per cent when comparing this quarter with the same quarter in 2012. This could be as a result of the Retail Distribution Review, carried out by the Financial Services Authority, which required financial advisers

to have, at least, a qualification at level 4 by the end of 2012, where previously it was at level 3.

- Over the past five years there has been a continual growth in the number of awarding organisations offering and awarding higher qualifications, with a 9 per cent increase in the number of awarding organisations offering these qualifications since quarter 1 of 2012 (127 awarding organisations compared with 116) and a 5 per cent increase in the number awarding (91 compared with 87).
- Pearson Education Ltd<sup>1</sup> had the most certificates with 4,350, or 17 per cent, of all higher qualification certificates this quarter; this is 14 per cent higher than the same quarter last year.

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<sup>1</sup> Pearson Education Ltd. was previously known as Edexcel. Qualifications from Pearson Education Ltd. will appear as Edexcel in data tables and this will change in the next bulletin.

## Regulated higher qualifications

### Qualifications available

The number of regulated<sup>2</sup> higher qualifications available<sup>3</sup> continues to rise. In January – March 2013, there were 2,466 qualifications, an increase of 15 per cent on the same quarter of 2012 (see figure 1).

The continual quarter-on-quarter increase has seen more than double the number of higher qualifications on offer over the past three years, from 1,117 in 2010 Q1.

Figure 1 shows that the continual growth of these qualifications is mainly in QCF qualifications.<sup>4</sup> The QCF began in 2008 after tests and trials, and, from 2010, qualifications began to be restructured in order to be accredited to the QCF. The QCF offers up to three different sizes of a qualification (award, certificate and diploma) so there are more qualifications and associated certificates (each size is counted as a separate qualification). Figure 1 shows the gradual decline (in the last few quarters) of NVQs and qualifications categorised as higher level, suggesting that these qualifications have been restructured.

For more detailed information on number of available qualifications, see table 1 in the appendix.

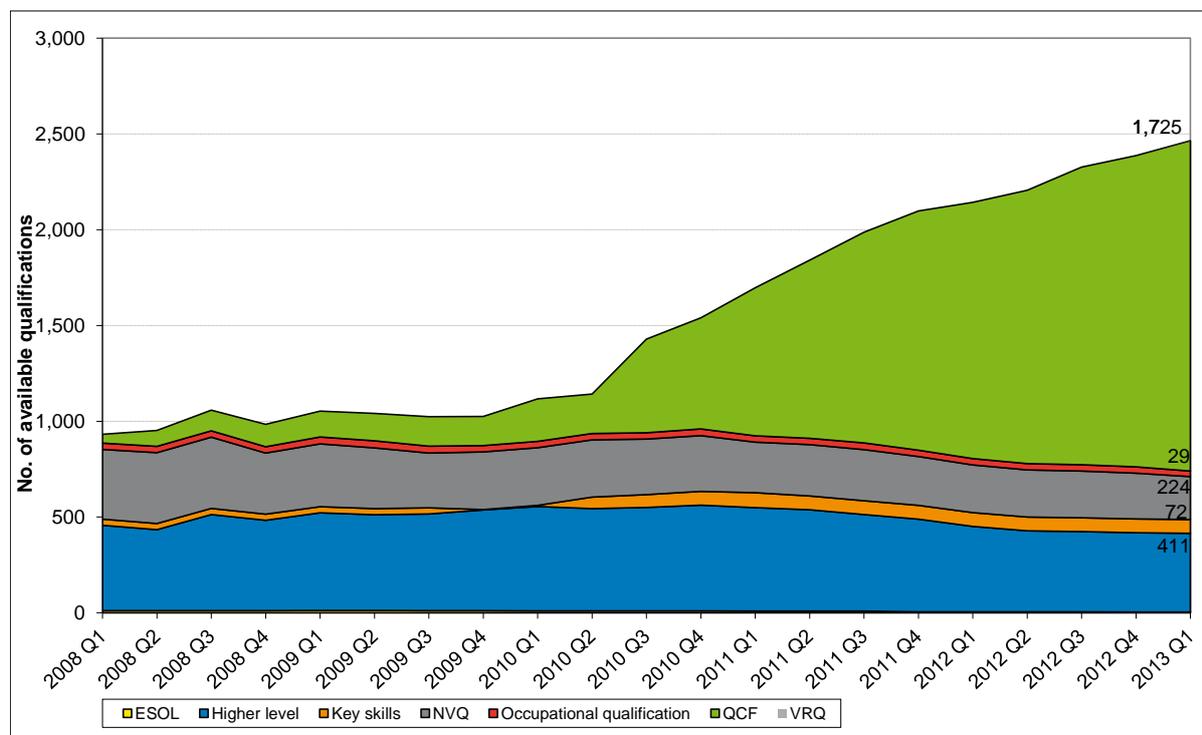
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<sup>2</sup> An accredited qualification is one that has met the relevant criteria as set by the regulators of qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. On accreditation a qualification will be issued with a Qualification Accreditation Number, and specific dates set for the period for which the qualification will be accredited. The qualification is then said to be regulated.

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this bulletin, regulated qualifications (other than GCSEs, A levels and the Diploma) are considered to be available either until they pass their certification end date or if they have made an award during the reporting period (table 1 in the appendix).

<sup>4</sup> The QCF is a framework that is designed to provide students, learning providers and employers with an inclusive and flexible regulated qualifications framework containing units and qualifications that recognise the widest possible range of quality-assured student achievements. There are three sizes: award (1-12 credits), certificate (13-36 credits) or diploma (37 or more credits).

**Figure 1:** Number of available regulated higher qualifications per quarter by qualification type, January – March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)



**Key:** QCF: Qualifications and Credit Framework; NVQ: National Vocational Qualification; ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages.

During this quarter, 102 new QCF qualifications, five new higher level type qualifications and one new vocationally related qualification were added to the list of available regulated higher qualifications. The business management sector had the highest proportion of new qualifications mainly from three awarding organisations, namely, Agored Cymru, Lantra Awards and Small Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative Awards. We also saw that 12 NVQs<sup>5</sup>, eight higher level qualifications, six vocationally related qualifications and four occupational qualifications are no longer available to be awarded.

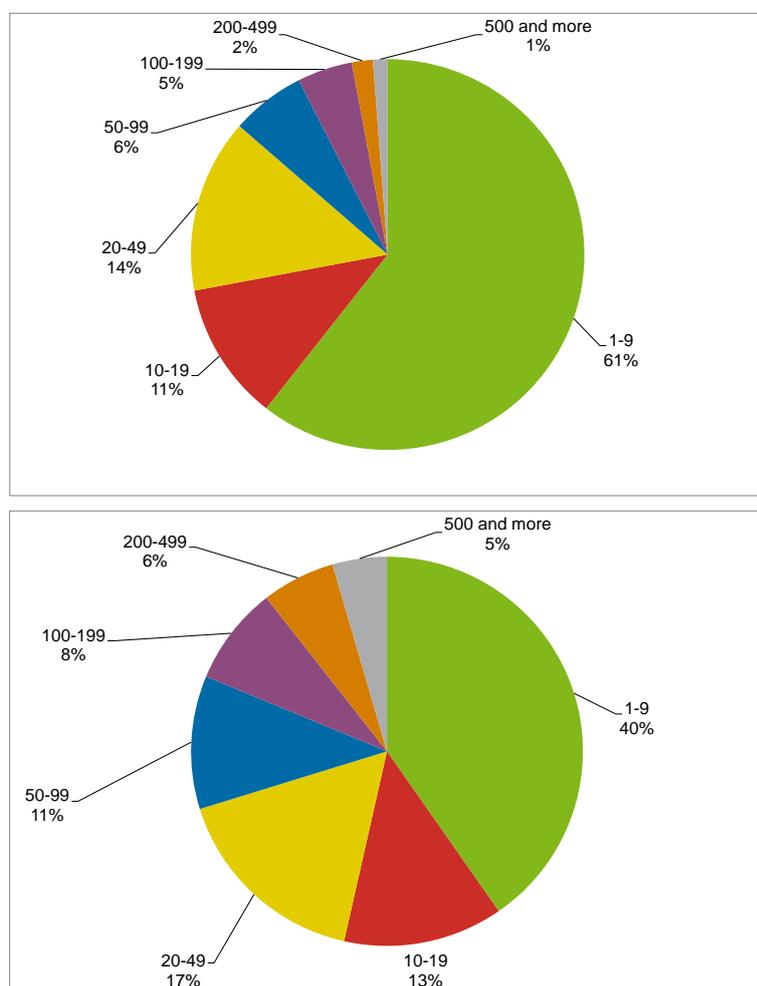
<sup>5</sup> NVQs are work-related, competence-based qualifications that cover a broad range of industry sectors and occupations and are delivered in a workplace setting.

## Qualifications available and awarded

In this quarter, there were 30 per cent (751 from 2,466) of available qualifications with certificates. In the last 12 months to end March 2013, of the number of qualifications that were available, certificates were issued for 1,138 qualifications.

These qualifications generally have low numbers of certificates compared with qualifications below level 4. Figure 2 shows the number of qualifications awarding different levels of certificates in January – March 2013.

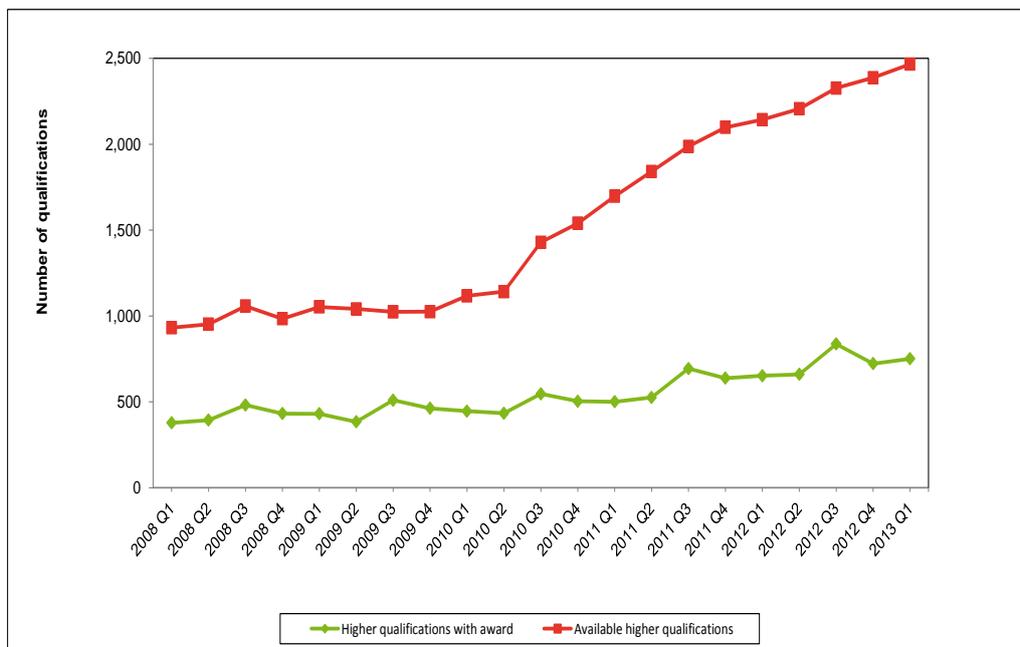
**Figure 2:** Number of available higher qualifications during this quarter;  
a) with certification in the quarter (top chart)  
b) with certification in the past 12 months (bottom chart)



It should be noted that of the qualifications available this quarter, 1,715 had no achievements this quarter and 1,328 had no achievements in the past 12 months.

Figure 3 shows the five-year trend in the number of qualifications available and those that have been awarded.

**Figure 3:** Total number of available higher qualifications per quarter, and total number of higher qualifications with awards, January – March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)



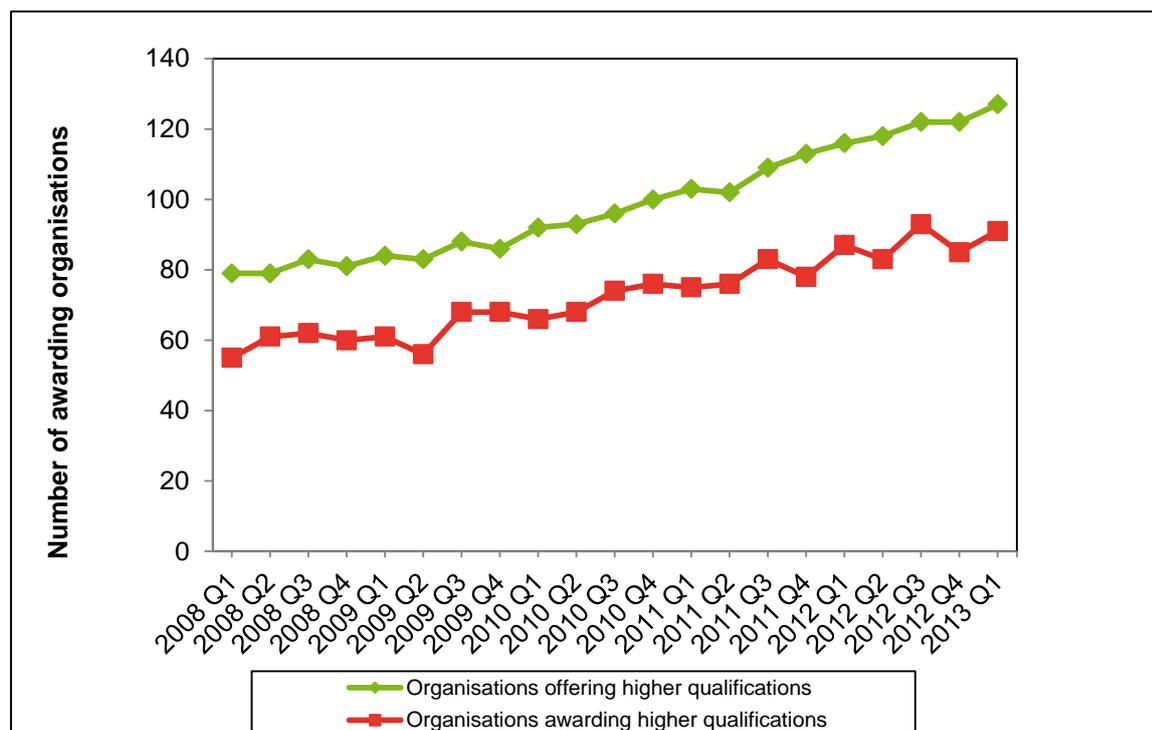
The qualifications making up the difference between the available higher qualifications and higher qualifications with awards (see figure 3) are inactive qualifications (qualifications with no certificates in the past 12 months).

## Awarding organisations

There are 127 recognised awarding organisations that offer regulated higher qualifications. In January – March 2013, 91 of those awarding organisations awarded higher qualifications during this quarter.

It is clear from figure 4 that there is a trend, since quarter 2 of 2011, for a greater number of awarding organisations awarding higher qualifications in quarters 1 and 3. Compared with the same quarter of 2012, there was an 9 per cent increase (116 in 2012 Q1 compared with 127 in 2013 Q1) in the number of awarding organisations offering regulated higher qualifications and a 6 per cent increase (87 in 2012 Q1 compared with 91 in 2013 Q1) in the number awarding in January – March 2013.

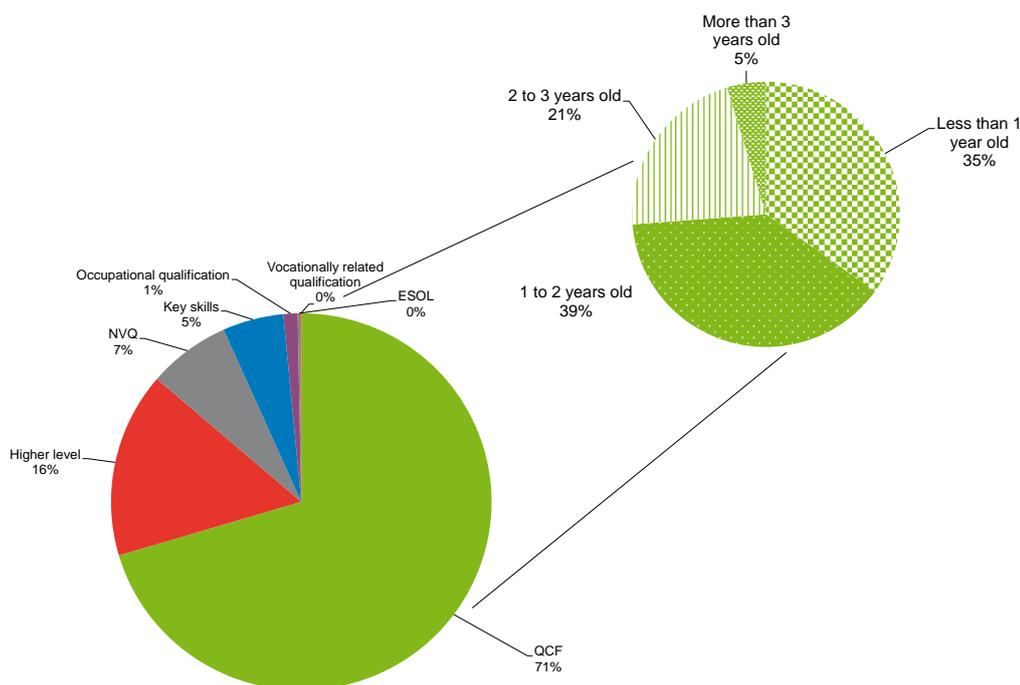
**Figure 4:** Total number of awarding organisations with at least one available higher qualification per quarter, and awarding organisations that have awarded at least one certificate, January – March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)



## Inactive qualifications

Inactive qualifications are those that were available for award during this quarter but where no award was made in the 12 months to March 2013. Figure 5 shows the number of inactive qualifications by type and by age (how long they have been available). Between January and March 2013, 2,466 qualifications were available with 1,328 inactive qualifications (54 per cent).

**Figure 5:** Proportion of available qualifications (January – March 2013) that have been inactive (April 2012 – March 2013) by type of qualification and age of inactive QCF qualification, April – March 2013



**Key:** QCF: Qualifications and Credit Framework; NVQ: National Vocational Qualification; ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Almost three-quarters of the inactive QCF qualifications are up to two years old and we could expect these qualifications to start having certifications in the next few quarters as it may take one to two years before we see qualifications being awarded after they become available.

We used simple regression model analysis to evaluate if each sector subject area has more or fewer inactive qualifications than expected, given its number of available qualifications. We found that the number of inactive qualifications is largely related to the number of available qualifications for each sector subject area; that is, the greater the number of qualifications in a sector, the larger the number of inactive qualifications.

The model assumes that all sector subject areas should have the same proportion of inactive qualifications, which means that sector subject areas with more available qualifications should have more inactive qualifications. However, although some of the inactive qualifications are being replaced by new qualifications they have not been removed from the database and are still classified as available. For that reason, the results of this analysis should be interpreted with caution.

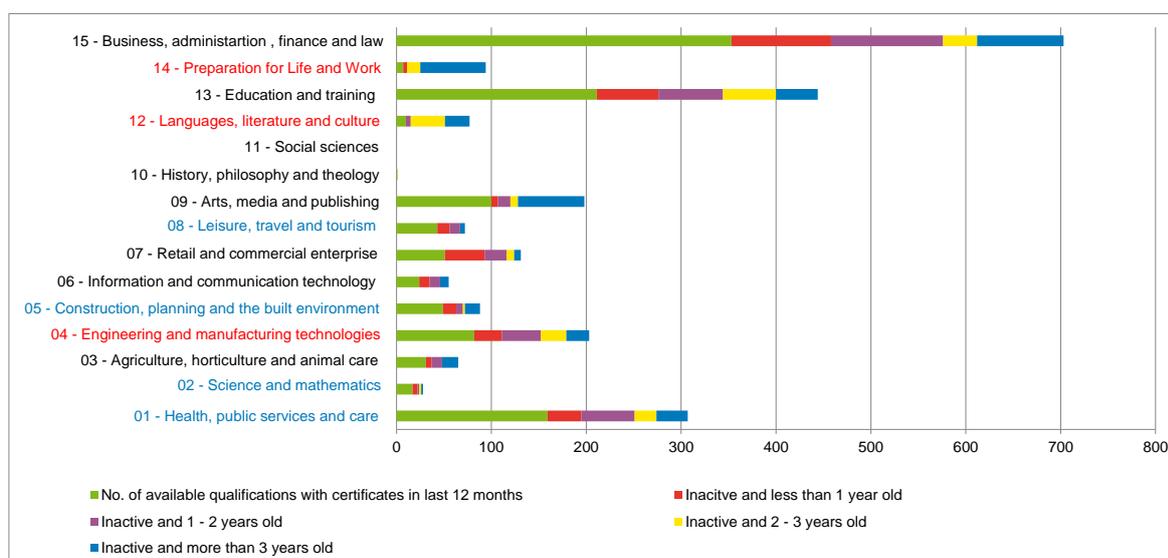
Figure 6 shows the number of available qualifications with achievements and the number of inactive qualifications by age for each sector subject area.

Sector subject areas highlighted in blue indicate that there are fewer inactive qualifications given the number of available qualifications; sector subject areas highlighted in red show the opposite.

Three sector subject areas had more inactive qualifications given the number of available qualifications. Of the inactive qualifications in languages, literature and culture, all have been available for more than a year and, in the last 12 months to this quarter, 94 per cent, are from Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR). Interestingly, all qualifications from OCR in this sector are inactive. Similarly, preparation for life and work had around 95 per cent of all the inactive qualifications that were available for more than two years (83 of the 87 inactive qualifications).

On the other hand, the sector subject areas with fewer inactive qualifications than expected (highlighted in blue), given the number of available qualifications, have more than 54 per cent of qualifications that have been available for less than two years.

**Figure 6:** Number of available and inactive higher qualifications by age for each sector subject area, January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)

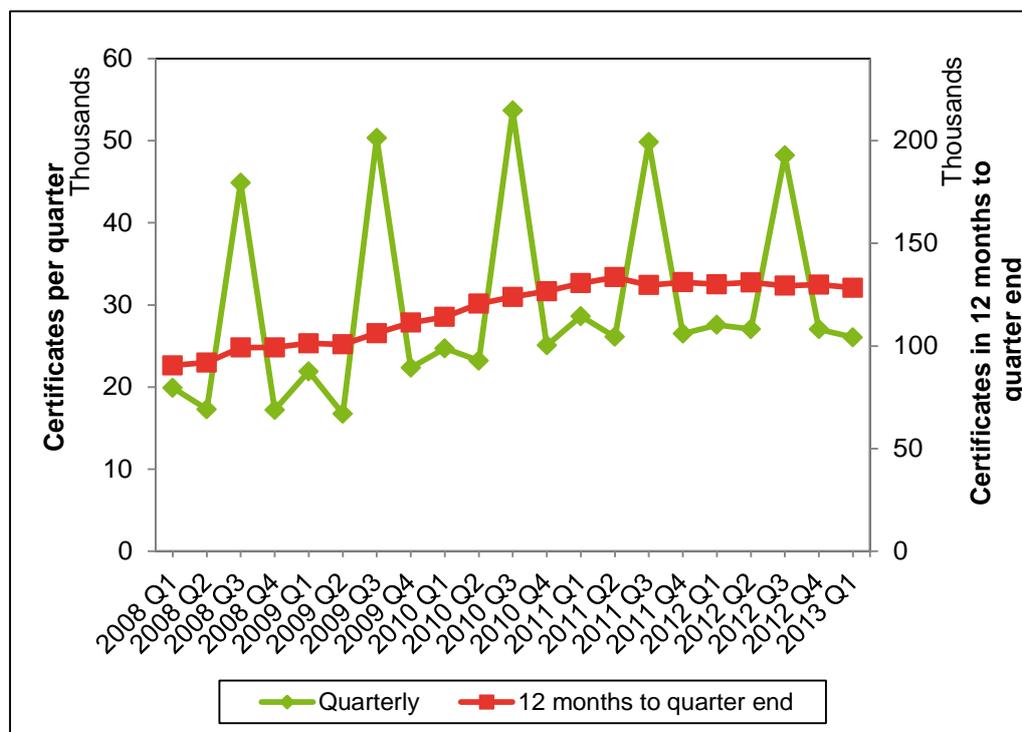


## Certificates

There were 26,050 certificates (see table 2 in the appendix) awarded in higher qualifications during January – March 2013, a decrease of 6 per cent on the same quarter of 2012 (see figure 7). This is the lowest number of certificates issued in a quarter since 2011 Q1.

The majority of the certificates are in QCF qualifications (89 per cent). The decline in the overall number of certificates, for this quarter, was mainly attributed to the fall in certifications in NVQ qualifications for this quarter compared to 2012 Q1. For more information see tables 2 and 6 in the appendix.

**Figure 7:** Total number of certificates per quarter and in the 12 months to the end of each quarter, January – March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)



From figure 7, we can see that the 12 months to quarter end series clearly shows the overall increase in certificates over the last five years, although the increase has been less significant over the past two years (the quarter with the highest 12-month sum of certificates was quarter 2 of 2011).

The quarterly figures show significant peaks in quarter 3 each year, although this has started to decline in the last two years.

## Certificates by awarding organisation

Figure 8 shows the ten awarding organisations with the most certificates this quarter. Together, these ten awarding organisations represent 69 per cent of all certificates awarded in January – March 2013.

**Figure 8:** The ten awarding organisations with the most certificates in higher qualifications, January – March 2013 (January – March 2012 figures shown for comparison)

Awarding Organisation	Number of certificates		% share of total certificates	% change in certificates
	January to March 2012	January to March 2013		
Pearson Education Ltd	3,800	4,350	17	14
City and Guilds of London Institute	4,150	3,500	13	-16
Chartered Management Institute	3,500	2,150	8	-39
Institute of Leadership & Management	1,500	1,650	6	10
University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations	1,200	1,350	5	13
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	50	1,300	5	2500
Association of Accounting Technicians	1,200	1,200	5	0
Chartered Institute of Legal Executives	950	900	3	-5
OCR	1,150	900	3	-22
Chartered Insurance Institute	1,400	650	2	-54

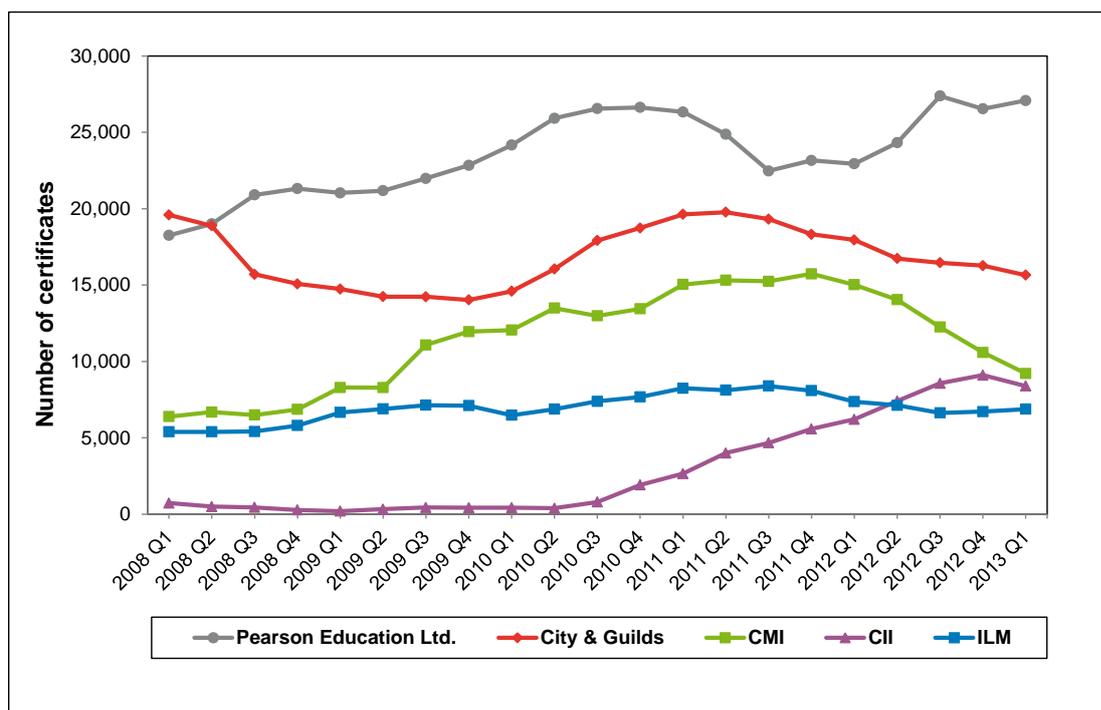
Pearson Education Ltd (also known as Edexcel) continues to award the highest number of certificates, 4,350 awards in January – March 2013, an increase of 14% on the same quarter of last year.

The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) awarded 1,300 certificates in January – March 2013 compared to only 50 in the same quarter of 2012. Their qualifications became available to students in January 2011. Early awards were first issued in quarter 1 of 2012 and since then there have been awards issued in most quarters. Its most commonly taken qualification is the Level 4 Diploma in Accounting and Business.

OCR awarded approximately 3 per cent of all certificates this quarter. This figure has been falling over recent quarters, partly due to several of their NVQ and occupational qualifications approaching their expiry date and not being replaced.

Figure 9 shows the five-year trend for the five awarding organisations with the most certificates during quarter 1 of 2013 and shows the number of certificates in the 12 months to the end of each quarter from 2008 Q1 to 2013 Q1.

**Figure 9:** The five awarding organisations with the most certificates in higher qualifications for the 12 months to the end of each quarter, showing the trend from January – March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2012 (2013 Q1)



**Key:** CII: Chartered Insurance Institute; CMI: Chartered Management Institute; ILM: Institute of Leadership and Management.

It can be seen that for the first time, the number of certificates in CII qualifications has started to decline, in the 12 months to quarter end. The same was also found for the ifs School of Finance (figures not shown) which can be explained by the decline in the number of available certificates for IFS Level 4 Diploma for Financial Advisers qualification. This could be as a result of the Retail Distribution Review, carried out by the Financial Services Authority, which required financial advisers to have, at least, a qualification at level 4 by the end of 2012, where previously it was at level 3.

The numbers of certificates for CMI and OCR are continuing to decline when comparing quarters (see figure 8) and when we look at the numbers of certificates over 12 months to quarter end, CMI's have been falling since 2011 Q4 and OCR's since 2010 Q4.

The 50 awarding organisations with the most certificates are listed in table 4 in the appendix.

## Certificates by qualification

Figure 10 shows the five higher qualifications with the most certificates. The 50 qualifications with the most certificates are listed in table 3 in the appendix.

**Figure 10:** The five higher qualifications with the most certificates, January – March 2013 (January – March 2012 figures shown for comparison)

Qualification	Number of certificates		
	January to March 2012	January to March 2013	% change
City & Guilds Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	100	1,850	1,750
ACCA Level 4 Diploma in Accounting and Business (QCF)	50	1,250	2,400
Cambridge ESOL Level 5 Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) (QCF)	950	1,150	21
AAT Level 4 Diploma in Accounting (QCF)	900	1,000	11
CILEx Level 6 Certificate in Law (QCF)	850	800	-6

Qualifications in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector have seen large increases in the number of certificates this quarter because they are now the minimum requirements for teachers who wish to gain the full teacher qualification: Qualified Teacher Status in the Lifelong Learning Sector.<sup>6</sup> Six of the 50 qualifications with the highest number of certificates shown in table 3 in the appendix, are in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector.

The ACCA Diploma in Accounting and Business was launched in December 2011 as part of a new suite of qualifications in Foundations in Accountancy. The first Diploma certificates were awarded in February 2012 and since the course takes 6-12 months to complete, we have seen a large increase in certificates for ACCA Level 4 Diploma in Accounting and Business.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector, University of Cambridge:  
[www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/celta/ptlls](http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/celta/ptlls)

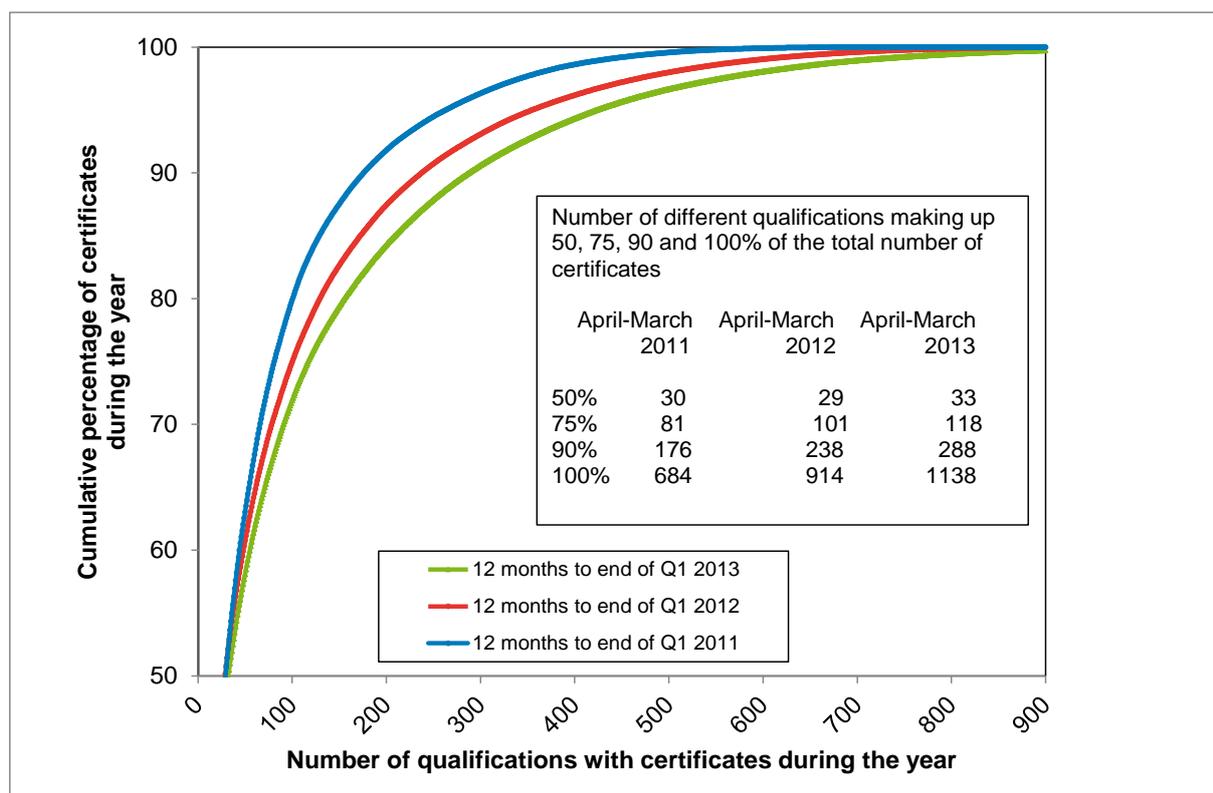
<sup>7</sup> Diploma in Accounting and Business: [www.accaglobal.co.uk/content/dam/acca/global/PDF-students/2012s/sa\\_june11\\_dipabv2.pdf](http://www.accaglobal.co.uk/content/dam/acca/global/PDF-students/2012s/sa_june11_dipabv2.pdf)

The CII Level 4 Diploma in Financial Planning (QCF) qualification (shown in table 3 in the appendix) had high numbers of certificates previously, but fell this quarter from 1,250 certificates issued in January – March 2012 to 450 this quarter, a decrease of 64 per cent. Again, this could be affected by the Retail Distribution Review, carried out by the Financial Services Authority.

## Number of qualifications by percentage of all certificates

From Figure 11 we see that there is an overall growth in the number of qualifications being awarded compared to previous years, although 50 per cent of certificates are made up of only around 30 qualifications. This is expected given the decline in the average number of certificates per qualifications (figure 12) and the general increase in the overall number of available higher qualifications.

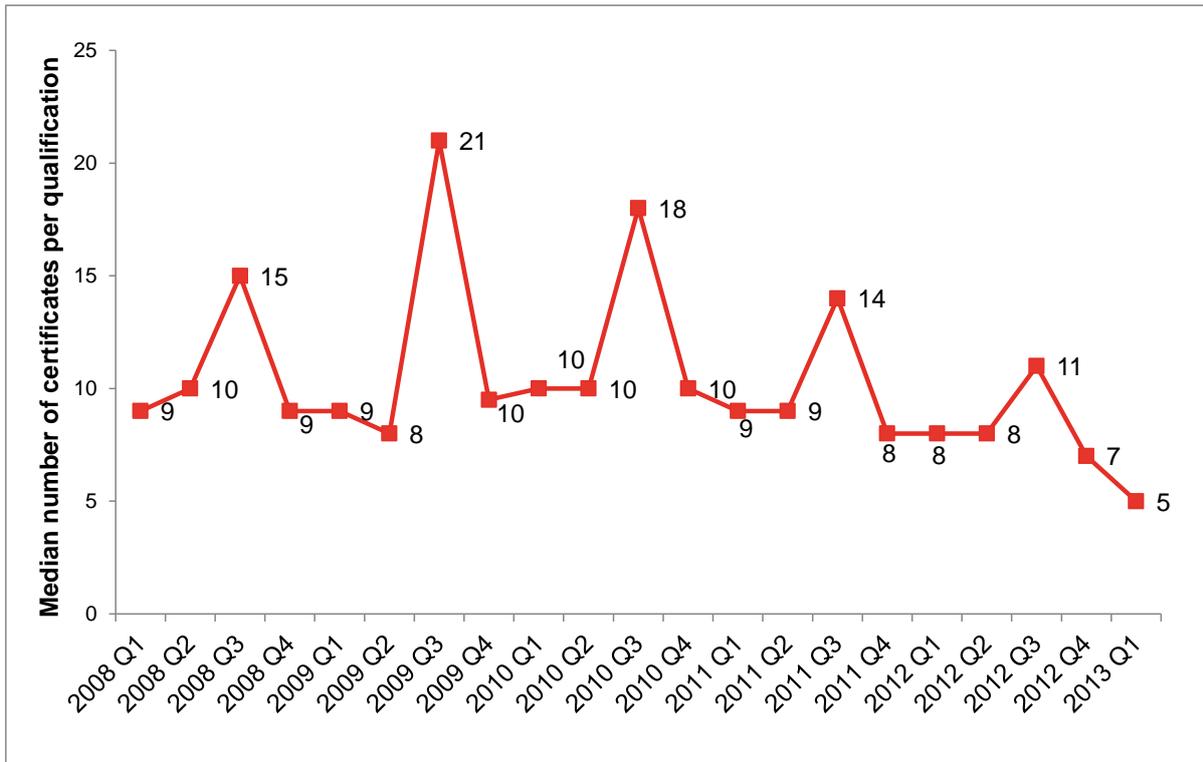
**Figure 11:** Number of qualifications making up the total percentage of certificates for the 12 months to end of 2011 Q1 to 2013 Q1.



When we look at the average (median<sup>8</sup>) number of certificates per qualification (figure 12), we see that the highest number of certificates per qualification is at its highest in quarter 3 every year and, generally, the rest of the quarters have the same number of certificates. Since 2011 Q3, the median number of certificates has declined when looking at the general trend, for each quarter. One reason contributing to this is the number of new qualifications coming onto the QCF framework and the number of certificates not increasing.

<sup>8</sup> The median number lies in the middle of the range when all the numbers of certificates are ordered from low to high. It gives the value representing 50 per cent of all certifications.

Figure 12: Median number of certificates per qualification for 2008 Q1 to 2013 Q1.



## Certificates by sector subject area of qualification

Regulated higher qualifications are allocated to one of 15 sector subject area codes (see our *Statistical Publications Glossary*<sup>9</sup> for further details).

Figure 13 compares the number of certificates for each sector subject area and also the percentage change in certificates between January – March 2012 and January – March 2013.

The figure shows a number of certificates in education and training with an increase of 2 per cent on the same quarter of last year. This can largely be explained by the greater number of students undertaking qualifications in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector, as discussed in the previous section.

The business, administration, finance and law sector subject area continues to have the highest number of certificates. This sector has seen growth in the number of certificates issued in higher vocational qualifications since 2008, but has been declining since last year. This could be partly explained by the changes in the financial services sector.

The increase in certificates in the language and literature sector subject area is in line with the 31 per cent increase in Signature Level 6 NVQ Certificate in British Sign Language (QCF) (from 42 to 55 certificates) and IoLET Level 6 Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (QCF) qualification, which has now moved onto the QCF and had no certificates in quarter 1 2012 but has 47 this quarter.

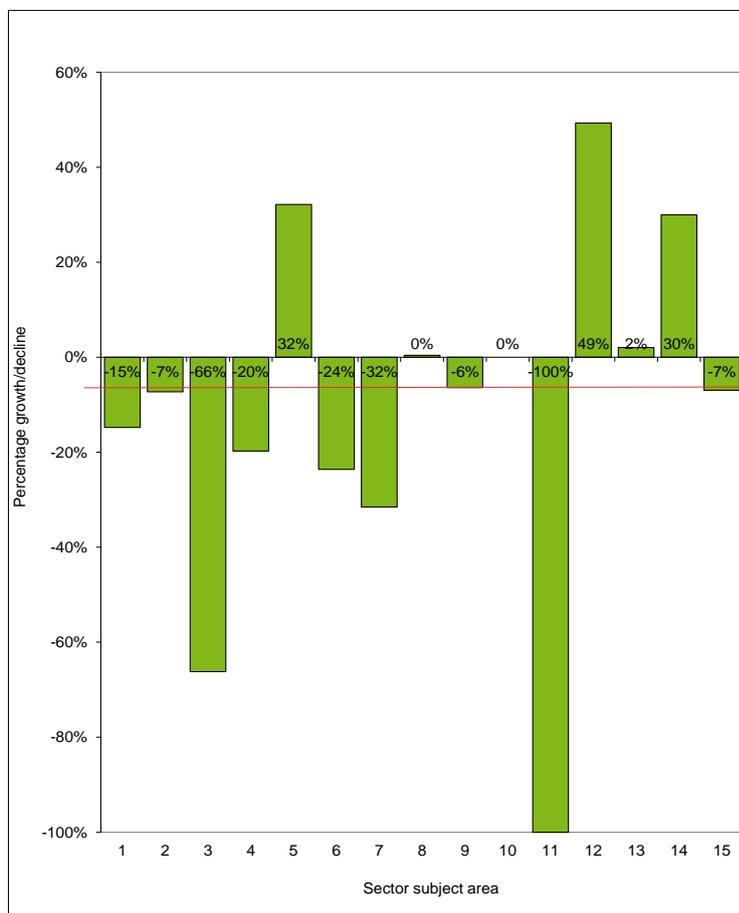
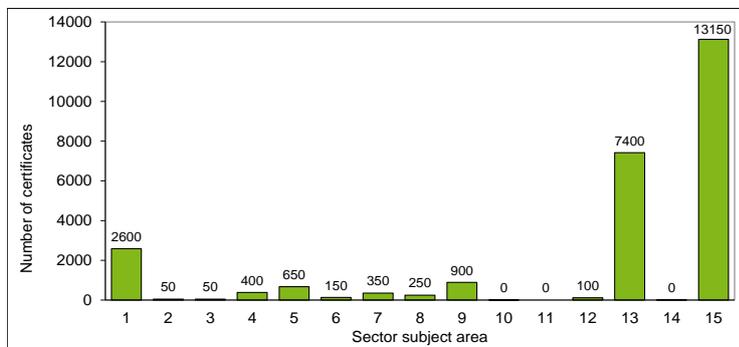
The increase in certificates for the construction, planning and the built environment area is in line with the increase in certificates for the QCF qualifications.

A number of sector subject areas had a reduction in their number of certificates between January – March 2012 and January– March 2013. The 100 per cent decline in social science is due to the sector having one certificate in 2012 Q1 and none this quarter.

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<sup>9</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf)

**Figure 13:** Number of higher qualification certificates by sector subject area for January – March 2013 (2013 Q1) and the percentage growth and decline between January – March 2012 and January – March 2013 (red line showing the average change for all higher qualifications (6 per cent decrease))

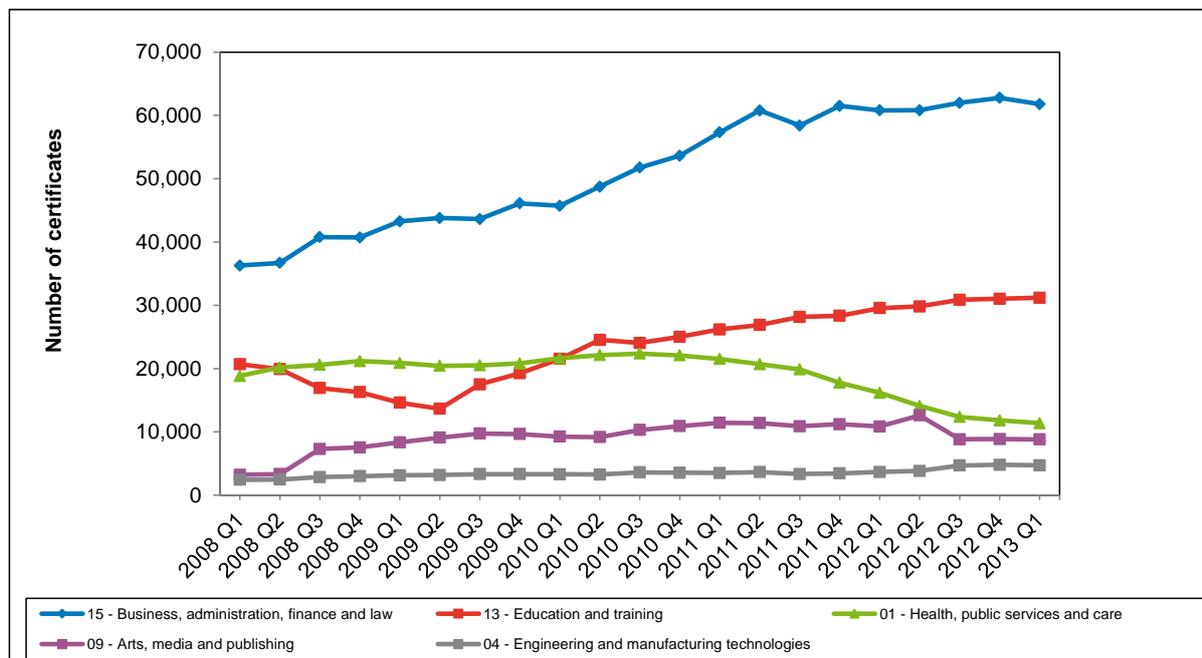


- 1 Health, public services and care
- 2 Science and mathematics
- 3 Agriculture, horticulture and animal care
- 4 Engineering and manufacturing technologies
- 5 Construction, planning and the built environment
- 6 Information and communication technology
- 7 Retail and commercial enterprise

- 8 Leisure, travel and tourism
- 9 Arts, media and publishing
- 10 History, philosophy and theology
- 11 Social sciences
- 12 Languages, literature and culture
- 13 Education and training
- 14 Preparation for life and work
- 15 Business, administration, finance and law

Figure 14 shows the five-year trend for the five sector subject areas with the most certificates in January – March 2013 (see table 5 in the appendix for further details).

**Figure 14:** Total number of higher qualification certificates in the 12 months to the end of each quarter, January - March 2008 (2008 Q1) to January – March 2013 (2013 Q1)



## **Certificates by level of qualification**

All regulated qualifications are assigned a level, ranging from entry, then 1 to 8 (see our *Statistical Publications Glossary*<sup>10</sup> for full details). Higher qualifications are those at levels 4 to 8.

Figure 15 shows the large variation in the number of certificates by level and the variation in change by level between January – March 2012 and this quarter. Of the five higher levels, only levels 5 and 8 showed an increase in the number of certificates since January – March 2012. Level 5 showed an increase of 4 per cent, to 250 certificates, while level 8 showed an increase of 17 per cent but with only 18 more certificates. It should be noted that qualifications at level 8 included CMI Level 8 in Strategic Direction and Leadership (QCF) which is awarded in three different sizes (award, certificate and diploma).

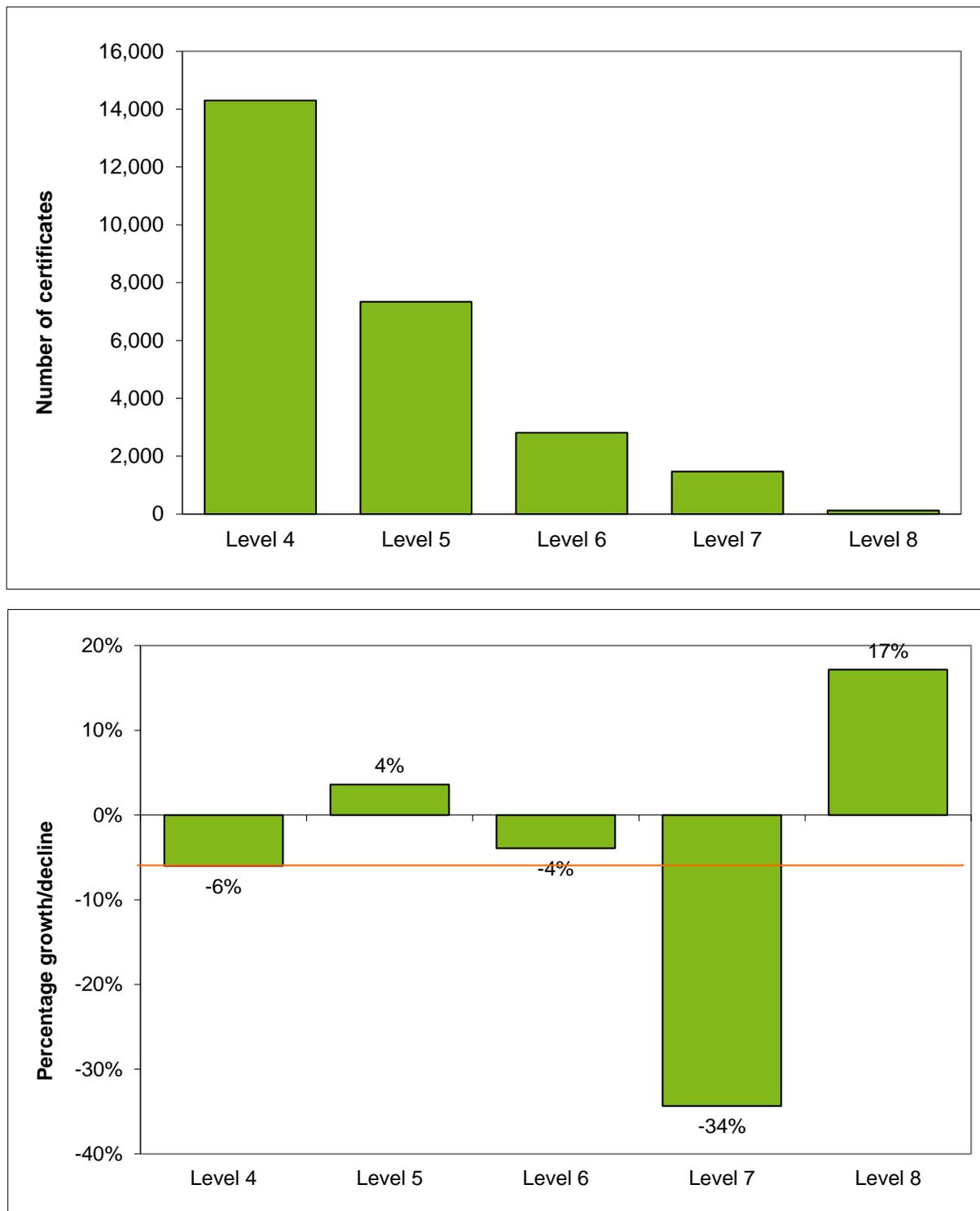
The majority of the decline in level 7 certificates can be explained by the decline in the CMI's Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership and the Level 7 Certificate in Strategic Management and Leadership (QCF). Together these qualifications had a decline of over 500 certificates.

Of 37 level 6 qualifications that declined in number of certificates, 21 were in the business, administration, finance and law subject sector area. Of 35 level 7 qualifications that declined in number of certificates, 26 were in business, administration, finance and law.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf)

**Figure 15:** Number of higher qualification certificates by level for January – March 2012 (2013 Q1) and the percentage growth and decline in certificates between January – March 2012 and January – March 2013 by level (red line showing average change for all higher qualifications (6 per cent decrease))



## Background information

Under the *Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009* (London: HMSO), one of our objectives is to improve public confidence in regulated qualifications and assessments by raising awareness and understanding of the qualifications we regulate.

This bulletin covers certificates for the January – March 2013 quarter and the 12 months to March 2013 for regulated qualifications of all types at level 4 and above (equivalent to post-GCE A-level). This bulletin is one of a suite of two publications that present quarterly statistics on certificates for regulated qualifications. The other bulletin, *Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly*<sup>11</sup>, covers certificates in NVQs, vocationally related qualifications, QCF qualifications and occupational qualifications at all levels.

Each quarter, awarding organisations submit data to us about the number of qualifications they have awarded. Certificates are included in the quarter when the final qualification certificate is issued. This bulletin shows the number of certificates in the January – March 2013 quarter and during the 12 months to March 2013, broken down by awarding organisation, sector subject area, type of qualification, level of qualification and by country. Information on the availability of qualifications is also provided. All regulated qualifications at level 4 or above are included, regardless of the age of the student, the type of school or college and the funding status of the qualification.

### Geographical coverage

In this bulletin we present data on certificates for all regulated qualifications at level 4 and above in England, Wales and Northern Ireland during the quarter January – March 2013. You can find statistics for Scotland on the Scottish Qualifications Authority website.<sup>12</sup>

### Qualification type

At the point of accreditation, regulated qualifications are classified into 18<sup>13</sup> qualification types. We recognise that the classification system is not ideal, as very

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<sup>11</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-and-other-qualifications](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-and-other-qualifications)

<sup>12</sup> The Scottish Qualifications Authority is the national accreditation and awarding organisation in Scotland: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42397.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42397.html)

<sup>13</sup> Including GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma and its components

similar qualifications may appear under different qualification types, for example NVQs and the QCF.

This bulletin presents figures on six of these qualification types: English for speakers of other languages, higher level, key skills, NVQ, QCF and occupational qualifications.

This bulletin relates only to qualifications in these types that are at level 4 or above. These qualifications are a subset of those reported in the *Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly* bulletin<sup>14</sup>, which covers qualifications at entry level to level 8.

## Revisions

Once published, data on the number of certificates for any qualification are not usually subject to revision, although subsequent bulletins may be revised to insert late data or if an error is identified. Qualifications may also be re-categorised to a different type, level, sector subject area or awarding organisation. In some cases, data may be amended to reflect the new categorisation.

Data from Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) had been updated from 2012 Q3 and there have been changes for data from LAMDA from 2011 Q2 onwards.

In this bulletin, some figures have been revised since the July – September 2012 bulletin. These revisions involved updates from two awarding organisations and only affected quarters 2 and 3 of 2012.

Pearson Education Ltd. was previously known as Edexcel. Qualifications from Pearson Education Ltd. will appear as Edexcel in data tables and this will change in the next bulletin.

## Completeness of the data

Awarding organisations send us data each quarter. We contact any awarding organisation that does not return a complete set of data within the collection period, to make sure that the data are as complete as possible. For this quarter, we received data from all the awarding organisations.

Figures in the commentary and tables for the number of certificates are rounded to the nearest 50. This reflects the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale data

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<sup>13</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-and-other-qualifications](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-and-other-qualifications)

collection and also makes reading them easier. As a result of rounded figures, the percentages shown in pie charts may not necessarily add up to 100 per cent.

Comparisons in this bulletin are only made with data from the same quarter of the previous year. This is because of seasonal changes in the number of certificates over the year.

The raw data, which covers 1989 onwards, are available on our website.<sup>15</sup>

## **Definitions**

Some of the key terms used in this bulletin are defined as follows:

- Accreditation – a process that reviews and confirms achievement to specific criteria and standards.
- Achievement – any award that is not graded as U, absent or X (fail).
- Available qualification – a qualification eligible for an award or a qualification that has made an award.
- Awarding organisation – an organisation recognised to develop, deliver and award descriptions of qualifications.
- Active qualification – a qualification eligible for award to students, even if the qualification is no longer available for enrolment.
- Certification – a formal acknowledgement of student achievement.
- Recognition – an evidence-based process of achieving compliance with the criteria for recognition.

Our *Statistical Publications Glossary*<sup>16</sup> provides further details on sector subject area classifications and qualification types and levels.

In this bulletin, quarter refers to calendar quarters. So quarter 1 (Q1) refers to January – March, quarter 2 (Q2) to April – June, quarter 3 (Q3) to July – September, and quarter 4 (Q4) to October – December.

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<sup>15</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-data](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/vocational-data)

<sup>16</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf)

We are continually striving to improve the quality and coverage of information in these quarterly updates, and welcome any suggestions or comments you have regarding this bulletin. Our contact details are on the last page.

## Appendix

Table 1: Number of available higher qualifications, 2007-8 to January-March 2013  
England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	English for speakers of other languages	Higher level	Key skills	NVQ	Occupational qualification	QCF	Vocationally related qualification	Total number of qualifications
07-08	11	505	32	399	33	108		<b>1,088</b>
08-09	12	545	32	365	37	160		<b>1,151</b>
09-10	11	577	68	315	35	496		<b>1,502</b>
10-11	10	554	78	291	35	1,117		<b>2,085</b>
11-12	5	491	72	256	33	1,562		<b>2,419</b>
12-13	4	419	72	239	33	1,721	1	<b>2,489</b>
Oct-Dec 2007	11	421	32	363	33	33		<b>893</b>
Jan-Mar 2008	11	446	32	364	33	46		<b>932</b>
Apr-Jun 2008	11	423	32	370	33	83		<b>952</b>
Jul-Sep 2008	11	502	32	372	33	108		<b>1,058</b>
Oct-Dec 2008	11	472	32	319	33	117		<b>984</b>
Jan-Mar 2009	12	510	32	328	36	135		<b>1,053</b>
Apr-Jun 2009	12	500	32	317	37	143		<b>1,041</b>
Jul-Sep 2009	11	505	32	286	36	154		<b>1,024</b>
Oct-Dec 2009	11	526	2	301	33	152		<b>1,025</b>
Jan-Mar 2010	10	545	6	301	33	222		<b>1,117</b>
Apr-Jun 2010	10	534	60	299	33	206		<b>1,142</b>
Jul-Sep 2010	10	540	67	290	33	489		<b>1,429</b>
Oct-Dec 2010	10	552	72	291	35	580		<b>1,540</b>
Jan-Mar 2011	9	540	78	264	33	773		<b>1,697</b>
Apr-Jun 2011	9	529	72	268	33	930		<b>1,841</b>
Jul-Sep 2011	9	504	72	267	35	1,100		<b>1,987</b>
Oct-Dec 2011	5	484	72	255	33	1,249		<b>2,098</b>
Jan-Mar 2012	5	446	72	249	33	1,338		<b>2,143</b>
Apr-Jun 2012	5	423	72	246	33	1,427		<b>2,206</b>
Jul-Sep 2012	5	419	72	244	33	1,554		<b>2,327</b>
Oct-Dec 2012	4	414	72	239	33	1,625		<b>2,387</b>
Jan-Mar 2013	4	411	72	224	29	1,725	1	<b>2,466</b>

*Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database*

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations
  2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to December
- Blank cells indicate that there were no available qualifications

Table 2: Total certificates for higher qualifications, 2007-8 to January-March 2013  
England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	Total number of certificates
07-08	99,200
08-09	106,200
09-10	123,900
10-11	129,650
11-12	129,350
12-13	53,100
Oct-Dec 2007	17,100
Jan-Mar 2008	19,900
Apr-Jun 2008	17,300
Jul-Sep 2008	44,900
Oct-Dec 2008	17,200
Jan-Mar 2009	21,900
Apr-Jun 2009	16,750
Jul-Sep 2009	50,350
Oct-Dec 2009	22,350
Jan-Mar 2010	24,700
Apr-Jun 2010	23,200
Jul-Sep 2010	53,650
Oct-Dec 2010	25,050
Jan-Mar 2011	28,650
Apr-Jun 2011	26,100
Jul-Sep 2011	49,850
Oct-Dec 2011	26,500
Jan-Mar 2012	27,600
Apr-Jun 2012	27,050
Jul-Sep 2012	48,200
Oct-Dec 2012	27,050
Jan-Mar 2013	26,050

*Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database*

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations
2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to December

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50

Table 3: The 50 higher qualifications with the highest number of certificates, January-March 2013 (January-March 2012 shown for comparison)

England, Wales & Northern Ireland	Total number of certificates	
	January-March 2012	January-March 2013
City & Guilds Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	100	1,850
ACCA Level 4 Diploma in Accounting and Business (QCF)	50	1,250
Cambridge ESOL Level 5 Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) (QCF)	950	1,150
AAT Level 4 Diploma in Accounting (QCF)	900	1,000
CILEx Level 6 Certificate in Law (QCF)	850	800
Edexcel BTEC Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	650	700
Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Business (QCF)	150	600
CMI Level 5 Certificate in Management and Leadership (QCF)	900	600
Edexcel Level 4 Award In Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	0	550
CII Level 4 Diploma in Financial Planning (QCF)	1,250	450
Edexcel BTEC Level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (QCF)	400	350
CFA UK Level 4 Certificate in Investment Management (QCF)	300	350
ILM Level 5 Award In Management (QCF)	100	350
CMI Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership (QCF)	550	300
Edexcel BTEC Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership (QCF)	100	300
IAM Level 4 Diploma In School Business Management (QCF)	-	300
TCL Level 5 Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL)	-	250
Cskills Awards Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Construction Site Management (QCF)	100	250
ILM Level 5 Award In Leadership (QCF)	50	200
Edexcel BTEC Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	550	200
ISTD Level 4 Certificate in Vocational Graded Examination in Dance: Advanced 1 (QCF)	200	200
CISI Level 4 Diploma in Investment Advice (QCF)	150	200
CIPS Level 4 Foundation Diploma in Purchasing and Supply	150	200
City & Guilds Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF)	100	200
CIM Level 6 Professional Diploma in Marketing	250	200
CMI Level 6 Award in Management and Leadership (QCF)	250	200
CIM Level 4 Professional Certificate in Marketing	200	200
Ascentis Level 4 Award In Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	100	200
City & Guilds Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services (England) (QCF)	0	200
CMI Level 7 Certificate in Strategic Management and Leadership (QCF)	300	150
IFS Level 4 Diploma for Financial Advisers (QCF)	850	150
ILM Level 5 Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring in Management (QCF)	200	150
CMI Level 5 Award in Management and Leadership (QCF)	300	150
Edexcel Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services (England) (QCF)	0	150
NCFE Level 4 Award In Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	-	150
ABRSM Level 4 Diploma in Music Performance (QCF)	150	150
ILM Level 5 NVQ Diploma in Management (QCF)	100	150
CIPS Level 6 Graduate Diploma in Purchasing and Supply	200	150
Edexcel Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF)	100	150
Cskills Awards Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Controlling Lifting Operations - Planning Lifts (Construction)(QCF)	-	150
CIPS Level 5 Advanced Diploma in Purchasing and Supply	150	150
IAM Level 5 Diploma in School Business Management (QCF)	-	150
CII Level 4 Diploma in Regulated Financial Planning (QCF)	100	100
CMI Level 5 Award in Management Coaching and Mentoring (QCF)	150	100
Edexcel Level 4 NVQ in Supply Chain Management	100	100
CIPD Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Personnel and Development	100	100
City & Guilds Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	100	100
City & Guilds Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	150	100
CMI Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (QCF)	450	100
CMI Level 8 Certificate in Strategic Direction and Leadership (QCF)	100	100
OCR Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF)	250	100

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations

2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to December

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as '0', value of 0 will appear as '-'.

Table 4: The 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates in higher qualifications, January-March 2013 (January-March 2012 shown for comparison)  
England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Awarding organisation	Total number of certificates	
	January-March 2012	January-March 2013
Pearson Education Ltd	3,800	4,350
City and Guilds of London Institute	4,150	3,500
Chartered Management Institute	3,500	2,150
Institute of Leadership & Management	1,500	1,650
University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations	1,200	1,350
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	50	1,300
Association of Accounting Technicians	1,200	1,200
Chartered Institute of Legal Executives	950	900
OCR	1,150	900
Chartered Insurance Institute	1,400	650
Trinity College London	600	500
Institute of Administrative Management	150	500
Cskills Awards	300	500
Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply	450	450
EDI	350	400
Chartered Institute of Marketing	450	350
Association of Business Executives	550	350
Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment	350	350
CFA Society of UK	300	350
Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing	300	300
Ascentis	100	200
NCFE	100	200
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	200	200
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development	250	200
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	250	200
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	150	200
IFS School of Finance	900	200
Active IQ	100	150
Institute of Commercial Management	150	150
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	150	150
ATHE Ltd	-	150
Association of British Dispensing Opticians	100	100
Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management	100	100
British Institute of Facilities Management	50	100
Institute of Sales and Marketing Management	0	100
Assessment and Qualifications Alliance	100	100
WAMITAB	100	100
ABC Awards	100	100
Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited	100	100
Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body	200	100
The Pensions Management Institute	50	50
Signature	100	50
Mineral Products Qualifications Council	50	50
NOCN	100	50
Scottish Qualifications Authority trading as SQA	0	50
Awarding Body for Vocational Achievement Ltd	50	50
International Dance Teachers Association	-	50
VTCT	50	50
NCC Education Services	50	50
IoL Educational Trust	-	50

*Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database*

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations
2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to December

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as '0', value of '0' will appear as '-'.

Table 5: Total number of certificates in higher qualifications by sector subject area, 2007-8 to January-March 2013  
England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	Health, public services and care	Science and mathematics	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Construction, planning and the built environment	Information and communication technology	Retail and commercial enterprise	Leisure, travel and tourism	Arts, media and publishing	History, philosophy and theology	Social sciences	Languages, literature and culture	Education and training	Preparation for life and work	Business, administration, finance and law	Total number of certificates
07-08	20,600	350	1,250	2,850	3,850	2,500	1,300	450	7,300	-	-	900	16,950	150	40,800	<b>99,200</b>
08-09	20,550	800	1,150	3,300	4,750	2,050	1,500	450	9,750	-	0	500	17,500	200	43,650	<b>106,200</b>
09-10	22,350	650	950	3,600	5,150	1,500	2,100	900	10,300	0	-	500	24,050	100	51,750	<b>123,900</b>
10-11	19,900	300	700	3,350	3,450	1,450	1,500	1,100	10,900	0	0	400	28,150	50	58,400	<b>129,650</b>
11-12	12,350	200	750	4,700	4,000	1,400	2,200	1,300	8,850	0	0	650	30,850	100	62,000	<b>129,350</b>
12-13	5,100	50	250	1,000	1,400	300	800	450	2,200	0	-	350	13,500	50	27,700	<b>53,100</b>
Oct-Dec 2007	4,550	50	200	350	650	350	300	0	200	-	-	400	3,650	0	6,350	<b>17,100</b>
Jan-Mar 2008	4,700	100	300	150	500	50	300	50	400	-	-	50	4,300	0	8,950	<b>19,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2008	5,200	50	300	200	550	400	400	50	450	-	-	400	3,850	50	5,450	<b>17,300</b>
Jul-Sep 2008	6,150	150	400	2,150	2,200	1,650	300	350	6,300	-	-	50	5,150	50	20,000	<b>44,900</b>
Oct-Dec 2008	5,100	100	250	450	550	200	350	50	450	-	-	300	3,000	0	6,300	<b>17,200</b>
Jan-Mar 2009	4,400	250	250	350	550	450	200	50	1,200	-	-	50	2,650	0	11,500	<b>21,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2009	4,750	0	200	250	950	100	350	50	1,150	-	-	50	2,850	50	6,000	<b>16,750</b>
Jul-Sep 2009	6,250	400	450	2,300	2,650	1,300	600	300	6,950	-	-	100	9,000	150	19,800	<b>50,350</b>
Oct-Dec 2009	5,400	50	200	500	950	400	550	100	350	-	-	350	4,750	0	8,800	<b>22,350</b>
Jan-Mar 2010	5,200	200	250	300	850	200	600	200	800	0	-	50	4,900	50	11,100	<b>24,700</b>
Apr-Jun 2010	5,250	50	150	200	1,000	50	300	150	1,100	-	-	50	5,850	0	9,000	<b>23,200</b>
Jul-Sep 2010	6,500	350	350	2,650	2,400	850	600	450	8,100	-	-	50	8,550	50	22,850	<b>53,650</b>
Oct-Dec 2010	5,150	50	150	400	600	400	500	200	950	0	0	300	5,700	0	10,650	<b>25,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2011	4,650	50	100	250	550	150	350	250	1,300	-	-	50	6,050	0	14,800	<b>28,650</b>
Apr-Jun 2011	4,450	50	200	350	550	50	250	100	1,050	-	-	50	6,600	0	12,450	<b>26,100</b>
Jul-Sep 2011	5,700	200	200	2,300	1,800	850	450	500	7,600	-	-	50	9,800	0	20,450	<b>49,850</b>
Oct-Dec 2011	3,050	50	150	500	700	350	400	200	1,250	0	-	150	5,900	0	13,800	<b>26,500</b>
Jan-Mar 2012	3,050	50	150	500	500	200	500	250	950	-	0	100	7,250	0	14,100	<b>27,600</b>
Apr-Jun 2012	2,350	50	250	500	700	150	450	300	2,800	0	-	150	6,850	0	12,500	<b>27,050</b>
Jul-Sep 2012	3,900	100	250	3,200	2,100	750	850	500	3,800	-	-	250	10,850	50	21,600	<b>48,200</b>
Oct-Dec 2012	2,500	0	200	600	700	150	450	200	1,300	-	-	200	6,050	0	14,550	<b>27,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2013	2,600	50	50	400	650	150	350	250	900	0	-	100	7,400	0	13,150	<b>26,050</b>

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations

2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to September

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as '0', value of '0' will appear as '-'.  
Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 6: Total number of certificates in higher qualifications by qualification type, 2007-8 to January-March England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	English for speakers of other languages	Higher level	Key skills	NVQ	Occupational qualification	QCF	Total number of certificates
07-08	3,600	52,200	150	31,100	4,150	8,050	<b>99,200</b>
08-09	1,450	44,650	200	31,650	4,300	23,900	<b>106,200</b>
09-10	700	46,600	100	34,450	4,250	37,800	<b>123,900</b>
10-11	0	30,300	50	25,800	3,250	70,250	<b>129,650</b>
11-12	-	16,850	0	8,600	900	103,000	<b>129,350</b>
12-13	50	4,050	-	1,750	100	47,150	<b>53,100</b>
Oct-Dec 2007	300	10,150	0	5,450	850	350	<b>17,100</b>
Jan-Mar 2008	1,100	9,000	0	7,500	950	1,400	<b>19,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2008	1,300	6,800	50	7,100	1,000	1,050	<b>17,300</b>
Jul-Sep 2008	900	26,300	50	11,050	1,350	5,250	<b>44,900</b>
Oct-Dec 2008	200	7,100	0	6,450	1,000	2,450	<b>17,200</b>
Jan-Mar 2009	250	8,900	0	7,600	1,000	4,100	<b>21,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2009	400	4,600	50	6,100	1,000	4,600	<b>16,750</b>
Jul-Sep 2009	600	24,050	150	11,550	1,250	12,750	<b>50,350</b>
Oct-Dec 2009	300	7,900	0	7,250	1,050	5,850	<b>22,350</b>
Jan-Mar 2010	350	8,250	50	8,650	1,000	6,400	<b>24,700</b>
Apr-Jun 2010	0	6,850	0	7,150	950	8,250	<b>23,200</b>
Jul-Sep 2010	50	23,600	50	11,400	1,250	17,350	<b>53,650</b>
Oct-Dec 2010	0	6,800	0	6,800	950	10,500	<b>25,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2011	0	7,500	0	7,500	800	12,800	<b>28,650</b>
Apr-Jun 2011	-	3,900	0	6,100	750	15,300	<b>26,100</b>
Jul-Sep 2011	-	12,100	0	5,400	750	31,600	<b>49,850</b>
Oct-Dec 2011	-	4,000	0	3,250	400	18,800	<b>26,500</b>
Jan-Mar 2012	-	3,600	-	2,300	250	21,400	<b>27,600</b>
Apr-Jun 2012	-	2,500	-	1,650	100	22,800	<b>27,050</b>
Jul-Sep 2012	-	6,700	0	1,400	100	40,000	<b>48,200</b>
Oct-Dec 2012	0	2,000	-	1,000	50	23,950	<b>27,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2013	0	2,050	-	750	50	23,200	<b>26,050</b>

*Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database*

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations
2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to September

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as '0', value of '0' will appear as '-'.  
Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 7: Total number of certificates in higher qualifications by level, 2007-8 to January-March 2013 and vocational qualifications, from 2007-8 to January-March 2013  
England, Wales & Northern Ireland

	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	<b>Total number of certificates</b>
07-08	60,500	27,300	7,400	4,000	-	<b>99,200</b>
08-09	62,000	31,500	7,650	5,000	50	<b>106,200</b>
09-10	72,450	35,950	8,300	7,000	150	<b>123,900</b>
10-11	78,350	35,650	9,150	6,250	200	<b>129,650</b>
11-12	74,950	34,950	9,550	9,600	300	<b>129,350</b>
12-13	30,700	13,850	5,200	3,200	150	<b>53,100</b>
Oct-Dec 2007	12,000	3,550	850	700	-	<b>17,100</b>
Jan-Mar 2008	13,550	3,650	2,150	550	-	<b>19,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2008	12,550	3,000	600	1,150	-	<b>17,300</b>
Jul-Sep 2008	22,350	17,100	3,850	1,600	-	<b>44,900</b>
Oct-Dec 2008	11,250	3,750	1,150	1,100	-	<b>17,200</b>
Jan-Mar 2009	13,500	5,300	2,000	1,100	-	<b>21,900</b>
Apr-Jun 2009	11,800	3,500	550	850	0	<b>16,750</b>
Jul-Sep 2009	25,450	19,050	3,900	1,950	0	<b>50,350</b>
Oct-Dec 2009	13,450	6,250	1,350	1,250	50	<b>22,350</b>
Jan-Mar 2010	16,400	5,700	1,000	1,550	50	<b>24,700</b>
Apr-Jun 2010	14,450	6,500	800	1,500	0	<b>23,200</b>
Jul-Sep 2010	28,150	17,500	5,200	2,750	50	<b>53,650</b>
Oct-Dec 2010	15,700	6,200	1,650	1,450	100	<b>25,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2011	18,150	7,450	1,450	1,550	50	<b>28,650</b>
Apr-Jun 2011	16,750	6,350	1,850	1,150	0	<b>26,100</b>
Jul-Sep 2011	27,750	15,700	4,200	2,100	100	<b>49,850</b>
Oct-Dec 2011	15,100	6,950	1,550	2,850	50	<b>26,500</b>
Jan-Mar 2012	15,200	7,100	2,950	2,250	100	<b>27,600</b>
Apr-Jun 2012	16,500	6,950	1,500	2,050	50	<b>27,050</b>
Jul-Sep 2012	28,150	13,950	3,550	2,500	50	<b>48,200</b>
Oct-Dec 2012	16,400	6,500	2,400	1,700	50	<b>27,050</b>
Jan-Mar 2013	14,300	7,350	2,800	1,450	100	<b>26,050</b>

*Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database*

Notes:

1. Data are supplied by awarding organisations

2. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to September

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as '0', value of '0' will appear as '-'.  
Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation	
Spring Place	2nd Floor
Coventry Business Park	Glendinning House
Herald Avenue	6 Murray Street
Coventry CV5 6UB	Belfast BT1 6DN
Telephone 0300 303 3344	
Textphone 0300 303 3345	
Helpline 0300 303 3346	

Alison Fisher – Head of Statistics