Northern Ireland

Background	
Academic Calendar	September-June
What is year nine called?	Form Two, Year Two, year 9
Where is year nine typically located?	Final year of lower secondary school
Native Language(s)	English, Irish (Gaelic)
Graduation Timeline	
6 + 3+ 3 = 12 with optional +1 = 13 or +2 = 14	Varies (12, 13, or 14); see document-specific timelines below

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF PROOF OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION:

This section is divided into three "tiers." All tiers are acceptable forms of proof of graduation. Each tier has a separate expected timeline for completion and builds upon the previous tier.

Tier One

1. *General Certificate of Secondary Education* (GCSE) [Must pass **five** or more GCSE examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

2. *International General Certificate of Secondary Education* (IGCSE) [Must pass **five** or more IGCSE examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

3. *Level 1/Level 2 Certificates* [Must pass **five** or more Level 1/2 certificate examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

4. *General Certificate of Education* (GCE) Ordinary Level (O-level) examinations [Must pass **five** or more O-level examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

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5. *General National Vocational Qualifications* (GNVQ or NVQ) Intermediate Level (Level 2)

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

Tier Two

The expected timeline for completion of all Tier Two forms of proof of acceptable high school graduation is upon successful on-time completion of year 13. Earning a Tier Two form of proof of high school graduation will advance the expected date of high school graduation **one year** from the on-time expected timeline of a Tier One document.

1. *General Certificate of Education,* Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS-level) examinations [Must pass **two** or more AS-level examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

2. International Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS-level) examinations/Oxford Cambridge and RSA examinations (OCR) Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary Levels [Must pass **two** or more AS-level examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

3. *Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) Level 3 Diploma* (formerly National Certificate)

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Pearson/Edexcel
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

4. *Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations* (OCR) *Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma*

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Oxford/Cambridge
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

5. *Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations* (OCR) *Level 3 National Technical Diploma*

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Oxford/Cambridge
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

6. One Advanced Subsidiary (AS-level) examination and one Advanced (A-level) examination pass in **two** differing subjects (i.e., one AS-level in physics and one A-level in history)

Expected Timeline of Completion	13 years (five years or 10 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

Tier Three

The expected timeline for completion of all Tier Three forms of proof of acceptable high school graduation is upon successful on-time completion of year 14. Earning a Tier Three form of proof of high school graduation will advance the expected date of high school graduation **one year** from the on-time expected timeline of a Tier Two document or **two years** beyond the on-time completion of a Tier One document.

1. *General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level* (GCE A-Level) examinations/Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) Level 3 Advanced Level [Must pass **two** or more A-level examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

2. International Advanced Level (A-level) examinations [Must pass **two** or more A-level examinations in separate subjects to qualify as an acceptable form of proof of high school graduation]

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	August

3. General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ or NVQ) Advanced Level (Level 3) examination

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

4. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Level 3 Extended Diploma*

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Pearson/Edexcel
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

5. *Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations* (OCR) *Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma*

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Oxford/Cambridge
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

6. *Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations* (OCR) *Level 3 National Extended Diploma*

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Oxford/Cambridge
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

7. *Cambridge Pre-University Diploma* (Pre-U Diploma)

Expected Timeline of Completion	14 years (six years or 12 semesters from the initial start of year nine)
Issuing Body	Various examination boards
First Available Date of Issue (Typical)	June/July

NOT ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF PROOF OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

1. GCSE Short Course examinations

Expected Timeline of Completion	12 years (four years or eight semesters from the initial start of year nine.)
Document Type	Certificate
Issuing Body	Various examination boards

2. Colleges of Further Education
3. National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Foundation Level
4. Pitman Qualifications
5. *Vocational Certificate of Education* (VCE)
6. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma*
7. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Level 3 90-credit Diploma*
8. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Foundation Diploma*
9. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *First Diploma*
10. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *First Certificate*
11. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Introductory Diploma*
12. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) BTEC documents at Level 2 and below
13. Business and Technology Education Council's (BTEC) *Introductory Certificate*
14. *Cambridge Pre-University Certificate* (Pre-U Certificate)
15. *City and Guilds Level 3 Diploma*

GRADING SCALES

For school transcripts in years nine through 12 (form two through form five), **if alpha grades are present**, apply the GCSE grading scale. For year 13, **if alpha grades are present**, apply the AS-level grading scale. For year 14, **if alpha grades are present**, apply the A-level grading scale.

GCSE		
Numeric Grade	*U.S. Grade Equivalent*	*Quality Points*
7,8,9	A	4
5,6	B	3
4	C	2
1-3	F	0
U	F	0

GCSE					
Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points	Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
A	A	4	E	C	2
B	B	3	F	D	1
C	B	3	G	D	1
D	C	2	Ungraded	F	0

GCE: Ordinary Level (O-Level) Examination			
Grade	Numeric Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
A	1	A	4
B	2	B	3
C	3	C	2
D	4	D	1
E	5	D	1
F, G, H	-	F	0

Advanced Level (AS-Level, OCR Level 3 AS/A Level and A/A2 Level) Examination		
Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
A	A	4
B	B	3
C	B	3
D	C	2
E	C	2
N, O	F	0
U	F	0

Advanced Level (Modular Scheme) Examination		
Numeric Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
1	A	4
2	B	3
3	C	2 (lowest passing grade)

Business and Technology Education Council/Btec and Cambridge Pre-University Diploma		
Grade	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
Distinction	A	4
Merit	B	3
Pass	C	2 (lowest passing grade)

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) Alpha Scale		
Grade	*U.S. Grade Equivalent*	*Quality Points*
A	A	4
B	B	3
C	B	3
D	C	2
E	C	2
F	D	1
G	D	1
Ungraded	F	0

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

» The following are less commonly known course titles **approved** for use in an academic certification:

English/Native Language	*Math*	*Science*	*Social Science*	*Additional Courses*
Communication	Methods in Mathematics	Anatomy for Sport and Exercise (BTEC Level-3 course only)	Citizenship (earned 2010 and after).	Philosophy
English as a Second Language (Cambridge, Pearson/ Edexcel examination only)		Body in Action (BTEC Level-3 course only).	Classical Civilization.	Religion B Philosophy & Ethics
		Environmental Science & Environmental Management.	Communication and Culture.	
		Human Physiology.	Global Perspectives.	
		Principles of Anatomy and Physiology in Sport (BTEC Level-3 course only)	Humanities.	
			Modern Studies.	
			Psychology for Sports Performance (BTEC Level-3 course only).	
			Sport and Exercise Psychology (BTEC Level-3 course only).	
			World Development.	

» The following course titles have been reviewed and **not approved** for use in an academic certification:
  - Applications in Mathematics.
  - General Studies.
  - Film Studies.
  - Human Health and Physiology.
  - ICT (Information and Communication Technology).
  - Media Studies.
  - Religious Studies.

» The following BTEC Level 3 course titles have been reviewed and **not approved** for use in an academic certification:
  - Physiology of Fitness.
  - Scientific Principles Module.
  - Sport and Society.
  - Social Aspects of Sport.
  - Social Principals of Sport.

Only BTEC coursework listed on a 'Level 3' document and included on the approved course list (above) can be considered for use in an academic certification. Those not listed as either approved or not approved will not be pursued by academic certification.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

» **Course Title Usage guide**.
» **Determination of Credit resource**.
» **International initial-eligibility flyer**.
» **NCAA Guide of International Academic Standards for Athletics Eligibility**.
» **International Resources**.
» **How to Submit Your Academic Records**.

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