UK Qualifications & Awarding Bodies Mapping Guide (Scotland & England)

Side-by-side comparison of SCQF and RQF levels across SQA, VTCT/iTEC, City & Guilds, Qualifi, EduQual, CIBTAC/CIDESCO, HABIA, JCCP, and BABTAC with practical course examples.

SCQF Level (Scotland)	SQA (Scotland)	RQF Level (England)	VTCT / iTEC	City & Guilds	Qualifi & EduQual	CIBTAC / CIDESCO	HABIA & JCCP Standards	BABTAC Recognition & Course Examples
SCQF 4 Entry / Foundation	National 4, **NC** (Level 4), SVQ 1	**Level 1** Introductory	VTCT / iTEC Level 1 Awards & Certificates	City & Guilds Level 1 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 1 Awards	—	**HABIA** Level 1 NOS	**Assistant / Introductory Level** *Examples: Intro to Hair & Beauty Sector, Salon Reception, Basic Styling & Manicure.*
SCQF 5 Core Practitioner	National 5, **NC** (Level 5), SVQ 2	**Level 2** Core Trade	VTCT / iTEC Level 2 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 2 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 2 Diplomas	CIBTAC Level 2 Diplomas	**HABIA** Level 2 NOS	**BABTAC Level 2 Practitioner** *Examples: Barbering, Hairdressing, Beauty Specialist, Waxing, Facials, Gel Nails, Lash & Brow.*
SCQF 6 Advanced Practitioner	Higher, **NC** (Level 6), SVQ 3	**Level 3** Aesthetics Pre-Req	VTCT / iTEC Level 3 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 3 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 3 Diplomas	CIBTAC Level 3 / **CIDESCO** Beauty Diploma	**HABIA** Level 3 NOS	**BABTAC Level 3 Practitioner** *Examples: Swedish/Body Massage, Advanced Barbering, Facial Electricals, Nail Tech, Anatomy & Physiology.*
SCQF 7 Higher Technical	**HNC**, Advanced Higher, SVQ 3/4	**Level 4** Advanced Aesthetics	VTCT / iTEC Level 4 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 4 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 4 Diplomas	CIBTAC Level 4 / CIDESCO Post-Grad	**HABIA** Level 4 NOS / **JCCP** Level 4	**BABTAC Level 4 Advanced** *Examples: Laser & IPL Hair/ Skin, Microneedling, Chemical Peels, Dermaplaning, Salon Management.*
SCQF 8 Specialist / Clinical	**HND**, SVQ 4, PDA	**Level 5** Specialist Practice	VTCT / iTEC Level 5 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 5 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 5 Diplomas	—	**JCCP** Level 5 Benchmark	**BABTAC Level 5 Specialist** *Examples: Advanced Aesthetic Practice, Radiofrequency, Tattoo Removal, Plasma Fibroblast, Sports Massage.*
SCQF 9–10 Degree Level	Ordinary & Honours Degrees	**Level 6** Clinical / Degree	VTCT / iTEC Level 6 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 6 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 6 Diplomas	—	**JCCP** Level 6 Benchmark	**BABTAC Level 6 Clinical** *Examples: Advanced Aesthetic Therapies, Clinical Skin Science, Cosmetic Science & Spa Management Degrees.*

SCQF Level (Scotland)	SQA (Scotland)	RQF Level (England)	VTCT / iTEC	City & Guilds	Qualifi & EduQual	CIBTAC / CIDESCO	HABIA & JCCP Standards	BABTAC Recognition & Course Examples
SCQF 11 Postgraduate	Master's Degree, PgDip	**Level 7** Post-Grad Aesthetics	VTCT / iTEC Level 7 Diplomas	City & Guilds Level 7 Diplomas	Qualifi / EduQual Level 7 Diplomas	—	**JCCP** Level 7 Benchmark	**BABTAC Level 7 Post-Grad** *Examples: Clinical Aesthetic Injectable Therapies (Botulinum Toxin & Dermal Fillers), Medical Aesthetics.*

Key Guidance for Learners, Educators & Practitioners

- **Framework Alignment:** Scotland's SCQF spans 12 levels while England's RQF spans Entry to Level 8. An SQA **NC** typically sits at SCQF 4–6 (RQF Levels 1–3), an **HNC** sits at SCQF 7 (RQF Level 4), and an **HND** sits at SCQF 8 (RQF Level 5).
- **Regulated vs. CPD Courses:** Awarding organisations (SQA, VTCT/iTEC, City & Guilds, Qualifi, EduQual) issue regulated qualifications registered on the SCQF or Ofqual RQF. Short 1-day CPD courses do not carry formal RQF/SCQF levels even when marketed with level numbers.
- **Standards & Insurance: HABIA** sets UK National Occupational Standards (Levels 1–4), **JCCP** defines competency benchmarks for non-surgical aesthetics (Levels 4–7), and **BABTAC** maps both Scottish SCQF and English RQF qualifications to verify practitioner insurance eligibility.