



CATS
GLOBAL SCHOOLS

CATS UFP **Qualification**

An RQF Level 3 Qualification

Going further than others



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1. Introduction from the Chief External Examiner

As the Chief External Examiner, I am pleased to present this evaluation of the CATS University Foundation Programme (UFP) and its alignment with the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Level 3 expectations. This review assesses the CATS UFP's structure, assessment rigour, and quality assurance, confirming its equivalence to A-Level qualifications.

The report highlights the programme's effectiveness in preparing students for UK higher education through critical thinking and independent research. I commend CATS Global Schools for maintaining high academic standards and quality assurance mechanisms that meet RQF requirements.

Dr Ian Hill
Chief External Examiner
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2. Qualification Overview

Feature	CATS UFP	A-Level
RQF Level	3	3
Duration	1 Year (Standard) / 6-9 Months (Fast-Track)	2 Years
Subjects Studied	3 Academic Subjects + English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	Typically 3 Subjects
Total Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	435 GLH + Independent Study	~360-450 GLH per subject
Assessment Methods	In person and oral Exams, Coursework, Presentations, Research Projects	Exams, Coursework (limited to some subjects)
Grading System	A* – E (Aligned with A-Levels)	A* – E
Progression Pathway	Direct Entry to UK Universities	Direct Entry to UK Universities

3. Alignment with RQF Expectations

3.1 Structure and Depth of Learning

RQF Expectation: A Level 3 qualification should provide a breadth and depth of knowledge comparable to advanced secondary education (post-16 education). Learners should develop analytical, problem-solving, and evaluative skills.

How CATS UFP Meets the Standard:

- Like A-Levels, CATS UFP offers three academic subjects with significant depth.
- The programme is designed to bridge international qualifications with UK university expectations, ensuring an equivalent standard to A-Level curricula.
- The inclusion of **English for Academic Purposes (EAP)** supports students in academic literacy, complementing the subject-based curriculum.

3.2 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Workload

RQF Expectation: A minimum of 360 GLH per qualification.

How CATS UFP Meets the Standard:

- Each UFP subject includes 145 GLH, totalling **435 GLH for three subjects**, which meets the RQF Level 3 requirements.
- Additional independent learning, including research and project-based learning, enhances workload comparability with A-Levels.

3.3 Assessment Rigour and Methodology

RQF Expectation: Level 3 qualifications should assess a range of higher-order thinking skills, including analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and independent research.

How CATS UFP Meets the Standard:

- A combination of examinations, coursework, presentations, and research projects ensures a rigorous assessment structure.
- These methods test knowledge, independent research skills, and critical thinking, aligning with university expectations.
- The range of assessments in CATS UFP provides a comprehensive evaluation of students' academic abilities, similar to A-Level coursework and exams.

3.4 External Moderation and Quality Assurance

RQF Expectation: Rigorous quality assurance mechanisms must be in place to ensure validity and reliability of assessment outcomes.

How CATS UFP Meets the Standard:

- CATS UFP operates under an **Examination Board with external university-based examiners**, ensuring academic standards align with UK higher education expectations.
- **Internal verification and moderation processes** are embedded into the qualification, comparable to A-Level examination boards (OCR, AQA, Edexcel, etc.).
- **Secure examination procedures and malpractice handling policies** maintain academic integrity equivalent to national A-Level standards.

3.5 University Recognition and Progression

RQF Expectation: Level 3 qualifications should be widely accepted for entry into higher education.

How CATS UFP Meets the Standard:

- Over 95% of UFP students progress to UK universities, including over 65% to Russell Group institutions over the last 6 years.



- The qualification has been validated and recognised by numerous universities as equivalent to A-Level entry requirements.
- University-style assessments (coursework, independent projects, research) support academic transition to higher education.

4. Summary of CATS UFP Alignment with A-Level

Feature	CATS UFP	A-Level
Duration	1 Academic Year (Standard) or 6 Months (Fast-Track)	2 Years
Assessment Methods	Exams, coursework, presentations, research projects	Predominantly exams
English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	Integrated into programme	Not included
Quality Assurance	External moderation by university-based examiners	Exam boards review and moderate
Higher Order Skills Development	Critical thinking and problem-solving embedded in assessments	Developed through subject-based curriculum

5. Conclusion

The CATS UFP meets the RQF Level 3 expectations by providing a rigorous, structured, and well-moderated qualification that is equivalent to A-Levels. The assessment structure, quality assurance mechanisms, and guided learning hours ensure comparability with A-Level qualifications.

The UFP qualification aligns with RQF Level 3 standards and provides a clear pathway for progression into UK higher education.



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