

MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY



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**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND VALIDATION OF NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS**

October 2020

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Accreditation of a training programme	A process of quality assurance through which accredited status is granted to a programme of education or training, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative or professional authorities by having met predetermined standards (CEDEFOP, 2008).
Awarding Body	Body issuing qualifications (certificates, diplomas or titles) that formally recognises the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) of an individual, following an assessment and validation procedure (CEDEFOP, 2011).
Credit Value	A value assigned to a unit standard or a qualification that represents the notional learning time required to meet the performance requirements of the unit standard or qualification.
Learning Outcome	Statement of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process.
Level descriptors	Set of statements which describe each level of a qualification framework in terms of progressive stages of achievement and complexity.
Performance Criteria	Statements against which the attainment of elements of competence/outcomes of learning is measured. They describe the type and quality of evidence that must be considered by an assessor towards awarding credits for a module/unit standard.
Qualification	The formal recognition of the achievement of the required number and range of credits and other requirements at specific levels as determined by the Awarding Body (MQA Act 2001)

Term	Definition
Qualifications Framework	A system for classification, publication and articulation of quality assured qualifications according to a set of criteria (UNESCO, 2017).
Qualification Validation Committee (QVC)	The QVC evaluates qualifications developed and ensures that the qualifications are fit for-purpose and meet the needs of learners or the labour market, before endorsement.
Quality Assurance	Formal evaluation, monitoring and auditing processes to confirm that systems and processes are in place to ensure that educational/training provision meets the stated standards.
Recognition of Prior Learning	The acknowledgement through evaluation of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant credit in one or more-unit standard/s of a qualification.
Unit Standard	A registered statement of the learning outcomes, the type and quality of evidence that represents performance worthy of the award of credits, and the contexts in which that evidence should be demonstrated.
Validation	Validation is the process of ensuring that the characteristics and requirements of the proposed qualification, including each unit standard, are correct and reasonable, and meet the needs of stakeholders.

1 The National Qualifications Framework

1.0 Introduction

The Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) has one of its objects to develop, implement and maintain a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). In the furtherance of this object, the MQA needs to develop National Qualifications that are relevant to industry needs and the national economy. National Qualifications must be developed in close consultation with practitioners in the relevant sector/industry, be internationally benchmarked and match the skills development needs of the sector/industry.

To maintain consistency in the development of National Qualifications, the MQA has developed these Guidelines for the Development of National Qualifications. These guidelines will assist Awarding Bodies in the development of relevant and fit for purpose national qualifications.

1.1 The National Qualifications Framework

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is an instrument for the development and classification of qualifications and comprises 10 levels, ranging from the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) at level 1 up to a Doctorate at level 10 (Annex I). Each level is characterised by a set of level descriptors (Annex II) which indicate what a learner is expected to know and be able to do after receiving a qualification at that level. The NQF is a tool for establishing national equivalence and comparability of qualifications and it provides clear and flexible learning pathways thereby promoting lifelong learning. The NQF level assigned to a qualification spells out the learning demand of the said programme in terms of standards of knowledge, skills and competence irrespective of the title.

The NQF is also used as an instrument to develop outcome-based qualifications.

1.2 Who can develop qualifications and apply for validation?

National Qualifications, at NQF Levels 1 to 6, may be developed by:

- (i) any local Awarding Body (MITD, MIH and others)
- (ii) any local Awarding Body jointly with Employers/ Training Provider/ Professional Associations /NGO.
- (iii) industry/organisation in collaboration with the MQA, where Awarding Bodies are unable to develop such qualification

2 National Qualifications Development Process

This streamlined process caters for the development of qualifications based on request made by local Awarding Bodies autonomously, or jointly with training providers, employers, professional associations and NGOs that do not have awarding powers. Furthermore, provision has also been made to consider request/s from Industry for any specific qualification need that arises from an industry /organisation or is of national interest and the Awarding Body is unable to develop such qualification. In this particular context, such organisation/s may, in collaboration with the Authority, engage in the generation of the qualification/s and submit same for validation.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the process flow starts from the development of the qualifications and culminating to:

- (i) submission of the qualifications to the MQA for validation/accreditation
- (ii) evaluation of qualifications by the QVC, based on criteria and guidelines established by MQA,
- (iii) recommendations made by QVC for validation of qualifications
- (iv) validation of the qualifications by MQA Board
- (v) Validated National Qualifications will be used for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) purposes or for delivery of training programmes by registered training institutions.
- (vi) For institutions wishing to offer the qualification, the training programme will be subject to Accreditation requirements as prescribed by the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF).

Stage 1: Development

1

- Investigation and research (key features: requirements of industry or sector, Awarding Bodies, qualification development methods)
- Qualification developed or reviewed by a recognised Awarding Body or jointly with training institution or by industry/organisations in collaboration with the MQA (where Awarding Bodies are unable to develop such qualification).
- Qualifications to be developed or reviewed as per guidelines established by MQA

Stage 2: Submission

2

- Application for validation of qualification by a recognized Awarding Body or jointly with training institution or industry/organisations
- **Qualifications guidelines requirements** -Justification, target group, purpose, entry requirements, expected duration of programme, qualification pathway, proposed NQF Level and evidence of industry consultation

Stage 3: Validation

3

- **Evaluation of submissions by Qualification Validation Committee (QVC):** Validates the submissions and ensures that they meet the requirements in terms of unit standards, range, performance criteria, credit value, level of qualification.

4

- **Qualification specifications endorsed and recommended for registration on the NQF by the QVC or make amendments thereto.**

5

- **Qualifications endorsed by the QVC are submitted to the MQA Board for approval through its Technical Committee.**

6

- **Qualifications are published on the MQA Website.**

7

- **Qualifications having reached their review stage are considered through the same process, with amendment if any, by the QVC and recommendations are made to MQA for endorsement of National Qualifications.**

Applicant requested to make amendments to qualifications

Figure 1: Process for Development and Validation of National Qualifications

2.1 Methods for Qualification Development

A number of methods, such as DACUM, job analysis, functional analysis can be applied for the development of unit standards and qualifications (as described in section 2.3). However functional analysis is widely used in many countries and is the recommended approach. Functional analysis enables the identification of key purposes of an occupation which are subdivided into functions and sub-functions until the outcomes of each function are identified. The outcomes are further analysed to draft Unit Standards.

Any other approach may also be considered for the development of qualifications.

The Qualification should be drafted based on the Guidelines for Development and Validation of National Qualifications.

2.2 Functions of the Qualification Validation Committee (QVC)

The Qualification Validation Committee (QVC) evaluates the qualifications submitted by Awarding Bodies and ensures that the qualifications satisfy the requirements in terms of unit standards, range, performance criteria, credit value, level of qualification, entry requirements and general objectives. The QVC may also advise on qualification pathways proposed within the National Qualifications Framework and make suggestions for improvement to the qualification as and when required. Subsequently, if the qualifications are fit for purpose and meet the prescribed requirements, the QVC would recommend admission of the qualifications on the NQF.

The Committee comprises representatives from:

- (i) Business Mauritius
- (ii) Higher Education Commission
- (iii) Human Resource Development Council
- (iv) Mauritius Examinations Syndicate
- (v) Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology
- (vi) Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training

Co-opted subject experts and/or industry representatives may also be convened in the Committee depending on the qualification/s under consideration.

2.3 Submission of a new Qualification

The Application Form for Validation of Qualifications (Annex III), duly filled in, and the detailed qualification document should be submitted to the Authority as per the format, described hereunder, for evaluation by the Qualification Validation Committee (QVC).

2.3.1 Qualification Characteristics and Requirements

2.3.1.1 Title of qualification

The title of the qualification includes the field/sector, the type of qualification, and level of qualification. The developer should ensure that the qualification title aligns with the NQF qualification definitions. The nomenclature of National Qualifications is as follows:

- Qualification Type (e.g. National Certificate, National Diploma)
- NQF Level (e.g. Level 3)
- Qualification Designator (e.g. Computing)
- Qualification Qualifier (e.g. Software Applications)

In this respect, an example of the title of a National Qualification should read as follows: National Certificate Level 3 in Computing (Software Applications)

2.3.1.2 Proposed NQF Level of the qualification

In order to determine the appropriate level for the proposed National Qualification, the outcomes for each unit of competency should be compared to the level descriptors of the NQF to determine the best match and take into account credit values of each qualification component. The credit values reflect the duration of the qualification components.

2.3.1.3 Credit Value of the qualification

The credit value reflects the average learning hours expected for a learner to complete the learning leading to the achievement of the qualification. For instance, one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning.

Notional learning hours include:

- Contact hours (teaching sessions, laboratory practical classes and/or workshops);
- Time spent on self-study (including online learning) and assignments;
- Time spent on work placements;
- Time spent on assessment

The total credit value of the qualification should be cumulative of the credit values of the Unit Standards. An estimate of the credit value of qualifications at different NQF Levels is as per table below.

NQF Level	Credit Value assigned
1-2	60-100
3-4-5	100-200
6	200-240

One year of full-time learning is generally assigned a credit value of 120 (1,200 notional learning hours) and one semester of full time learning is generally assigned a credit value of 60;

2.3.1.4 Purpose of the qualification and target group

A statement that summarises why the qualification was developed, who it is aiming at, and how it meets identified national needs and priorities.

2.3.1.5 Justification for development of such qualification

This is a brief description of the industry or sector for which the National Qualification is developed. Included in this section is a statement of the scope of the National Qualification - an indication of the occupations, jobs or activities for which the National Qualification is relevant. This information lets employers, providers, assessors and learners know what career options are available to holders of the National Qualification.

2.3.1.6 Proposed Entry Requirements

Any necessary entry requirements or pre-requisite qualifications should be specified. Entry requirements should not exclude individuals on the basis of gender, special needs, or other discriminating factors. Whenever possible, recognition of prior learning is encouraged in order to widen the access to learning opportunities for everyone.

2.3.1.7 Assessment Methods

Different methods of assessments should be adopted to ensure that a variety of evidence is collected for the assessment of both knowledge and skills. This will enable the assessor in making appropriate decision on whether the learner has achieved the competencies included in each unit standard. The unit standards should be assessed as a whole rather than individual learning outcomes or individual performance criteria.

Assessments should be based on the following guiding principles to the learning outcomes: fairness, validity, consistency, sufficiency, authenticity and appropriateness.

Examples of assessment methods are:

- Direct observation of activities (real or simulated);
- Oral Questioning and/or Written tests;
- Review of project/work samples;
- Projects, presentations, role-plays and case studies;
- Portfolio assessments;
- Feedback from external stakeholders.

Furthermore, the components and percentage weighting of each assessment method must be provided, and the minimum percentage pass mark to be achieved in order to pass the course should be stated.

2.3.1.8 Integration within existing qualification pathways

Developers of each national qualification must indicate the relationship of this qualification with other available qualifications for the sector (national and international). This includes mapping the likely pathways to and from the qualification.

2.3.1.9 Rule of combination

The Awarding Body or organisations must ensure that at least 70% of the unit standards in the qualification developed reflects national needs and the remaining unit standards purport to specific skill needs in the sector. Mandatory and elective components are clearly indicated in the qualification structure.

2.3.1.10 Evidence of consultation with relevant industry stakeholders

Awarding Bodies should consult with relevant stakeholders of the different fields such as:

- Professional Associations/ Councils in the Sector
- Regulatory Bodies in the Sector
- Training Providers in the field
- Employers/Industry Associations

The Awarding Body with the assistance of the above stakeholders should work out the scope of the qualification in light of the requirements from the MQA. The scope of the qualification will determine whether the qualification should pertain to the sector, a particular field or an occupation.

2.3.1.11 International Comparability

The extent to which the national qualification, being reviewed or developed, and its associated unit standards compare with similar qualifications offered internationally should be indicated. A clear description should be provided.

2.3.1.12 Collaborative Agreement for the proposed qualification

Awarding Bodies may develop qualifications autonomously, or jointly with training providers, employers, professional associations and NGOs that do not have awarding powers. With regard to qualifications development involving a collaborative agreement with external stakeholders, the list of relevant industry, professional organisation, educational body or other stakeholders collaborating for the qualification and relevant documents (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Letter of endorsement, Agreement statement, etc) should be provided.

2.3.1.13 Generation of Unit Standards

Unit Standards are registered components and building blocks of National Qualifications. Each represents an outcome of learning and/or a work activity that is a significant part of what a qualification recognizes. Unit standards state:

- the outcome(s) of learning and/or work activity needing to be formally assessed;
- the proof of performance a candidate must produce and/or demonstrate if they are to receive formal recognition of their knowledge and skills;

- the quality of this required evidence, representing what national stakeholders consider being acceptable performance;
- the scope, context, parameters and limitations to and/or of any required performance;

The instructions and template for drafting Unit Standards are provided at Annex IV.

Characteristics and components of Unit Standards are specified as follows.

(i) Title of Unit Standard

The title provides an indication of the contents of the Unit Standard and states what the learner is able to do in a single sentence. No two unit standards can have the same title.

(ii) NQF Level assigned

The NQF level assigned to the Unit Standard should be based on the NQF level descriptors as well as the qualification specifications.

(iii) Credit Value

The credit value assigned to the Unit Standard reflects the average learning hours expected for a learner to complete the learning leading to the achievement of the standard. For instance, one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning.

The Credit Value is calculated as follows:

- Contact hours (teaching, practical classes and/or workshops) = ? hours
- Time spent on self-study and assignments = ? hours
- Time spent on work placements = ? hours
- Time spent on assessment = ? hours
- Others = ? hours

Total hours ÷ 10 = Credit Value.

The Credit Value should be whole numbers.

(iv) Purpose

This statement expresses the skills and knowledge that a learner should be able to demonstrate, upon achievement of this Unit Standard.

(v) Assessment Methods

A range of methods should be used to assess both the knowledge and skills of learners. This would ensure that relevant decisions are made on whether the learner has achieved competency in each unit. Assessment should be based on learning outcomes and guided by the principles of fairness, validity, consistency and appropriateness.

Assessment methods include:

- Direct observation of a real or simulated activity;
- Oral and/or written questions;
- Activities such as projects, presentations, role-play and case studies;
- Portfolio development, etc.

(vi) Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes reflect the competencies identified during functional analysis that can be measured and verified. Learning outcomes need to specify the complexity of learning in terms of the practical demand (action), the context in which learning is applied, and the degree of autonomy or independence, and responsibility of the learner. As the learner progresses towards higher levels, the complexity, degree of autonomy, independence, and originality of the work becomes eminent. Learning outcomes should be spelt out as actions which can be demonstrated and assessed.

Reflecting NQF levels in learning outcomes

When writing learning outcomes, with a view to ensuring that learning outcomes are written at the required (or desired) level, it is important to:

- become familiar with the NQF Level Descriptors at the level for which the unit is being written, in addition to those above and below, and to regularly revisit these during the writing process
- identify the distinguishing features between NQF levels such as problem-solving skills, familiarity, supervised or independent working, and routine or non-routine actions
- learning outcomes should be indicative of the NQF level
- show what is expected to be achieved by learners in term of knowledge, skills and/or competence.
- ensure that the learning outcomes are measurable and achievable

- ensure that there is clear linkage between the learning outcomes and the assessment methods
- ensure that there is clear linkage between the unit learning outcomes and the programme/qualification learning outcomes
- use a manageable number of learning outcomes.
- make use of appropriate verbs, which are in line with the NQF level descriptors, in the qualification learning outcomes. The levels recommended by Bloom (1964) to specify the nature of the understanding that is sought (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis) can be consulted, at Annex V, when learning outcomes are being written down.

Where appropriate, use multiple verbs to represent increased of complexity of learning outcomes.

For example:

- Learning outcomes for qualifications at level 2 and 3 would contain “basic verbs” and limited multiple verbs per learning outcome, e.g. describe or list.
- Intermediate levels learning outcomes might include some basic verbs, some higher level ones, but predominantly contain intermediate level verbs, e.g. compare and contrast...; critically analyse and make independent judgment.

Structure of Learning Outcomes

A well-constructed learning outcome includes the following elements to reflect the complexity of learning:

- *demand/competence* – what a learner is able to do, e.g. plan and implement
- *standard or complexity/degree of sophistication of performance* - how well, e.g. can make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations
- *autonomy or degree of independence* of the learner and amount of guidance required by the learner, e.g. can autonomously plan and implement tasks

Examples of Learning Outcomes

At NQF Level 6:

Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of market forces and performance management, responding to niche markets.

At NQF Level 5:

Ensure corrective actions are taken for risk situations documented in the food safety programme.

At NQF Level 4:

Explain roles and responsibilities for ensuring quality in an organisation.

At NQF Level 3:

Use effective communication techniques when dealing with visitors and callers.

At NQF Level 2:

Perform basic calculations for the workplace.

(vii) Performance Criteria

These represent measurable and verifiable assessment criteria used to assess the learners' knowledge and skills. Demonstration of the performance criteria indicates that the learner is competent in the elements that make up each unit standard. Each learning outcome is expected to have, as a guide, 4-8 performance criteria.

(viii) Range Statements (where applicable)

The range statement specifies the context in which the learning outcome and performance criteria apply. It limits the breadth of the competency that needs to be achieved.

(ix) Review date

It specifies the date by which the Unit Standard is expected to be reviewed.

2.4 Evaluation by the Qualification Validation Committee (QVC)

After submission of an application for validation of qualification to the MQA, the qualification is evaluated by the QVC and recommendations are made for its validation

2.4.1 Validation of Qualifications

One of functions of QVC Members is to validate and/or recommend the NQF level of a Qualification and its Unit Standards by comparing learning outcomes and the associated assessment for each unit to the NQF Level Descriptors.

Step 1: Determination of the NQF Level for each unit standard

The QVC considers the level of each of the unit standard that the qualification comprises, as these will determine the overall NQF level of the qualification. The level is influenced mainly by the learning outcomes and assessment methods, and other factors such as:

- complexity and depth of knowledge and understanding
- degree of independence and creativity
- range of sophistication in application and practice
- role taken in relation to others in carrying out tasks.

Step 2: Determination of the qualification's NQF Level

Once the Members have agreed on the levels of all unit standards of the qualification, they would then come to a consensus regarding the overall NQF level of the qualification, for which a number of common models or approaches exist such as using:

- equal components: a simple model that is used where all units of the qualification are at the same level.
- exit level: often adopted for larger qualifications lasting for one year or more, or where qualifications have been designed at a particular level (such qualifications are usually governed by a distinct specification, relevant to the type of qualification, in which the minimum number of credits is predefined for each level of the qualification). In such qualifications, learners build up their knowledge as they progress through the qualification, with the exit level then determining the eventual NQF level.
- proportional design: a model which determines the level of the overall qualification based on the proportion of units at a particular level – for example a qualification comprising six units in total, two of which are at NQF Level 4 and four of which are at NQF Level 5, would opt for NQF Level 5, the majority of units being at that level.

Where none of the above models is applicable (e.g. for a smaller qualification with an equal number of units at different levels), the QVC will need to decide on the eventual (proposed) level of the qualification taking into account:

- the credit value of each unit

- the target group the qualification is aimed at
- the level of any prerequisite requirements
- the importance (weighting) of individual units within the qualification
- the level(s) of entry or progression pathways.

In all cases, the Members would indicate the basis on which they make their final decision on the overall level of a qualification.

QVC would carry out the validation process based on the criteria listed in the Qualifications Validation Criteria sheet at Annex VI and makes recommendations for validation

Step 3: Validation of qualification by MQA Board for admission on the NQF

Once validated by the MQA Board a qualification code is assigned thereto. The qualification code comprises three alpha characters, a numeric character identifying the NQF level, a two numeric character sequence identifier, and two numeric characters identifying the year the qualification was endorsed. Upon MQA Board's Approval, the qualification is admitted on the NQF and is subsequently published on the MQA Website.

2.5 Revision and Review of Qualifications

2.5.1 Revision to Qualifications

A revision of a qualification is conducted if there are minor changes to the elements and /or performance criteria in Unit Standards. Following receipt of comments and proposed changes by stakeholders, same are considered by the QVC. The proposed changes are scrutinized by members of the QVC and if justified, the changes are recommended to the MQA for approval. Following approval, an revised version of the qualification document is circulated.

2.5.2 Review of Qualifications

A review of a qualification is conducted if there are significant changes to the qualification.

Qualifications are reviewed to ensure that they are still useful, relevant and fit for purpose. Review aspects pertain to current and future skills needs of the sector, policy/regulations changes, technological and social changes affecting the sector and changes in workforce characteristics, which may require a change to the

qualification title, its purpose, its level on the NQF, the number of credits and its learning outcomes.

Awarding Bodies and Organisations would be notified about the review exercise at least 12 months prior to expiry date of qualifications and would be requested to fill in a Qualifications Review Form (Annex VII) for a qualification under review and submit it to the Authority. All the sheets are compiled and considered in the QVC with a view to finalise all qualifications under review and provide recommendations to the MQA Management and subsequently to the MQA Board for approval.

The QVC would make recommendations for validation of the reviewed qualifications based on the criteria listed in the Qualifications Validation Criteria sheet at Annex VI.

The QVC may recommend the withdrawal of qualification(s) which do not cater for the needs of industry and are no longer fit for purpose.



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THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL	PRIMARY / SECONDARY EDUCATION	TVET / WORKPLACE	TERTIARY EDUCATION	LEVEL
10			Doctorate	10
9			Masters Degrees e.g. MA, MSc, MPhil Post-Graduate Diploma, Post-Graduate Certificate	9
8			Bachelor Degree with Honours	8
7			Bachelor (Ordinary Degree)	7
6			National Diploma Level 6	Diploma
5	HSC / GCE 'A' Level /BAC / IBAC/ HSC Professional	National Certificate Level 5	Certificate	5
4		National Certificate Level 4		4
3	SC / GCE 'O' Level	National Certificate Level 3		3
2	National Certificate of Education (NCE)	National Certificate Level 2		2
1	Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC)	National Certificate Level 1		1

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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
1	The level at which Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) is registered.	Demonstrate basic numeracy, literacy and basic IT skills	
2	The level at which National Certificates at level 2 are registered	Demonstrate narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are limited in range 2. Are repetitive and familiar 3. Are applied within closely defined contexts 4. Require close supervision
3	The level at which National Certificates at level 3 are registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate basic operational knowledge 2. Master readily available knowledge 3. Be able to use known solutions to familiar problems 4. Display/generate some new ideas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are established and familiar 2. Are moderate in range 3. Are applied in a range of familiar contexts 4. Require supervision
4	The level at which National Certificates at level 4 are registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate a broad knowledge base incorporating some technical concepts 2. Have command of analytical interpretation of information 3. Express informed judgement 4. Be able to display a range of known responses to familiar problems 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require a wide range of technical skills 2. Are applied in a variety of familiar and non-familiar contexts with the need for some or no supervision 3. Demand occupation competence over a range of routine and non-routine tasks 4. Require the need for little or no supervision.

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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
5	The level at which National Certificates at level 5 are registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate broad knowledge base with substantial depth in area(s) of study 2. Have command of analytical interpretation of a range of data 3. Be able to determine appropriate methods and procedures to respond to a range of problems 4. Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments 5. Display qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require a wide-range of technical and/or management skills 2. Involve a wide-choice of standard and non standard procedures, often in non-standard combinations 3. Are employed in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts
6	The level at which National Diplomas at level 6 are registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate specialised in-depth knowledge in their area(s) of study. 2. Have command of analysis, diagnosis, planning and evaluation across a broad range of technical and/or management functions. 3. Be able to formulate appropriate responses to resolve problems. 4. Communicate, in a variety of forms and with structured and coherent arguments, the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and identify the broader principles, issues and impacts. 5. Display qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and in contexts where they are contributing to decision-making processes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require a command of a wide range of highly specialised technical and/or management, and/or conceptual or creative skills. 2. Involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures. 3. Are applied in highly variable and non-routine contexts.

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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
7	The level at which Bachelors Degree (Ordinary Degree) is registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, including an understanding of some advanced aspect(s) of their area(s) of study. 2. Ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context. 3. Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s), and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study. 4. An understanding of the limits of that knowledge and how this influences analysis and interpretation based on that knowledge. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solution to problems arising from that analysis. 2. Effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences; and deploy key techniques of the discipline with confidence. 3. Undertake further training; develop existing skills, and acquire new competencies that enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations. <p><u>And would have:</u> Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision making in complex contexts.</p>

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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
8	The level at which Bachelors degree with honours, often referred to as 'honours degrees' are registered. Also at this level are "conversion" programmes based largely on undergraduate material.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of a coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which are at or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline. 2. An ability to deploy accurately established analytical techniques and enquire within their discipline. 3. An ability to devise and sustain arguments and/or to solve problems using ideas or techniques some of which will be at the forefront of a discipline and to describe; and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent scholarship in the discipline. 4. An appreciation of the uncertain, ambiguity and limits of knowledge. 5. The ability to manage their own learning and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g. refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the methods, techniques and (where applicable) modes of practice that they have learned & reviewed to consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge & understanding so as to initiate and carry out projects. 2. Consider abstract data, concepts and/or raw materials and frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution or identify a range of solution to a problem. 3. Communicate information, ideas, problems, and solutions in a variety of formats appropriate to both specialists and non-specialist audiences. <p><i>And would have:</i> Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility for decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts, and the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.</p>

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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
9	<p>The level at which Masters degrees, e.g. MA, MSc, and M.Phil are registered.</p> <p>Also at this level are advanced programmes, such as Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas.</p> <p>However, differentiation between Masters Degrees and Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas is made on the basis of the lesser number of credits obtained and no practical understanding of techniques of research for the latter qualifications.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights at the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice. 2. A comprehensive understanding of relevant techniques applicable to their research or advanced scholarship. 3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. 4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline and to evaluate critically methodologies and where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, make sound judgement in the absence of complex data, and communicate these conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences. 2. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level. 3. Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level. 4. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision making in complex and unpredictable situations and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

LEVEL		LEARNING DEMAND	PROCESSES
10	The level at which Doctorates are registered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication. 2. A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice. 3. The ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems. 4. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make informed judgement on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences. 2. Continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches. <p><u>And would have:</u> The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environment.</p>



MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

(Established under the Mauritius Qualifications Authority Act 2001)

Application Form for Validation of Qualifications

Please read the 'Guidelines for Development and Validation of National Qualifications' document prior to filling in this Form.

1. Name of Awarding Body/ Institution/Organisation			
2. Address of the Awarding Body/Institution/Organisation			
3. Name of contact person			
4. Designation			
5. Phone number			
6. Email			
7. Title of the qualification to be developed (including NQF Level) <i>Example: National Certificate Level 3 in Computing (Software Applications)</i>			
8. Total Credits proposed for the qualification <i>(Note: 1 credit corresponds to 10 notional hours of training)</i>		Duration of qualification (where applicable) Hours
		 Years
9. Purpose of the proposed qualification and target group			
10. Sector			

11. Justification for the development of the qualification

12. Entry Requirements and/or Pre-requisite

13. Assessment Methods

14. Qualification pathways

15. Evidence from relevant industry stakeholders for the proposed qualification development

(Note: Please attach all evidences)

16. International Comparability

17. Collaborative Agreement for the proposed qualification (if any).

(Note: Please list relevant national industry, professional organisation, educational body or other stakeholders collaborating for the qualification and attach relevant documents (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Letter of endorsement, Agreement statement, etc).

Submitted by: **Signature:**

Designation : **Date:**/...../.....

Note: The duly filled in Application Form for Validation of Qualifications should be submitted along with the detailed skill sets of the qualification.

CHECKLIST

List of documents submitted (Please tick <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> as appropriate)	Remarks (<i>for office use only</i>)
Evidence of consultation with relevant stakeholders	
Collaborative Agreement (if any)	
Detailed Unit Standards of the Qualification (as per template at Annex IV)	

<i>For office use only</i>	
Remarks:	
.....	
.....	
Verified by:	Signature:
Date:/...../.....	

Instructions for Drafting Unit Standards and Qualifications

1. The Qualification purpose statement must be clear and related to identified individual, professional and industry needs.
2. The Qualification title should be formulated as per the prescribed nomenclature for naming National Qualifications. The title should be indicative of the purpose and outcomes of the qualification.
3. The Qualification level should be consistent with the purpose and outcomes of the qualification as well as the qualification type.
4. The entry requirements should be clearly specified and is appropriate for the level and complexity of the qualification.
5. The credit value of the qualification should be consistent with the qualification type and level assigned on the NQF.
6. The Unit Standards are drafted as per the prescribed template annexed and should reflect the purpose, title and level of the qualification.
7. The Unit Standard title should be formulated by using appropriate verbs consistent with the level descriptors. A list of verbs is provided in Annex V, as per Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.
8. The learning outcomes should reflect the purpose statement of the qualification. They should be clearly formulated and should be in line with the descriptors of the level at which the qualification is located on the NQF.
9. Learning Outcomes should be assessable. Use of appropriate verbs is very important in this respect.

Template of Unit Standards/Qualification Development

Qualification Title: National Certificate Level ... in ...

1. Level of qualification:
2. Total Credits:
3. Review date:
4. Access to qualification

4.1 Entry information

.....
.....

4.2 Award of unit standards

Unit No.	Unit Standard Title	Mandatory/ Elective/ Others	Level	Credit
01				
02				
03				
04				
05				
	Total Credits			

5. Purpose of Qualification:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Unit Standard Title

Level:

Credit:

Review date:

Purpose:

Assessment Method:

Special Note:

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria

Learning Outcome 1

Demonstrate knowledge of ...

Performance criteria

1.1

1.2

1.3

1.4

Learning Outcome 2

Apply....

Performance criteria

2.1

2.2

2.3

2.4

2.5

2.6

Unit Standard Title

Level:

Credit:

Review date:

Purpose:

Assessment Method:

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria

Learning Outcome 1

Demonstrate knowledge of ...

Performance criteria

- 1.1
- 1.2
- 1.3
- 1.4

Learning Outcome 2

Apply....

Performance criteria

- 2.1
- 2.2
- 2.3
- 2.4

Learning Outcome 3

Demonstrate knowledge of and apply....

Performance criteria

- 3.1
- 3.2
- 3.3
- 3.4

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Category	Definition	Action Verbs			
Knowledge	Recall terms, facts, or details in the approximate form in which they were presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define • identify • label • list • name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state • locate • quote • reproduce • repeat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recite • record • outline • describe • duplicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • match • memorize • recognize • recall • enumerate
Comprehension	Translate, summarize, or interpret information based on prior learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain • interpret • paraphrase • summarize • classify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss • predict • associate • convert • estimate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • translate • recognize • extend • express • indicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generalize • give examples • review • rewrite • relate
Application	Select, transfer, and use data or principles to complete a task with little direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solve • apply • illustrate • modify • use • calculate • demonstrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete • construct • report • operate • practice • compute • change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choose • discover • show • sketch • dramatize • manipulate • produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employ • schedule • write • examine
Analysis	Break materials into parts, classify and relate assumptions, and describe relationships among parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze • distinguish • infer • separate • categorize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare • differentiate • prioritize • produce • diagram 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relate • deduce • compare • contrast • devise 	
Synthesis	Integrate and combine ideas to form a unique solution to a problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design • compose • create • plan • combine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate • invent • integrate • organize • prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adapt • assemble • revise • choose • justify 	
Evaluation	Assess, critique, and judge value based on specific standards and criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate • appraise • judge • recommend • assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop • grade • measure • categorize • rank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select • construct • test • critique • generate 	



MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

(Established under the Mauritius Qualifications Authority Act 2001)

Qualifications Validation Criteria

Awarding Body/ Institution/Organisation	
Qualification Title	
NQF Level	
Total credits	

Qualification Characteristics/ Requirements	Criteria	Criteria has been met?		Remarks
		Yes	No	
1. Qualification Title	1.1 The title is indicative of the purpose and outcomes of the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	1.2 The title indicates the qualification type (e.g. National Certificate, National Diploma, etc) and field or sub-field.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	1.3 The title indicates the NQF Level (except for National Diploma)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	1.4 The title has the right designator, and/or the right qualifier	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	1.5 The title is appropriate and complies with qualification definitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Qualification Characteristics/ Requirements	Criteria	Criteria has been met?		Remarks								
		Yes	No									
2. Qualification NQF Level	2.1 The level is consistent with qualification definitions (National Diploma/National Certificate).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	2.2 The level is consistent with the outcome level descriptors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	2.3 The level is consistent with the qualification outcome statement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
3. Total Credit Value	3.1 The total credit value is shown.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NQF Level</th> <th>Credit Value Assigned</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1-2</td> <td>60-100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3-4-5</td> <td>100-200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>200-240</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	NQF Level	Credit Value Assigned	1-2		60-100	3-4-5	100-200	6	200-240	3.2 The total credit value of the qualification represents the sum of the credits assigned to each unit standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF Level	Credit Value Assigned											
1-2	60-100											
3-4-5	100-200											
6	200-240											
	3.3 The credit total is appropriate and conforms to qualification type and level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
4. Purpose of the qualification and Target group	4.1 The purpose of the qualification is clearly described.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	4.2 The purpose indicates the individuals, professionals, industries or community needs being targeted by the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	4.3 The scope indicates clearly the occupations, jobs or activities for which the qualification is relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	4.4 The benefits of the qualification are stated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									

Qualification Characteristics/ Requirements	Criteria	Criteria has been met?		Remarks
		Yes	No	
5. Entry Requirements	5.1 Entry requirements or pre-requisite qualifications or prior experience are clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5.2 Entry requirements do not exclude individuals on the basis of gender, social origin, special needs or other discriminating factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5.3 Entry requirements are acceptable for the level of the qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	6.1 The criteria for conducting RPL is clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6.2 The criteria is acceptable for the level of the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Qualification structure and Details	7.1 The qualification structure is stated together with details about the credit value of each unit standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Assessment Methods	8.1 The types of assessments for the qualification are described.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8.2 A range of formative and summative assessment methods such as role plays, simulations, assignments, work place assessments, written and oral presentations, and examinations, amongst others, are used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8.3 The components and percentage weighting of each assessment is provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8.4 The minimum percentage pass mark to be achieved by learners/candidates is clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8.5 The criteria, that will be used by the assessor to determine whether the student has achieved the outcomes of the qualification, are provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Qualification Characteristics/ Requirements	Criteria	Criteria has been met?		Remarks
		Yes	No	
9. Qualification Pathways	9.1 Appropriate learning pathways to and from the qualification are clearly indicated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Evidence from relevant industry stakeholders	10.1 Evidence of consultation with relevant industry stakeholders are provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	10.2 Evidence(s) states the relevance of the qualification in the sector/field or for the occupation for which it was developed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Subject Expert Views	11.1 Views of subject experts (Industry and Academia) have been obtained on the relevance and suitability of the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Unit Standards of the qualification	12.1 The level, credit value, review date, purpose, special note(optional), learning outcomes(elements) and performance criteria are clearly stated, for each Unit Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12.2 The assessment methods, and the requirements for successful completion of the qualification are reasonable for each Unit Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12.3 The Mandatory and Elective components are clearly stated, where applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12.4 Generic unit standards are up to date and relevant to the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12.5 The Unit Standards reflect the purpose and level of the qualification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12.6 The overall qualification structure (contents and assessment methods) is acceptable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Qualification Characteristics/ Requirements	Criteria	Criteria has been met?		Remarks
		Yes	No	
13. International Comparability	13.1 The qualification has been compared with international qualifications having some similarities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Collaborative Agreement for the qualification (where applicable)	14.1 Evidence of collaboration with relevant national or international industry, professional organisation, educational body or other stakeholders, is provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Remarks:

Qualification Code:

Submitted by: **Signature:**

Designation: **Date:**/...../.....



MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

(Established under the Mauritius Qualifications Authority Act 2001)

Qualifications Review Form

1. Qualification Details

Sector		Qualification Code	
Qualification Title			Total credits
Name of Awarding Body/Institution			
Name of Contact Person			
Designation			
Phone Number			
Email			
Address			

2. Review Comments

Review Aspects	Does the qualification require review? If Yes, propose changes to Unit Standards.	
	Unit No.	Change/s
To meet the current and future industry skills needs of the sector? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

Review Aspects	Does the qualification require review? If Yes, propose changes to Unit Standards.	
	Unit No.	Change/s
To be in line with current and new regulations prevailing in the sector? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
To reflect any recent technological change affecting the sector? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
To reflect any recent social change affecting the sector? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
To reflect any recent change pertaining to the social/workforce characteristics of the sector? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

Note: In case of other changes, you may use additional sheets

3. Change to qualification title

--

4. Any other significant change/s

Comment:

--

Submitted by:

Date:/...../.....

Designation: **Signature:**

Complete this form and return it to:

The Director
Mauritius Qualifications Authority
Pont Fer, Phoenix
Tel: 6861400 Fax: 686 1441 E-mail: office@mqa.mu

For office use only

Remarks:.....
.....
.....

Verified by: **Signature:**

Date:/...../.....

4 References

1. CEDEFOP, 2011. *Glossary. Quality in education and training*.
2. Education & Training Quality Authority, 2017. *General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework, Handbook for Institutions*. Kingdom of Bahrain.
3. National Skills Standards Council, 2016. *Review of the alignment between the Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2012 and Standards for Training Packages*. Australia.
4. Weber State University, 2013. *Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. United States.