Maldives

Overview of Higher Education System
Higher Education in the Maldives is mainly provided by one Government University and six Private Colleges. Higher Education typically falls within level 5-10 of the Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF). Skill training covers education and training and occurs after basic education (year 7), and is not part of the secondary level school system.

There is a variety of providers of skill training and education for young school leavers and adults that aim at up-skilling and re-skilling unemployed persons. Usually this level of training or education falls within level 1-6 of the MNQF. There are number of such training providers including polytechnics, training institutes, training centres, learning centres, or mobile training units providing specialist education or training up to level 6 of the MNQF.

National Qualifications Framework
The MNQF, established in 2001 and revised in 2009, is a comprehensive and coherent national framework that facilitates quality improvement, quality assurance and private sector participation in post-secondary education. The MNQF ensures that students, employers, education providers and the community at large can easily understand the learning outcomes involved in various qualifications.

All local institutes that offer skills training on any level stipulated by the Maldives Qualifications Authority must have their curriculum approved by the MQA. In turn, the MQA recognises all qualifications that are awarded by these institutions and fall within a level of the MNQF.

Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
The MQA is responsible for validating and recognising foreign degrees. The MQA uses standardised processes and criteria and an evidence-based evaluation technique to assess and recognise foreign qualifications. Typically, qualification validation (official recognition) services are used by individuals who would like to gain employment in the Maldives; pursue higher/further education or skill or vocational training; have prior learning recognised; or apply for public funding or scholarships.

General recognition implies that the foreign higher education or training was undertaken at a recognised/accredited institution of higher education in the country of origin and that admission criteria, curriculum, delivery and duration of the course of study or programme are in line with the criterion of MNQF.

Issues and Challenges Concerning Foreign Qualifications Recognition
Some of the challenges with assessing and recognising foreign qualifications include:

- Institutions without access to national accreditation systems
- Difficulty of verifying foreign documents
- Difficulty in communication with institutions
- Language proficiency of the qualification holders sometimes forms a barrier to practical experiences, such as medical internships or practices

Quick Facts and Links
Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF):
- Facilitates the development of quality assurance mechanisms for the post-secondary education sector.
- Provides a framework for recognition of qualifications offered in the Maldives and abroad.

Maldives Qualifications Authority (MQA)
The MQA's mandate is to assure the quality of post-secondary qualifications awarded in testimony of educational attainments.

The MQA:
- Steers the development of the MNQF and oversees the certification leading to qualifications within the Framework.
- Facilitates understanding of the full range of qualifications available; how they relate to each other and how different types of qualifications can improve the skills, competences and the quality of life of the workforce.
- Assist training sectors and providers in the design of qualifications, assessment and certification that best fit the Levels of Qualifications in the MNQF for Lifelong Learning.
- The programme of study transforms into tailor-made courses
- Distance, online courses.

**Progress towards Ratification of the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention**
The MQA have updated and revised the guidelines for transparent, coherent and reliable recognition procedures to comply with the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention. In this aspect, the Maldives is ready to ratify the Convention.

**Commitment to Information Sharing Mechanisms**
All documents at present are in local language, when they have been translated they will be shared on the MQA website and the National Centre for Information Technology (NCIT) website.

The MQA is ready to upload relevant information, such as the higher education institutes and other information related to higher education systems onto the UNESCO Portal to Recognised Higher Education Institutions and APARNET.

The Maldives are yet to start the official process of formally nominating a body/organisation to act as the official National Information Centre as required by the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention.

### National Focal Point Contact

**Mr Abdulla Rasheed**  
Maldives Qualifications Authority (MQA)  
**Email:** a.rasheed@mq.gov.mv

**Additional contacts**  
**Ms Aminath Asra**  
Director, Maldives Qualifications Authority (MQA)  
Ministry of Education  
**Email:** asra@mq.gov.mv; info@mq.gov.mv

---

**Summary of Country Report prepared for the 12th Session of the Regional Committee on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, 21-23 May, 2013**

Author: Aminath Asra, Maldives Qualifications Authority and TVET Authority, Ministry of Education

---

**Criteria and Procedures for Assessment**

The MQA considers the following when assessing foreign qualifications:

**Institutional Status**
The MQA only recognises qualifications from institutions officially recognised in the country of origin. In some cases, the institution offering the education and training and the institute awarding the qualifications are different. The MQA verifies the status of both.

**Eligibility, admission criteria and credit transfer**
Entry requirements may be set based on education level, professional experience or other criteria that ensure that applicants have a reasonable chance of successfully undertaking advanced and complex studies leading to a higher qualification. Similarly the criteria for credit transfer should be in line with the entry criteria of the qualification in question.

**Credits and programme duration**
Length of study is one of the most frequently used assessment criteria. Although the length of study may not be a uniform concept, the MNQF outlines a minimum number of credits allocated to each level.

**Curriculum and programme delivery**
Curriculum and the mode of delivery must be appropriate to the nature of the course, therefore the MQA evaluates institution status and analyses transcripts.