DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SRI LANKA QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (SLQF)

REGIONAL EXPERT MEETING ON DEVELOPING REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

ORGANIZED BY UNESCO BANGKOK

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BANGKOK
• PIYASENA RANEPURA – SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH

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NEED FOR SLQF

• TO CONTRIBUTE THE EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED FROM CROSS BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES BASED ON THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE QUALIFICATION HOLDERS.

• TO ASSIST POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS TO KNOW THE LEVEL OF LEARNING AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF A PARTICULAR QUALIFICATION HOLDER.

• TO INTEGRATE THE NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NVQ) AND TO IDENTIFY THE PATHWAYS OF LATERAL MOBILITY BETWEEN THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SECTOR AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR.

• TO RECOGNIZE THE ACCREDITED PRIOR LEARNING IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE UPWARD MOBILITY WITHIN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.
NEED FOR SLQF

• TO OFFER A TRANSPARENT AND COHERENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE LEARNER TO OPTIMIZE HIS/HER OBJECTIVE OF LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE.

• TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AT HOME BY IMPROVING PROCESSES IN THE LEARNING AND THE METHODS OF DELIVERY.

• TO PROVIDE A CLEAR SYSTEM TO DEVELOP LINKS WITH THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ABROAD IN ORDER TO SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE MOBILITY OF LEARNERS AND ACADEMICS IN THE RECENT PAST ACROSS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF THE WORLD SEEKING HIGHER EDUCATION.
AIM OF SLQF

• THE AIM OF THE SLQF IS TO CREATE AN INTEGRAL NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS BY RECOGNIZING AND ACCREDITING QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED BY DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS ENGAGED IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN SRI LANKA.
OBJECTIVES OF SLQF

• ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT ALL LEVELS;

• FACILITATE ACCESS TO HIGHER LEARNING AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTE TO FULL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS AND TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY;

• ENHANCE EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES;

• ASSIST EMPLOYERS TO IDENTIFY THE LEVELS OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF QUALIFICATION HOLDERS;

• DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES IN QUALIFICATION HOLDERS;
OBJECTIVES OF SLQF

• FACILITATE LATERAL AND VERTICAL MOBILITY, AND PROGRESSION WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER PATHWAYS;

• PROVIDE GUIDANCE IN COMPARING QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED BY DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS;

• HELP IN DEVELOPING HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS;

• RECOGNIZE PRIOR LEARNING; AND

• PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING.
1. **NAMING OF QUALIFICATION** - IN ORDER TO HAVE A UNIFORM SYSTEM, THE **DESIGNATORS** AND **QUALIFIERS** OF EACH QUALIFICATION **TYPE** ARE IDENTIFIED IN THE SLQF.

The first two levels (Levels 1-2) are **Senior Secondary Level** education qualifications and the next four levels (Levels 3-6) are **Undergraduate Qualifications**. The other six levels (Levels 7-12) are **Postgraduate Qualifications**.

- **Senior Secondary Level**: Certificate, and Advanced Certificate
- **Undergraduate Level**: Diploma, Higher Diploma, Bachelors, and Honours Bachelors
- **Postgraduate Level**: Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, Masters, and Doctorate.
KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SLQF

2. **VOLUME OF LEARNING** - VOLUME OF LEARNING IS DESCRIBED IN TERMS OF CREDITS AND THE CREDIT IS DEFINED IN TERMS OF LEARNING TIME

ONE CREDIT IS CONSIDERED EQUIVALENT TO 50 NOTIONAL LEARNING HOURS FOR A TAUGHT COURSE, LABORATORY STUDIES COURSE OR FIELD STUDIES/CLINICAL WORK. IN CASE OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING, INCLUDING TIME ALLOCATED FOR ASSESSMENTS AND IN CASE OF RESEARCH, INCLUDING TIME ALLOCATED FOR LITERATURE SURVEY, ONE CREDIT IS CONSIDERED EQUIVALENT TO A MINIMUM OF 100 NOTIONAL HOURS.
KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SLQF

3. QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS - PROVIDE THE SPECIFICATIONS:

- SLQF EXIT LEVEL
- QUALIFICATION TYPE WITH DESIGNATORS AND THE QUALIFIERS
- NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED AT EACH LEVEL
- PURPOSE AND SCOPE
- GENERIC OUTCOMES AND ATTRIBUTES EXPECTED FOR THE AWARD OF EACH QUALIFICATION
- MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
- POSSIBLE PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES

For each qualification, the generic outcomes and attributes signify the expected capabilities from qualification holders defined in terms of the four main domains of learning: KNOWLEDGE; SKILLS; ATTITUDES; and MIND-SET AND PARADIGM, characterized as the K-SAM MODEL.
## K – SAM Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>what the qualification holders know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>what the qualification holders can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes, Values, Professionalism and Vision for life</td>
<td>how the qualification holders think and behave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind-set and Paradigm</td>
<td>how the qualification holders perceive the world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SLQF

4. **LEVEL DESCRIPTORS** - DESCRIBED IN TERMS OF THE **12 LEARNING OUTCOMES** IDENTIFIED BY THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CUSTOMIZED TO SUIT EACH LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION.

IN DESCRIBING EACH LEVEL, THE DEGREE OF INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES, COGNITIVE SKILLS AND SOFT SKILLS ARE CONSIDERED.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR THE SLQF LEVELS 1 TO 12 IS TO GUARANTEE CONSISTENCY ACROSS LEARNING IN ACHIEVING THE EXPECTED ATTRIBUTES OF QUALIFICATIONS AND TO HELP HEIS TO EVALUATE THE COMPARABILITY OF QUALIFICATIONS.
LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

THE FOLLOWING **TWELVE LEARNING OUTCOMES** HAVE BEEN CUSTOMIZED AS LEVEL DESCRIPTORS TO SUIT EACH LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Core Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subject / Theoretical Knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practical Knowledge and Application</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teamwork and Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Creativity and Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Managerial and Entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Information Usage and Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Networking and Social Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Adaptability and Flexibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Attitudes, Values and Professionalism</td>
<td>Attitudes, Values, Professionalism and Vision for life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Vision for Life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Updating Self / Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>Mind-set and Paradigm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **COMPARABLE LEVELS OF SLQF & NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK (NVQ)** - THE COMPARABLE NVQ AND SLQF LEVELS HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED ON THE BASIS OF SIGNIFICANT SIMILARITIES IN THE LEARNING OUTCOMES STATED UNDER RESPECTIVE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS IN THE TWO FRAMEWORKS BY A PANEL OF EXPERTS.

THE **VERTICAL PROGRESSION** BETWEEN QUALIFICATIONS IS STRAIGHT FORWARD PROVIDED THAT THE MINIMUM STIPULATED REQUIREMENTS ARE MET.

**LATERAL PROGRESSION** IS ALSO POSSIBLE AT CERTAIN LEVELS IF THE CANDIDATE MEETS THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE TARGET QUALIFICATION.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLQF Level</th>
<th>Qualification Awarded</th>
<th>Minimum Volume of Learning for the Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Honours Bachelors</td>
<td>120 credits after SLQL 2 or 90 credits after SLQL 3 or 60 credits after SLQL 4 or 30 credits after SLQL 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bachelors, Bachelors Double Major</td>
<td>90 credits after SLQL 2 or 60 credits after SLQL 3 or 30 credits after SLQL 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Higher Diploma</td>
<td>60 credits after SLQL 2 or 30 credits after SLQL 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>30 credits after SLQL 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Advanced Certificate (GCE A/L or equivalent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Certificate (GCE O/L or equivalent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# SLQ Levels 7 - 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLQF Level</th>
<th>Qualification Awarded</th>
<th>Minimum Volume of Learning for the Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy / MD with Board Certification/Doctor of Letters/Doctor of Science</td>
<td>Minimum 3 years of fulltime or equivalent time of original research after SLQL 6 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Master of Philosophy / DM</td>
<td>Minimum 2 years of fulltime or equivalent time of original research after SLQL 5 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Masters with course work and a research component</td>
<td>60 credits after SLQL 5 or SLQL 6 which include a research component of minimum 15 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Masters with course work</td>
<td>30 credits after SLQL 5 or SLQL 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>25 credits after SLQL 5 or SLQL 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>20 credits after SLQL 5 or SLQL 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW SLQF EVOLVED

• JULY 2002 - COMMITTEE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS AND DIRECTORS AND UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC) OF SRI LANKA DEVELOPED A HANDBOOK TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES AT INSTITUTIONAL AND SUBJECT LEVELS

• AUGUST 2005 – QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (QAAC) WAS ESTABLISHED UNDER UGC

• NOVEMBER 2007 - CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (CQF) OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN UNIVERSITIES WAS PUBLISHED BY QAAC TO ADDRESS THE SIGNIFICANT VARIATION IN THE DEGREE AWARDING CRITERIA BY DIFFERENT FACULTIES WITHIN THE SL UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Continued/
• **2004** - **NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQ) FRAMEWORK** was introduced and accreditation process of training institutions wishing to offer courses leading to award NVQ qualifications started by **TERTIARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION (TVEC)**. The technical and vocational education courses conducted in public, private & non-government organizations (NGOS) sector training institutions are currently accredited by TVEC.

• **2009 TO 2012** – **SLQF WAS PREPARED BY A NATIONAL COMMITTEE** consisting of prominent academics, vocational and technical field experts. There were 10 SLQ levels (two senior secondary levels, four undergraduate levels and four postgraduate levels).

• **JUNE 2012** - **FIRST EDITION OF SLQF** was printed and distributed.
• **APRIL 2013** - A CIRCULAR ISSUED BY THE UGC REQUIRING ALL UNIVERSITIES TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO IMPLEMENT SLQF.

• **APRIL 2014** - A SURVEY CONDUCTED ONE YEAR LATER COVERING ALL UNIVERSITIES SHOWED ONLY 48% OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES HAVE ATTEMPTED TO APPLY THE RELEVANT SECTIONS IN SLQF.

• **2012** - THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION STARTED PROMOTING OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION (OBE) AND STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING (SCL) UNDER ITS VISION TO MAKE SRI LANKA AN INTERNATIONAL HUB OF EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY 2020.

• **MARCH 2015** – IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE MOHE POLICY, THE FIRST EDITION OF SLQF WAS UPDATED BY INCORPORATING THE ASPECTS OF OBE AND SCL. THE NEW VERSION HAS **12 LEVELS** (TWO SENIOR SECONDARY LEVELS, FOUR UNDERGRADUATE LEVELS AND SIX POSTGRADUATE LEVELS)
IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

• ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES
  • LEGISLATION REQUIREMENT
  • ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT NATIONAL QUALIFICATION COUNCIL/AGENCY/AUTHORITY WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERN AND MANAGE SLQF
  • DESIGNING A MECHANISM TO ACCOMMODATE CREDIT TRANSFER AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

• ACADEMIC CHALLENGES
  • RESTRUCTURING EXISTING QUALIFICATIONS TO FIT THE SLQF
  • DEVELOPING ALL NEW QUALIFICATIONS TO SUIT THE EXPECTED SLQF LEVEL
  • CONTINUOUS STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT
THANK YOU