The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

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Meeting Australia’s skills needs

Australian Government reform focused on:

• Increased participation and educational attainment to achieve greater productivity

• Interconnected tertiary education environment that supports lifelong learning

• High quality education and training
Australia’s Tertiary Sector

Higher Education

41 Australian universities
- 37 public, 3 private, 1 specialised university
2 campuses overseas universities
125 accredited private providers
4 self-accrediting institutions

Over 1.2 million students in Australian universities

VET

Around 5,000 RTOs
- Government-owned TAFEs
- Dual sector institutions
- Private providers (Large & small)
- Community colleges
- Not for profit organisations
- Enterprises
- Secondary schools

1.8 million students in the public system
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

- National policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.
- Incorporates the qualifications from schools, VET and higher education into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.
- Protects the quality of Australian education and training wherever it is delivered.
Governance of the AQF

• **Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESSE) -** responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the AQF

• **AQF Council** – expert advisory body responsible for providing specialist advice to SCOTESSE on the AQF
Quality assurance arrangements

• Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

• National standards
   Standards Setting bodies
    - Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP)
    - National Skills Standards Council (NSSC)

• National regulators
   Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
   Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Why was the AQF developed?

Part of a broader reform process
- changes in the economy
- demand for skilled workers
- increase in VET enrolments

Aimed at increased labour mobility
Strengthened AQF 2011

• Review needed to take account of developments and changes in the economy, education and training, and in government policies

• To ensure that qualification outcomes remain contemporary, relevant and nationally consistent
Strengthened AQF 2011

- Strengthened AQF implemented July 2011 - Full implementation by 1 January 2015
- Focus on learning outcomes
- Ten-level structure Certificate I to Doctoral degree
- Senior Certificate of Secondary Education is not located at a level
- Qualification types against AQF levels
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AQF Level</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Certificate II</td>
<td>Certificate III</td>
<td>Certificate IV</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>Bachelor Honours Degree</td>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
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<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
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AQF Levels

1. **Level 1** – Graduates at this level will have knowledge and skills for initial work, community involvement and/or further learning
2. **Level 2** – Graduates at this level will have knowledge and skills for work in a defined context and/or further learning
3. **Level 3** – Graduates at this level will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for work and/or further learning
4. **Level 4** – Graduates at this level will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for specialised and/or skilled work and/or further learning
5. **Level 5** – Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for skilled/paraprofessional work and/or further learning
6. **Level 6** – Graduates at this level will have broad knowledge and skills for paraprofessional/highly skilled work and/or further learning

7. **Level 7** – Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning

8. **Level 8** – Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional/highly skilled work and/or further learning

9. **Level 9** – Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for research and/or professional practice and/or further learning

10. **Level 10** – Graduates at this level will have systemic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or professional practice.
# AQF Qualification Type Descriptors
## Certificate III – Level 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Qualifies individuals who apply a broad range of knowledge and skills in varied contexts to undertake skilled work and as a pathway to further learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Graduates will have factual, technical, procedural and theoretical knowledge in an area of work and learning</td>
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</table>
| Skills   | Graduates will have:  
- Cognitive, technical and communication skills to interpret and act on available information  
- Cognitive and communication skills to apply and communicate known solutions to a variety of predictable problems and to deal with unforeseen contingencies using known solutions  
- Technical and communication skills to provide technical information to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences  
- Technical skills to undertake routine and some non-routine tasks in a range of skilled operations |
**Application of knowledge and skills**

Graduates will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:
- with discretion and judgement in the selection of equipment, services or contingency measures
- to adapt and transfer skills and knowledge with known routines, methods, procedures and time constraints
- in contexts that include taking responsibility for own outputs in work and learning including participation in teams and taking limited responsibility for the output of others within established parameters

**Volume of learning**

The volume of learning of a Certificate III is typically 1–2 years. Up to 4 years may be required to achieve the learning outcomes through a program of indentured training/employment
Supported by several policies

- **AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy**
  - Ensures nationally consistent use of certification documentation, protects against fraud

- **AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy**
  - Guidance on credit arrangements, recognition of prior learning, to support pathways

- **AQF Qualifications Register Policy**
  - National registers of AQF qualifications

- **AQF Qualification Type Addition and Removal Policy**
  - Sets out requirements for addition or removal of qualification types. Flexibility to adapt to change
Importance of the AQF

• Qualifications are recognised across Australia
• Consistency in outcomes for each qualification type
• Supports national standards in education and training
• Is central to ensuring that qualifications will enable learners to meet the standards expected by industry
• Communicates what Australian qualifications mean
• Facilitates mobility of learners and workers
Pathways

• The philosophy underpinning the AQF is lifelong learning

• Its focus is student acquisition of knowledge, skills and their application as they progress through their education and working lives

• AQF Pathways Policy
Conclusion

• National qualification framework underpinned by a robust quality assurance system

• [link](http://www.aqf.gov.au)

• Questions?