Recognition of Overseas Qualifications

The Qualifications Recognition Services (QRS) assesses qualifications awarded outside of New Zealand. We determine whether overseas qualifications can be recognised in New Zealand and then provide a comparison between those overseas qualifications and the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).

QRS is a team within NZQA and operates separately from other government agencies such as Immigration New Zealand or the Education Council. QRS does not provide advice or answer queries about immigration, professional registration (e.g., teacher registration), or employment in New Zealand. Please contact the appropriate agency directly to get the correct advice and information you need. You can find out who to contact at https://www.govt.nz.

Read more about our Principles and Policies (PDF, 274KB).

Qualifications We Can Assess

Do you hold an overseas qualification and plan to live, work, or study in New Zealand? You may be required to have your qualification assessed by Qualifications Recognition Services (QRS) at NZQA to see how it aligns with the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).

In New Zealand all qualifications need to meet the definition of a qualification on the NZQF. Your overseas qualification will need to meet this minimum standard to be assessed and recognised by NZQA.

For us to assess and attempt to recognise your qualification, it must:

- be a complete programme of study, and
- be awarded by a provider that is nationally recognised or accredited by the responsible government or government-mandated authority in the country of award, at the time of award, and
- have a minimum of 400 notional learning hours, and
• include achievement of a set of learning outcomes through a formal programme of instruction or learning.

Qualifications We Do Not Assess

We do not assess the following kinds of awards or experience:

• academic secondary school qualifications (such as high school diplomas), or
• incomplete programmes of study that did not result in awarding a qualification, or
• programmes that do not meet the minimum requirement of the equivalent of one semester of full-time study (40 credits or 400 notional hours), or
• certificates of attendance, or
• certificates of proficiency (if they do not also include formal learning programmes), or
• letters or certificates of work experience, or
• apprenticeships without formal training programmes, or
• professional or specialist training certificates (such as CISCO or Microsoft expert awards).

Our Services

QRS offers three types of assessments. Read below about each assessment type to learn why and when you might need them, how you can use them, and how to apply.

International Qualifications Assessment (IQA)

The IQA is an in-depth assessment that provides a Recognition Statement explaining your overseas qualification in the New Zealand context. It can be used for immigration, employment, further study, or teacher registration and salary purposes.

Read more about the IQA
Pre-Assessment Result (PAR)

The PAR is a preliminary assessment to help you understand the level your overseas qualification may be comparable to on the NZQF. It is used only for immigration purposes, specifically for the Expression of Interest.

Read more about the PAR

Overseas Study Assessment (OSA)

The OSA is for people (New Zealand residents) who have completed or plan to complete study outside of New Zealand and want to apply to Inland Revenue NZ (IRD) to have the interest on their New Zealand student loan written off.

Read more about the OSA

Learn more about our fees and additional services

Contact Us

Other questions? Contact QRS here or at QRS@nzqa.govt.nz or +64 (4) 463 3000 (Freephone in NZ: 0800 697 296).