

# **Registration Criteria for National Qualifications Framework Qualifications**



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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# Registration Criteria for National Qualifications Framework Qualifications

## Introduction

This booklet outlines the criteria that will be addressed in the evaluation of **National Qualifications** prior to registration on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

**These criteria take effect from 1 May 2003.**

The term **National** is restricted to qualifications based on unit or achievement standards. The term **New Zealand** is available for non-NQF qualifications of national standing that have been quality assured and placed on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (The Register).

The NQF is that part of the Register containing National Certificates, National Diplomas, National Degrees, and National Postgraduate qualifications. The NQF is based on principles of inclusiveness, portability, and transparency.

National qualifications are packages of nationally recognised standards, which reflect a meaningful milestone or end point on a learning pathway. The purpose of a qualification is to formally recognise significant achievements and to clearly identify what a person knows and can do.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is committed to

- maintaining the high quality and credibility of New Zealand's qualifications
- working in partnership with industry, professional groups, and all other stakeholders to ensure that New Zealand has a world-class qualifications system
- working with Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) as recognised national standard setters in industry
- working with other recognised national standard setters.

NZQA holds the copyright for all national qualifications and standards registered on the NQF.

## General Criteria for NQF Qualifications

The term National is restricted to qualifications that are

- based on registered unit standards and/or achievement standards, ie they have components for which there is automatically portable (transferable) credit
- developed by national standard setting bodies that can provide evidence of widespread endorsement by stakeholders
- registered on the NQF.

Recognised national standard setting bodies<sup>1</sup> (SSBs) are responsible for the content of national qualifications. The qualifications they develop must

- have the support of appropriate nationally recognised bodies
- meet the obligations of the SSB under the Treaty of Waitangi, and include a Māori dimension wherever that is appropriate
- not present any barriers based on gender, ethnic origin, disability, or unreasonable cost.

Qualifications will be registered on the NQF when it has been shown that the qualifications

- are different in purpose from any already registered on the NQF
- are flexible in structure where appropriate, and provide learners with attainable milestones, career options, and qualification pathways
- recognise broad transferable and generic skills as well as specialised industry and professional skills.

Qualifications must also

- meet the registration criteria as set out in this document
- meet NZQA documentation requirements for qualifications<sup>2</sup>
- have a logical internal structure and be achievable
- set out clearly, and without unnecessary complexity, the requirements for award
- include transition arrangements if their introduction impacts on existing qualifications.

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<sup>1</sup> Recognised national standard setting bodies comprise Industry Training Organisations, recognised under the provisions of the Industry Training Act 1992; the Ministry of Education in relation to achievement standards and the National Certificates of Educational Achievement; and NZQA's National Qualifications Services and Māori Qualifications Services.

<sup>2</sup> Formatting guides, templates, and other requirements are on the NZQA website:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/standard/registration/index.html>

For ITOs, the qualification must be consistent with its coverage as Gazetted by the Tertiary Education Commission in accordance with section 5 of the Industry Training Act 1992. For other SSBs, the qualification must not fall within the Gazetted coverage of an ITO.

Qualifications may be registered in Māori; a qualification published in both English and Māori will be regarded as one qualification.

## Specific Criteria for NQF Qualifications

### 1 Definitions

The following definitions are for National Certificates and National Diplomas.<sup>3</sup> They are included here because they are the most frequently used definitions.

The complete list of definitions for other qualifications is appended to this document: [Appendix 2 Qualifications - Definitions.](#)

#### CERTIFICATE

Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across all levels up to and including level 7, and are often used to prepare candidates for both employment and further education and training.

'National Certificates' (certificates approved to use the term 'National') recognise skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed standards (unit and achievement standards).

National Certificates may be gained in a wide range of areas. They include the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) levels 1-3 (the main qualifications in the senior secondary school) and National Certificates recognising achievement in a wide variety of industries and subjects.

Some National Certificates automatically recognise credit from non-NQF qualifications as outlined by the qualification regulations.

#### Credit Requirements

A certificate must comprise a minimum of 40 credits at levels 1-7.

The level of a certificate is determined by beginning with the highest level credits and counting back until a total of 40 credits is reached. The level at which the total of 40 is reached determines the level of the certificate.

#### DIPLOMA

Diplomas often prepare learners for self-directed application of skills and knowledge. These qualifications often build on prior qualifications or experience and recognise capacity for initiative and judgement

- across a broad range of educational and vocational areas
- in technical, professional, and/or management roles.

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<sup>3</sup> These definitions were updated in accordance with Register policy as of November 2003.

'National Diplomas' (diplomas approved to use the word 'National') recognise skills and knowledge meeting nationally set standards (unit and achievement standards).

Some National Diplomas automatically recognise credit from non-NQF qualifications as outlined by the qualification regulations.

### **Credit Requirements**

A diploma must

- be registered at level 5, 6, or 7, with the top 72 credits defining the level at which it can be registered
- have at least 120 of all credits contributing to the qualification at level 4 or above.

The level of a diploma is determined by beginning with the highest level credits and counting back until a total of 72 credits is reached. The level at which the total of 72 is reached determines the level of the diploma.

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## **2 Purpose**

The purpose statement must express what a person awarded the qualification knows and can do. The target audience for this statement is learners and trainees, their advisors, potential employers, and education and training providers, so it must be readable and give a clear indication of the role a person with the qualification is able to fulfil.

In order for the purpose statement to meet the requirements for the outcome statement in the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications it must

- express outcomes in terms of the applied knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes that the qualification recognises
- allow meaningful comparison with other qualifications.

In addition, the purpose statement for NQF qualifications must

- identify the target group for the qualification
- justify the content and structure of the qualification
- refer to possible NQF qualification pathways
- highlight portability of credit to other related NQF qualifications.

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## **3 Title**

The title of the qualification must be classified according to one or more of the following NQF categories – field, subfield, or domain. The classification(s) in the title provides stakeholders, including those who may wish to gain the qualification, with an understanding of where the qualification fits on the NQF.

In addition, the title of the qualification must be

- unique
- consistent with the purpose, nature, and composition of the qualification
- consistent with the recognised coverage of the SSB.

Descriptive words may be included in brackets after the classification if required. The inclusion of the level of the qualification is optional. Only one level can be included in the title. If the qualification can be awarded at more than one level, the level must be omitted.

Qualification titles may include strands that recognise specific skill sets. Strand names must be congruent with qualification purpose and title and listed in the same order that they appear in the qualification document.

Names of trademarked products, training and assessment material, training providers, or commercial organisations are not permissible.

Example of a title that meets the criteria:

**National Certificate in Textiles Manufacture (Woollen Spinning) (Level 2) with strands in Ring Spinning, and Mule Spinning**

Key:

*Textiles Manufacture* is the name of a subfield

*Woollen Spinning* is a descriptor

*Ring Spinning* and *Mule Spinning* are the strand names

A case may be made to NZQA for a title that is not an NQF classification if it is not possible to identify a classification item that reflects the content and purpose of the qualification.

The following criteria apply

- evidence is provided of stakeholder support for the proposed title
- the qualification is aligned with a classification on the NQF
- the proposed title
  - is consistent with the purpose of the qualification
  - is unique and allows differentiation from other qualifications
  - provides stakeholders, including those who may wish to gain the qualification, with an understanding of where the qualification fits on the NQF.

An example of a non-classification title is the National Certificate in Supervision of Youth Development Programmes (Conservation Corps and Youth Service Corps), registered under the *Public Sector Services* subfield.

## 4 Special Notes

Special notes may include any general guidance or restrictions for people wishing to work towards the qualification and, if possible, give the means by which any restrictions can be overcome. Any restrictions on entry must be justified.

Special notes may refer to additional requirements for industry registration or professional recognition. They may also refer to relevant quality assured non-NQF qualifications or legal requirements, for example, driver licence endorsements.

## **Prerequisites**

Prerequisites may be listed as a requirement in either the 'Special Notes' or 'Requirements for Award of Qualification'.

There are three types of prerequisites in qualifications.

### 1 Entry requirements

For example, health and safety knowledge and skills that must be demonstrated before practical training takes place.

- Listed in the Special Notes
- May relate to standards, national qualifications, or quality assured non-NQF qualifications and components
- Must be followed by 'or demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skills'
- Must be met before training begins
- Are checked by the accredited provider or ITO before enrolment.

### 2 Recommended for entry

For example, the minimum communication skills/numeracy skills required for training.

- Listed in the Special Notes
- May relate to standards, national qualifications, or quality assured non-NQF qualifications and components
- Are for guidance only.

### 3 Required for award of qualification

For example, an industry-approved core skills qualification for a trade qualification.

- Included in the Requirements for Award of Qualification. (See section 6 - Requirements for Award of Qualification)
- Must relate to national qualifications only
- Must not be followed by 'or demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skills'
- There may be associated guidance in the special notes
- Would normally be referred to in the purpose statement
- Training for the prerequisite may occur at the same time as the qualification for which it is required
- Must be awarded prior to the qualification for which it is required
- Are checked by NZQA when results are submitted for certification.

## 5 Structure

Most qualifications consist of compulsory standards that represent essential skills and knowledge, and elective requirements for complementary or specialist skills. Electives, including strands, allow and encourage depth and breadth, the development of specialisation, and the recognition of different knowledge and skills in the qualification.

<p><b>Sets of Compulsory standards</b></p> <p>Credit must be gained for all standards in a compulsory set. Compulsory sets may be in the core qualification, or form part of a strand, or the whole qualification may comprise compulsory standards.</p>	<p><b>Sets of Elective standards</b></p> <p>Credit must be gained for a specified number of standards or credits in an elective set. Elective sets may be in the core qualification, or form part of a strand, or the whole qualification may comprise elective standards.</p>	<p><b>Core Sets</b></p> <p>Requirements that are common to all strands within the qualification. This may include Core Elective and Core Compulsory Sets.</p>	<p><b>Strands</b></p> <p>Credit required for specialist knowledge and skills in addition to the core requirements. Strands may be elective or optional and include Strand Compulsory or Strand Elective Sets.</p>
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Credits for elective standards may be required from a specified list of standards, from a specified subfield or domain on the NQF, from anywhere on the NQF, or from a combination of these.

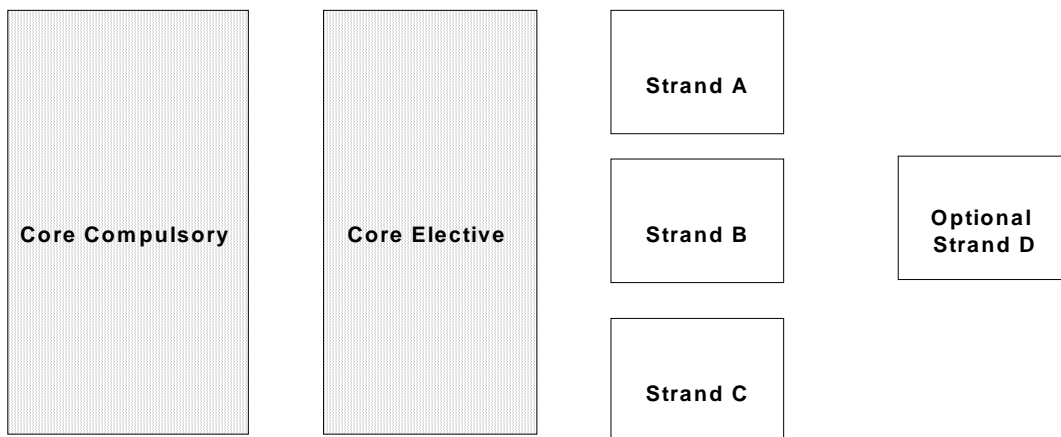
<p><b>Compulsory</b> A list of standards</p>	<p><b>Elective A</b> A minimum number of standards from a list of standards</p>	<p><b>Elective B</b> A minimum number of credits from a specified domain or subfield</p>
<p>This qualification will be awarded to people who have credit for all of the compulsory standards and who have met the requirements of the elective sections.</p>		

Qualifications may also include a set of specified optional standards that are considered necessary for some employment contexts but are not required for award of the qualification. The rationale for optional standards must be provided in the purpose statement.

Strands are included in a qualification where clearly identified sets of skills and knowledge represent different pathways through the qualification. A qualification with strands must have core requirements.

## Strands

- must specify and recognise a distinct skill set in the qualification, unique to each strand
- may be of different credit size, level, and structure
- may have requirements that include compulsory and/or elective sets
- may be **elective** – one of the strands is required for award of the qualification (the core components and the elected strand represent one qualification)
- may be **optional** – none of the strands are required for award of the qualification (the core components, or the core components and the elected strand, are sufficient to meet the qualification definition).



This qualification will be awarded to people who have met the core compulsory and core elective requirements and the requirements of strand A, B, or C. Strand D is optional and will be awarded to people who have also met its requirements.

Two or more qualifications, of the same type, at the same level must be stranded when their requirements overlap by more than 50 per cent. The rationale for this criterion is to prevent proliferation of similar qualifications and to ensure that clear pathways are mapped among qualifications.

Similar qualifications may be registered if they meet the following criteria

- the industries (or target groups) for which each qualification has been developed are significantly different from each other
- the distinctive purpose of each qualification is clearly set out.

In qualifications with multiple strands, some standard(s) may be used to meet the requirements of more than one strand. (In all other cases, standards are only counted once, see [Section 6 - Requirements for Award of Qualification](#)).

## 6 Requirements for Award of Qualification

The requirements for award must include the following

- clear and consistent specification of logical and achievable rules
- any prerequisite national qualifications<sup>4</sup>
- the minimum number of credits and/or standards required for each elective set
- any other minimum or maximum credit or level requirements.

Qualifications with elective set requirements that overlap with the requirements for another set must include a statement to indicate that credits will be counted only once for the qualification. For example, in a qualification that requires credit for 10 unit standards from the domain *Wood Drying* in a compulsory set, and also has an elective requirement for 20 credits from the subfield *Solid Wood Processing*, credit gained for the specified unit standards does not count towards meeting the elective requirements. The following statement applies:

Credit gained for standards may only be used once to meet the requirements of the qualification.

### Credit Exclusions for Achievement Standards

Achievement standards are developed by the Ministry of Education and registered on the NQF. Credit gained from achievement standards has the same status as credit from unit standards and can be used to meet the requirements of NQF qualifications.

Some achievement standards are deemed to be equivalent in outcome to some unit standards. Unit standards and achievement standards that assess the same outcomes are considered mutually exclusive for NQF qualifications, ie credits for the same learning outcome will be counted only once for the purpose of award of a qualification. The table of mutually exclusive standards is provided in the NZQA *Rules and Procedures* publications available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/>.

- If a candidate has credit for both the achievement standard and the unit standard, the standard with the highest credit will be used towards meeting the requirements of the qualification.
- If a candidate has credit for an achievement standard and the equivalent unit standard is specified for a qualification, the achievement standard can be used towards meeting the requirements of the qualification, and vice versa.

Qualification requirements may restrict credit totals to credit from unit standards only, however, the qualification rules must clearly state this and a justification must be provided.

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<sup>4</sup> Where the SSB intends that prior award of another NQF qualification is required for the award of the qualification, this must be stated in the qualification requirements section of the document. NZQA will then check and verify that a certificate has been issued.

## Versions of standards

Reviewed standards that continue to recognise the same overall outcome are re-registered as new versions on the NQF and retain their identification number (ID). Any version of a standard with the same ID may be used to meet qualification requirements where that ID is listed and/or the past or present classification of the standard is specified.

- If a candidate for a qualification has a version of a standard with a different level and/or credits from the standard listed in a qualification, the level and credits as they appear in the qualification will be used to determine if the candidate has met the requirements of the qualification.
- If a candidate for a qualification has a version of a standard that has been re-classified, all past and subsequent classifications of that standard can be used to determine if the candidate has met the requirements of the qualification.

## Replaced standards

Standards that have been reviewed and replaced, or reviewed and not replaced cannot be specified in the qualification requirements except through the transition arrangements. See [Section 13 - Transition Arrangements](#).

## 7 Levels and Credits

The level of the qualification must always be set by the minimum credit and level requirements for the qualification type. The level of a qualification is not determined by the standards selected from an elective set. If necessary, the elective rules must specify the level of the credits, and the number of credits, to meet the requirements for a national certificate, national diploma, or other national qualification.

The level of the qualification must be consistent with the levels of the standards in the qualification. Most qualifications will include standards above and/or below the level of the qualification, but significant anomalies should be avoided. For example where a certificate requires 38 credits at level 3 and 5 credits at level 2, the qualification is 2 credits short of meeting the criteria for a level 3 qualification. Where such anomalies are present, a rationale must be provided in the purpose statement of the qualification. However, additional credit requirements that are not relevant to the qualification should not be added solely for the purpose of raising the level.

## 8 Credit Totals

The credit totals required for each set, for each level, and for the qualification to be awarded, must be clearly set out in the qualification document. In qualifications with a simple structure the credit totals may be listed. Qualifications with sets normally include a table of minimum credit totals.

In qualifications with elective sets, the table or list(s) will show the minimum credits required for each level, and therefore illustrate the rules that determine the level of the qualification.

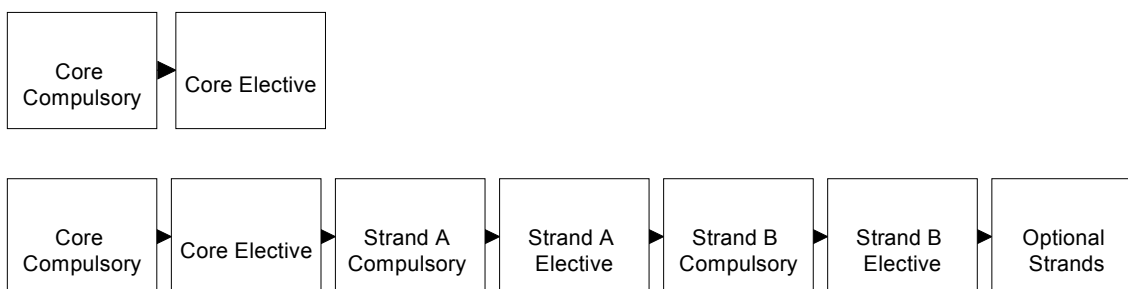
## 9 Detailed Qualification Requirements

The sets and/or components must be listed in detail in the qualification document. Within each set, components must be listed within the hierarchy of field, subfield, and domain, in alphabetical order.

Lists of standards must be of registered standards with all the following details correct at the time of registration – identification number (ID); title; level; credit value; and classification.

Standards in each domain are listed in tables in numerical order. Where elective credits may be selected from fields, subfields, and/or domains, the classifications are tabled alphabetically.

The sets in the qualification must be grouped in the following order:



## 10 Credit Recognition and Transfer between NQF and Non-NQF Qualifications

The qualification may include credit recognition provisions between quality assured non-NQF qualifications or qualification components and NQF qualifications. This provision has been developed in line with the principles and objectives expressed in the policy document *Supporting Learning Pathways - Credit Recognition and Transfer Policy* (NZQA, December 2002).

The Register provides a common credit currency, system of levels, and classification system for all qualifications quality assured in New Zealand. The Register therefore provides a basis for credit recognition and transfer.

Credit transfer arrangements can be used to provide learners with greater flexibility in meeting qualification requirements by specifying exemptions for qualification components and/or credit requirements.

Different credit recognition provisions apply to the NCEA - see [Section 14 - National Certificate of Educational Achievement \(NCEA\)](#).

The following criteria apply to credit transfer arrangements in all other NQF qualifications.

**The NQF qualification must be able to be achieved through credit from NQF standards alone.**

This ensures that national qualifications retain their unique character as standards-based and that those wishing to pursue a standards-based route can still do so.

**The specific non-NQF components/qualifications are listed on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications or in Australian Training Packages (AQF qualifications and units of competency).**

This ensures that alternative pathways are of a quality that is consistent with NQF standards and aligned to level, credit, and subject areas.

**The number of credits exempted is consistent with approved credit exemptions in other national qualifications.**

The same non-NQF components/qualifications will not normally be specified as exemptions for different levels and credit values in different qualifications.

**There is demonstrable equivalence between the non-NQF components/qualifications and the proposed exemptions for standards and/or credit in domains.**

There should be a clear match between the outcomes recognised by the non-NQF components/qualifications and the standards for which exemption is granted.

**Consultation has taken place with other standard setting bodies.**

Where credit exemptions are proposed for standards and/or credit in domains that are not the responsibility of the qualification developer the appropriate standard setters must be consulted.

**The number of credits exempted normally represents no more than 33 per cent of the total credits required for the qualification.**

This limitation on the proportion of credits that may be exempted on the basis of non-NQF components/qualifications serves to preserve the standards-based character of national qualifications.

**Exemptions granted through this provision apply only for the purposes of award of the specified qualification.**

Exemptions are qualification specific. For example, skills that are optional in one qualification, and for which the SSB has determined credit recognition, may be regarded as critical in another qualification. This will enable SSBs to preserve the integrity of the qualifications that they have developed.

Exemptions granted through this provision incur the current NZQA credit fee and do not currently appear on the printed Record of Learning.

## 11 Revision and Review of Qualifications

### What is the difference between review and revision?

A review is a planned process that is undertaken periodically to ensure that qualifications are still fit for purpose. Full consultation with industry and provider stakeholders must inform the review.

A revision may take place for a variety of reasons (see below). The consultation undertaken for a revision depends on the nature of the changes made, but is normally less extensive than that undertaken for a review.

### Revision

Qualifications are revised to take account of the following

- mistakes/omissions in the registered version
- changes to legislation
- industry/stakeholder feedback on content
- a review of standards that has impacted on the qualification.<sup>5</sup>

Revised qualifications are published as opposed to re-registered on the NQF. They are, however, issued as new versions.

### Review

To ensure that qualifications remain relevant and up to date they must normally be reviewed within five years of registration. In undertaking a review, the SSB will contact stakeholders. The review must take account of the views of industry, and representatives of the following:

- Employers
- Assessors
- Candidates
- Accredited providers
- Moderators
- Other SSBs that use the qualifications.

Note that: any person or organisation may contribute to the review by sending feedback to the SSB. Contact details for SSBs are available on the [Tertiary Education Commission](#) and [NZQA](#) websites.

When a **new version** of a qualification is registered

- a new version number (n+1) is included in the header (this number does not appear on the certificates awarded)
- version numbers of standards do not appear in the qualification documentation
- a transition statement must be included in the qualification when changes to structure and content have been made
- a review/revision report is published on the [NZQA website](#).

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<sup>5</sup> On request, Framework Registration will draft and re-issue a new version of a qualification when the impact is a result of a unit standard review by another standard setting body.

**Is it a new version of the qualification or a new (replacement) qualification?**

If a qualification is reviewed and reissued on the NQF with a new version number, it is considered to be a version of the same qualification. The NQF reference number (NQF ID) remains the same. A candidate can be issued only one certificate for that qualification.

If a qualification is reviewed and replaced by a new qualification, it is considered to be a different qualification. The new qualification is assigned a new NQF ID. A candidate who meets its requirements can be issued a certificate for the new qualification (whether they have been certificated for the replaced qualification or not).

A qualification that recognises a significantly different skill set should be registered as a new (replacement) qualification.

The review changes may include

- A certificate becoming a diploma
- The level of the qualification increasing where this will impact on professional/academic recognition or employment conditions
- The new qualification requirements involving 40 or more additional credits and industry requiring recognition of candidates' upskilling
- No expectation that any existing candidates will transfer.

The following review categories (see over page) are designed to inform the decision as to when to register a new (replacement) qualification, rather than a new version of a qualification.

## Review Categories

<b>Category A</b> (New version)	Changes are made to SSB name, contact details, or purpose statement
	No change is made to title, rules, or components of the qualification
	The qualification will be published as a new version with the same NQF ID
	No transition arrangements are required
<b>Category B</b> (New version)	Changes are made to title, rules, or components
	The new version of the qualification recognises a similar skill set to that recognised by the previous version
	The SSB is confident that people awarded the new or previous version are comparable in terms of competence
	The qualification will be published as a new version with the same NQF ID
<b>Category C</b> (Replacement qualification)	Significant changes are made to the qualification in terms of components, structure, type, or level
	The SSB views people with the replacement qualification as being significantly different in terms of competence from those with the replaced qualification
	The replacement qualification will be published with new NQF ID
	Transition arrangements are required
	Transition may be limited to phase-out dates
<b>Category D</b> (Qualification to expire)	Qualification is no longer required by industry
	The qualification is designated as expiring and a last date for meeting the qualification requirements is set
	There is no replacement qualification

## 12 The Review or Revision Report

SSBs must submit a report for publication with the qualification(s), reflecting the nature of changes made. This report is not intended to be a detailed account of the review or revision process.

The report must include

- the reasons for the review or revision and a brief outline of the consultation process
- a summary of the main changes made
- the transition arrangements from the previous to the new versions of the qualifications, including exemptions if required.

## 13 Transition Arrangements

Transition arrangements are for candidates who have an incomplete qualification when a new qualification, or a new version of a qualification, is registered.

Transition arrangements must be made whenever the introduction of a new qualification has an impact on existing qualifications that are nationally recognised and/or administered by NZQA.

Transition arrangements must be included in the registered qualification document.

There are two categories of transition:

**Non-NQF Transition Arrangements** – to a new qualification intended to replace a non-standards – based qualification (not registered on the NQF).

**NQF Transition Arrangements** – to a new qualification or new version of a qualification intended to replace a qualification currently registered on the NQF.

There are two approaches to setting transition arrangements. The option taken by the SSB must represent the best choice in terms of minimising additional training or assessment requirements, additional costs, or additional time for completion.

- 1 Allow the former qualification to be phased out over a period of time. This is appropriate when there are large numbers of learners and trainees at any one time and/or there is not a good match between the components of the former qualification and the new qualification.
- 2 Terminate training and assessment arrangements for the former qualification from a fixed date. People who are partway through the qualification are granted exemptions for standards in the new qualification corresponding to components of the former qualification. The exemptions are specified in the transition arrangements.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> All exemptions are qualification specific – they can only be used to meet the requirements of the qualification where they are specified; they cannot be used to meet the requirements of other qualifications.

Exemptions are most commonly included as part of transition arrangements to take account of reviews of standards, particularly standards that have been reviewed and replaced.

In relation to transition from an existing NQF qualification, the transition arrangements may indicate the extent of shared credits in the old and new qualifications; to assist people to decide which qualification it is in their interests to complete.

Transition candidates must not be forced to give up on obtaining a qualification because of the transition arrangements.

Where necessary, transition arrangements include some or all of the following:

- the last date for entry to training programmes or courses and/or assessments for the replaced qualification or replaced version of a qualification
- the date that training programmes, courses or assessment for the new qualification or new version of the qualification will start
- a 'complete by' date to allow people to complete the qualification or version of the qualification they have begun
- credit exemptions for a specified classification and/or exemptions for specified standards (may include a final date for people to use exemptions)
- arrangements for the collation of results
- arrangements for candidate fees
- publicity for the transition
- a contact for information
- a mechanism for appeals.

If no additional requirements are included in a new version of a qualification – for example the elective list has been expanded – transition arrangements are not required.

### **Specified dates in transition arrangements**

There are three dates that may be specified in transition arrangements, if required.

- 1 The start date for programmes or courses for the new qualification/new version.
- 2 The last date for entry to programmes or courses for the replaced qualification/version.
- 3 The last date for assessments to take place for the replaced qualification or replaced version of the qualification.

The last date for assessments to take place must allow a sufficient period of time for people to complete what they have begun. The period of time allowed for people to complete should take account of part-time candidates and opportunities for re-sits.

The last date for assessment is the **only** date checked by NZQA when results are forwarded for award.

NZQA checks that the unit standard results forwarded for award of a qualification have an assessment date **earlier** than the date specified for 'Last Date for Assessment'.

The 'Last Date for Assessment' is included in the **NQF Registration Information** table in the qualification document:

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	February 2000	31 December 2003
Revision	2	February 2004	31 December 2007
Review	3	March 2006	N/A

A qualification will not be awarded unless all of its component standards have been achieved prior to the last date for assessment.

#### 14 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

National Certificates of Educational Achievement levels 1-3 are the main qualifications in the senior secondary school. They have been developed by the Ministry of Education and differ from other national certificates in relation to credit recognition.

The NCEA provides for recognition of credits from other qualifications that are both listed on the Register and on the approved list for [NCEA Credit Inclusion](#). There is no limitation on the number of credits that can be imported from non-NQF qualifications.

#### 15 The Certificate

The qualification document includes a statement regarding the logos that will appear on the certificate. Requests for logos apart from the SSB or the accredited provider must be made to NZQA Framework Registration prior to the registration of the qualification.

The certificate will display the logo of NZQA and the Chief Executive's signature. The other logo/s present on certificates issued by NZQA are those of the SSB and/or the awarding accredited provider. The size and shape of the logo must be approved by NZQA. The logo must fit within an area of 10cm wide by 4.5cm high. The logos must be submitted to NZQA Tertiary Records after the registration of the qualification.

The logo of another body apart from the SSB, for example a professional body or trade association, may be included on the certificate. If the logo is in addition to that of the SSB *and* the awarding provider, two logos have to fit within the size constraints of one logo on the certificate.



Logos of trademarked commercial products are not permissible.

## 16 Prerequisite Diagrams

A diagram must be submitted with the qualification indicating the relationship among all standards in the qualification with prerequisites. This is for the quality assurance process; it is not compulsory to publish the diagram with the qualification.

A diagram may show the recommended order in which credit should be gained where the SSB considers that this will be of assistance to industry, providers, or self-directed learners.

Diagrams must be clearly labelled to indicate their function (eg *Prerequisite Diagram*, or *Recommended order in which credit should be gained*).

## 17 Classification

The Register website – <http://www.kiwiquals.govt.nz/> – requires all quality assured qualifications in New Zealand to be classified within the NZ Standard Classification of Education – Field of Study (NZSCED).

The NZSCED classification has three tiers (Broad, Narrow, and Detailed field). The most appropriate NZSCED classification should be selected for the qualification and included in the classification table in the qualification document. The NZSCED classifications and their descriptions are on the Ministry of Education website <http://www.steo.govt.nz/NZSCEDBrowseNoMenu.aspx?mode=browse>.

All NQF qualifications must also be classified in the NQF classification system. The NQF classification has three tiers: field, subfield, or domain. The NQF classification is normally used in the qualification title.

If the qualification has a non-classification title the qualification must be aligned with a NQF classification (See [Section 3 Title](#)).

Note: The classification database codes are entered at registration.

## Appendices

### 18 Appendix 1 Level descriptors

Level	Process	Learning demand	Responsibility
1	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are limited in range</li> <li>- are repetitive and familiar</li> <li>- are employed within closely defined contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recall</li> <li>- a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills</li> <li>- no generation of new ideas</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in directed activity</li> <li>- under close supervision</li> <li>- with no responsibility for the work or learning of others</li> </ul>
2	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are moderate in range</li> <li>- are established and familiar</li> <li>- offer a clear choice of routine responses</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic operational knowledge</li> <li>- readily available information</li> <li>- known solutions to familiar problems</li> <li>- little generation of new ideas</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in directed activity</li> <li>- under general supervision and quality control</li> <li>- with some responsibility for quantity and quality</li> <li>- with possible responsibility for guiding others</li> </ul>
3	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require a range of well-developed skills</li> <li>- offer a significant choice of procedures</li> <li>- are employed within a range of familiar contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some relevant theoretical knowledge</li> <li>- interpretation of available information</li> <li>- discretion and judgement</li> <li>- a range of known responses to familiar problems</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in directed activity with some autonomy</li> <li>- under general supervision and quality checking</li> <li>- with significant responsibility for the quantity and quality of output</li> <li>- with possible responsibility for the output of others</li> </ul>
4	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require a wide range of technical or scholastic skills</li> <li>- offer a considerable choice of procedures</li> <li>- are employed in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts</li> <li>- analytical interpretation of information</li> <li>- informed judgement</li> <li>- a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in self-directed activity</li> <li>- under broad guidance and evaluation</li> <li>- with complete responsibility for quantity and quality of output</li> <li>- with possible responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others</li> </ul>
5	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require a wide range of specialised technical or scholastic skills</li> <li>- involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures</li> <li>- are employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas</li> <li>- analytical interpretation of a wide range of data</li> <li>- the determination of appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems with some theoretical elements</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in self-directed and sometimes directive activity</li> <li>- within broad general guidelines or functions</li> <li>- with full responsibility for the nature, quantity, and quality of outcomes</li> <li>- with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes</li> </ul>

<b>Level</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Learning demand</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>6</b>	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require a command of wide-ranging highly specialised technical or scholastic skills</li> <li>- involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures, often in non-standard combinations</li> <li>- are employed in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specialised knowledge with depth in more than one area</li> <li>- the analysis, reformatting, and evaluation of a wide range of information</li> <li>- the formulation of appropriate responses to resolve both concrete and abstract problems</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in managing processes within broad parameters for defined activities</li> <li>- with complete accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<p>Carry out processes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- require a command of highly specialised technical or scholastic and basic research skills across a major discipline</li> <li>- involve the full range of procedures in a major discipline</li> <li>- are applied in complex, variable, and specialised contexts</li> </ul>	<p>Employing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge of a major discipline with areas of specialisation in depth</li> <li>- the analysis, transformation, and evaluation of abstract data and concepts</li> <li>- the creation of appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems</li> </ul>	<p>Applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in planning, resourcing, and managing processes within broad parameters and functions</li> <li>- with complete accountability for determining, achieving, and evaluating personal and/or group outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Level</b>	<b>Involves skills and knowledge that enable a learner to:</b>		
<b>8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide a systematic and coherent account of the key principles of a subject area; and</li> <li>- undertake self-directed study, research, and scholarship in a subject area, demonstrating intellectual independence, analytic rigour, and sound communication.</li> </ul>		
<b>9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demonstrate mastery of a subject area; and</li> <li>- plan and carry out - to internationally recognised standards - an original scholarship or research project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Demonstrated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the completion of a substantial research paper, dissertation, or in some cases a series of papers</li> </ul>		
<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide an original contribution to knowledge through research or scholarship, as judged by independent experts applying international standards.</li> </ul>		

## 19 Appendix 2 Qualifications - Definitions

The definitions set out below were approved by the Board of the Qualifications Authority and published in August 2001.<sup>7</sup>

### BACHELORS DEGREE

#### Characteristics of the Bachelors Degree programme

A Bachelors degree is a systematic and coherent introduction to the knowledge, ideas, principles, concepts, chief research methods, and problem-solving techniques of a recognised major subject (or subjects, in the case of a double degree or a double major). It requires meeting specified requirements, as set down in the relevant degree regulations, and involves at least one sequential study programme in which content is progressively developed to the point where a candidate is prepared for postgraduate study and supervised research. It prepares a candidate for advanced study as well as directed research and scholarship in the major subject(s) of the degree.

Bachelors degree programmes are taught mainly by people engaged in research; and emphasise general principles and basic knowledge as the basis for self-directed work and learning. (s254 The Education Act, 1989)

#### Entry

A programme of study leading to a Bachelors degree builds upon prior study, work, or experience and is open to those who have met the specified entrance requirements.

#### Outcomes

A graduate of a Bachelors degree programme is able to:

- a demonstrate knowledge and skills related to the ideas, principles, concepts, chief research methods, and problem-solving techniques of a recognised major subject (or subjects, in the case of a double degree or a double major);
- b demonstrate the skills needed to acquire, understand, and assess information from a range of sources;
- c demonstrate intellectual independence, critical thinking, and analytic rigour;
- d engage in self-directed learning; and
- e demonstrate communication and collaborative skills.

#### Credit requirements

A Bachelors degree requires a minimum of 360 credits from levels 4 to 7 or above. Some Bachelors degrees, notably in professional fields such as engineering, the health sciences, and law, encompass additional credits and may require a longer period of study. For example, an eight semester (four year EFTS) degree would normally be equivalent to 480 credits.

Of the credits required for a Bachelors degree, a minimum of 72 credits should be at level 7 or above. A maximum of 20 credits should be at level 4 (such that the integrity of the qualification at the higher levels is maintained).

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<sup>7</sup> *The New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications* (NZQA, 2001)

The degree should specify a spread of credit across levels so that the qualification reflects the requirements of the degree definition and achieves the associated learning outcomes in a way that is appropriate to the subject area.

### **Relationship with other qualifications**

A person who holds a Bachelors degree may be permitted to enrol for the Postgraduate Diploma or the Masters degree.

## **BACHELORS DEGREE WITH HONOURS**

A Bachelors degree may be awarded with honours to recognise advanced or distinguished study in advance of a level 7 Bachelors degree. This may occur by:

- recognising outstanding achievement in a 480 credit (or more) Bachelors degree especially in relation to work of a research nature (typically at level 8); or
- achieving 120 credits at level 8 following a level 7 Bachelors degree (either as part of an integrated honours degree or as a separate qualification).

A person with a Bachelors degree with honours may be permitted to enrol for a Masters degree or a Doctoral degree.

## **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE**

### **Characteristics of the Programme**

A graduate certificate is designed primarily as a vehicle for graduates to pursue further study at an undergraduate level. The graduate certificate can be designed as a bridging programme for candidates developing educational, professional, or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, or professional or subject area and/or as a broadening or deepening of skills or knowledge already gained in an undergraduate programme.

### **Entry**

Entry is usually open to graduates or to those who have been able to demonstrate equivalent practical, professional, or educational experience of an appropriate kind. This may include other level 6 or 7 qualifications.

### **Outcomes**

A person with a graduate certificate is able to:

- acquire and possess knowledge, analyse and solve problems, work and study independently; and
- demonstrate intellectual independence, analytical rigour, and sound communication skills.

### **Credit Requirements**

The graduate certificate:

- can be registered at levels 6 or 7;
- requires at least 60 credits (0.5 EFTS) from levels 5 to 7; and
- has its level defined by the top 40 credits.

### **Relationship with other qualifications**

The graduate certificate may provide an entry point to postgraduate study.

## GRADUATE DIPLOMA

### Characteristics of the Graduate Diploma Programme

A graduate diploma is designed as a vehicle for graduates to pursue further study at an undergraduate level. The programme can be designed to broaden knowledge and skills in a familiar subject or discipline or develop knowledge in a new area.

### Entry

Entry is usually open to graduates or to those who have been able to demonstrate equivalent practical, professional, or educational experience of an appropriate kind. This may include other level 6 or 7 qualifications.

### Outcomes

A person with a graduate diploma is able to:

- engage in self-directed learning and advance study; and
- demonstrate intellectual independence, analytic rigour, and the ability to understand and evaluate new knowledge and ideas.

### Credit Requirements

A graduate diploma:

- is registered at level 7 and requires a minimum of 72 credits at level 7; and
- requires a minimum of 120 credits from levels 5 or above.

### Relationship with other qualifications

A graduate diploma may provide the basis for postgraduate study.

## POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE

### Characteristics of the Postgraduate Certificate programme

A Postgraduate Certificate involves credits from a specified subject and, where appropriate, the cognate areas. It serves as a qualification recognising continuing professional development in the same area as the candidate's original degree. A candidate will normally have completed all requirements of a Bachelors degree or, in special circumstances, a Bachelors degree with Honours. The Postgraduate Certificate is designed to extend and deepen a candidate's knowledge and skills through formal instruction and directed inquiry.

### Entry

Postgraduate Certificates require a Bachelors degree in a cognate subject or relevant skills and knowledge acquired through appropriate work or professional experience.

### Outcomes

A graduate of a Postgraduate Certificate programme is able to:

- a acquire and assess knowledge, analyse and solve problems, work and study independently; and
- b demonstrate intellectual independence, analytic rigour, and sound communication.

### Credit requirements

A programme leading to the Postgraduate Certificate requires a minimum of 40 credits at level 8.

**Relationship with other qualifications**

A Postgraduate Certificate provides the basis for further Postgraduate study.

**POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA****Characteristics of the Postgraduate Diploma programme**

A Postgraduate Diploma is designed to extend and deepen a candidate's knowledge and skills by building on attainment in the principal subject(s) of the qualifying degree. It provides a candidate with a systematic and coherent survey of current thinking and research in a particular body of knowledge and may include instruction in the relevant research methodologies.

**Entry**

A candidate for the Postgraduate Diploma in a specified subject or, where appropriate, a cognate area will normally have completed all requirements of the relevant Bachelors degree. A provider may also admit to a programme leading to the Postgraduate Diploma a person who has completed all requirements of the Bachelors degree with Honours in a cognate subject, or who is deemed to have acquired the relevant skills and knowledge through appropriate work or professional experience.

**Outcomes**

A graduate of a Postgraduate Diploma programme is able to:

- a engage in self-directed learning and advanced study;
- b demonstrate intellectual independence, analytic rigour, and the ability to understand and evaluate new knowledge and ideas; and
- c demonstrate the ability to identify topics for original research, plan, and conduct research, analyse results and communicate the findings to the satisfaction of subject experts.

**Credit requirements**

The Postgraduate Diploma requires a minimum of 120 credits from levels 7 and above with a minimum of 72 credits from level 8.

**Relationship with other qualifications**

A Postgraduate Diploma may be awarded with distinction. It prepares a candidate for independent research and scholarship in the principal subject of the diploma. A person who holds a Postgraduate Diploma may be enrolled for a Masters degree or a Doctoral degree.

**MASTERS DEGREE****Characteristics of the Masters degree programme**

A Masters degree is normally designed to build on the principal subject(s) of the qualifying degree. Alternatively, a Masters degree may build on relevant knowledge and skills derived from occupational experience, as in the Master of Business Administration (MBA). Different discipline areas have different traditions. Thus national and international comparisons are relevant for a Masters degree in a particular area.

Typically they require students to demonstrate mastery of theoretically sophisticated subject matter; to evaluate critically the findings and discussions in the literature; to research, analyse and argue from evidence; to apply knowledge to new situations; and to engage in rigorous intellectual analysis, criticism and problem-solving.

A Masters degree programme contains a significant element of supervised research. The results of that research are normally embodied in a thesis, dissertation, or substantial research paper, but in some cases are incorporated in a series of papers. Creative work may also contribute to the research output. The research should demonstrate a capacity in the candidate for independent thinking.

### **Entry**

A candidate for the Masters degree will normally have completed the Bachelors degree, the Bachelors degree with Honours, the Postgraduate Diploma or, in special circumstances, the Postgraduate Certificate.

A provider may enrol a person who is not a graduate but who is deemed to have acquired the relevant skills and knowledge through work and/or professional experience. Before being enrolled, a person must have attained through formal study, work, or other experience, a high order of knowledge about the principal subject(s) of the degree or diploma, and have demonstrated interest in, and an aptitude for, original research.

### **Outcomes**

A graduate of a Masters degree programme is able to:

- a provide appropriate evidence of advanced knowledge about a specialist body of theoretical and applied topics relevant to the degree programme;
- b demonstrate the capacity for self-directed study and the ability to work independently;
- c plan and carry out, to internationally recognised standards, a piece of original research or scholarship which demonstrates a high order of skill in analysis and critical evaluation; and
- d demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.

### **Credit requirements**

The Masters degree requires either:

- 240 credits at levels 8 and 9, with a minimum of 40 credits at level 9; or
- when a candidate has a relevant Postgraduate Diploma or Bachelors degree with honours – or equivalent professional experience – 120 credits at levels 8 and 9 with a minimum of 40 credits at level 9.<sup>8</sup>

### **Relationship with other qualifications**

A person who holds the Masters degree may be admitted to a programme of advanced study and original research leading to a Doctoral degree.

## **DOCTORAL DEGREES**

It is not anticipated that Doctorates will be registered on the NQF, because each student's Doctorate is unique and would not therefore comprise portable credits.

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<sup>8</sup> Note that the 40 credit level 9 research aspect of the Masters degree may be met by a dissertation or in some instances a series of papers.