FIELD   MULTI-FIELD

Review of *Employment Skills* qualification

National Certificate in Employment Skills [Ref: 0231]

NZQA National Qualifications Services (NQS) has completed the review of the qualification listed above.

Date new versions published   June 2011

The next qualification review is planned to take place during 2016.

Summary of review and consultation process

The National Certificate in Employment Skills (NCES) was reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and reflects the current needs of employers and candidates wishing to enter the workforce.

The review was necessitated by the pending expiry in 2012 and 2013 of a number of compulsory and elective standards in version 11. Pre-review feedback from the sector also indicated that the current structure of the qualification contained too much flexibility for programme designers, and thus, an indistinct graduate profile for employers.

A working panel of ten representing the interests of tertiary education organisations, secondary schools, private training enterprises, industry training organisations, Tertiary Education Commission, Pasifika and Māori, met twice between March and September 2010 to establish a graduate profile and review the NCES.

The sector was encouraged to give feedback on the draft qualification via the NZQA consultation webpage. The consultation generated feedback from the secondary and tertiary sectors around the lack of flexibility of the proposed draft version. Feedback requested that some flexibility be introduced into the draft structure to ensure some accommodation of particular employer and/or learner needs could be incorporated into programmes leaded towards the NCES. Adjustments were made and an amended draft was circulated to panellists and consultees.

While consultees endorsed the amended version, feedback from the panel was divided. There was endorsement from some panellists representing prominent users of the qualification and industry, and some other panellists indicated that their preference was to return to the entirely compulsory structure. On deliberation, NQS adopted the amended structure, reasoning that providers who wanted to design a programme containing a compulsory core of generic, work-relevant standards, and a compulsory elective of literacy and numeracy standards could still do so. However, the flexible component also allowed providers to design programmes that accommodated local employer needs eg inclusion of industry-specific standards or more computing content.

Main changes resulting from the review

The panel established key focus areas covering literacy and numeracy, key competencies/priorities, and the skills and knowledge required of a graduate entering the workforce. Unit standards were selected to ensure coverage of the desired attributes and skills required of the graduate. The credit requirement was raised to 60 credits to better align with current funding models. The qualification model adopted contained a compulsory core of generic, work-relevant standards, and a compulsory elective of literacy and numeracy standards.

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Review category	**B**	See Key to Qualification Review Categories at the end of report

Version 12 was issued following review.

Changes to the structure and content

- The total credits increased from 55-68 to 60.
- A compulsory literacy and numeracy requirement has been added to the qualification. Candidates can meet this requirement by achieving unit standards in literacy and numeracy or specified achievement standards.
- Standards 496, 1294, 2780, 4248, 4252, 10781, 22144, 24699 and 24709 have been added to the compulsory section of the qualification
- Standards 1304, 3503, 8439, 8490, 8491 were removed from the compulsory section of the qualification
- All ESOL standards have been removed from the qualification.

For detailed information see Review Summaries on the NZQA website.

Candidates currently working towards version 11 may choose to complete that version or transfer their results to version 12. Candidates intending to complete the requirements for standards 90058 and 90060, must be assessed prior to their expiry date of 31 December 2011.

The last date for entry to programmes or courses for version 11 is January 2012.

The last date for assessments for version 11 is December 2012.

The start date for programmes or courses for version 12 is July 2011.

It is not intended that any existing candidates are disadvantaged by this review. However, anyone who feels disadvantaged should contact the standard setter at the address below.

NZQA National Qualifications Services
PO Box 160
Wellington 6140

Telephone   04 463 3000
Email   nqs@nzqa.govt.nz

Key to Qualification Review Categories

Category A The qualification is published as a new version with the same NQF ID	Changes are made to SSB name, contact details or purpose statement
	No change is made to title, rules or components of the qualification
	No transition arrangements are required
Category B The qualification is published as a new version with the same NQF ID	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
	Transition arrangements are required if candidates must gain additional/different credits for the new version
Category C A new (replacement) qualification is published with new NQF ID	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
	Transition arrangements are required
	Transition may be limited to phase-out dates
Category D Qualification will expire. There is no replacement qualification	Qualification is no longer required by industry
	The qualification is designated as expiring and a last date for meeting the qualification requirements is set