

A summary of the level descriptors is presented below:

Summary of qualifications

Qualification type	Descriptors	Type of Occupation
PhD, Post-Doctorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct cutting edge research in the field of study • Develop new techniques, ideas or approaches with complete autonomy 	Doctor, Researcher
Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of knowledge in the field of study • Propose solutions based on critical analysis of complex issues and research • Involving management of resources and supervision of others. 	Expert/Specialist
Post Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth specialized knowledge in the field of study • Apply specialized skills and principles based on systematic analysis of data in the field of study • Within broad autonomy 	Specialist
Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge in the field of study • Apply well-established principles, requiring a wide variety of data to solve problems in different contexts • within broad autonomy 	Manager/supervisor
Advanced Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized knowledge in the field of study • Apply varied and specialized procedures and techniques in the field of study requiring basic research • within broad parameters and a certain autonomy 	Technician specialized
Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad knowledge in the field of study • Apply varied procedures and techniques, to solve concrete problems, in non-routine contexts • under broad guidance 	Technician
Advanced Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational knowledge in the field of study • Apply a range of procedures and techniques in the field of study, to solve familiar problems in fairly routine contexts • under general supervision 	Trades person/ Specialized at intermediate level
Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic operational knowledge in the field of study • Apply basic procedures and techniques in response to precise instructions • under direct supervision 	Apprentice/ skilled at basic level

General Advanced Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge in particular subject areas • Apply a range of procedures and techniques in the field of study, to solve problems in a wide range of contexts • under general supervision 	Specialized general education
Secondary Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad-based knowledge • Apply basic procedures and techniques in a controlled environment and under direct supervision 	General education
Primary Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge • Apply basic procedures and techniques related to literacy, numeracy and IT skills involving development of desirable attitudes and values • under continuous guidance, regular checking and limited autonomy 	Basic educational foundation

A more comprehensive version of the level descriptors can be found below.

Section 4: Issues Arising from the Implementation of the Map

4.1. Implications for Learners.

The map informs learners as to the nature of qualifications on the framework. It indicates recognized qualifications types and the pathways to these. For learners with foreign certificates, the map is the main tool used to measure the “local currency” of their qualification.

4.2. Implications for Training Providers

The map clarifies for providers the nature of qualifications that are on offer and their levels. Training providers developing courses are guided by the descriptors and the notional hours, as well as other attendant regulations (for example, that of the definition of training under the SQA). Courses are validated using these criteria. Providers are to incorporate required unit standards for particular levels to allow for the articulation of qualifications. In subjecting qualifications to validation, providers are to ensure that the required resources and policies are in place. This is especially critical for the process of accreditation of the provider to deliver the qualification.

4.3. Implications for Policy makers

As the map becomes a reality the policies or current practices that need adjustment will be thrown into relief. Some of these, for example, the implications of the use of notional hours rather than days is immediately evident. Other policies, for example, that of student selection into and progression within institutions may require alignment. Resource implication, for example, to cater for the essential unit standards (if these were not already being covered) will need to be addressed. The implementation of the map will also, amongst others, make for a rationalised qualifications landscape, and in this scenario, salaries and

schemes of service can also be rationalised and aligned with a national system where the value of qualifications is no longer be uncertain.

4.4. Implications for Employers

The map shows at a glance the qualifications, their various levels, and clarifies the value of each qualification. It shows employers what their employees need to attain to arrive at certain levels of education and training and it provides a useful tool around which they can develop their schemes of service.

4.5. Implications for Professional Organizations

Organizations regrouping professionals have a guide as to the qualifications landscape from which they can develop qualifications in their own area. However, in the development of standards for qualification these organisations have a role to play in deciding with the SQA as to the professional competencies that should be included in the qualification. Similarly, professional organisations will need to assist the SQA in accrediting training providers.

The Level Descriptors

NQF level	Band	Qualification type	Level descriptors			
			Degree of complexity of tasks	Reasoning and problem solving	Knowledge	Autonomy and responsibility
10	Higher Education and Training	PhD, Post-Doctorate	<p>Carry out processes that: require originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge</p> <p>involve substantial contribution to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches in research and enquiry in the field of study</p> <p>demonstrate initiative and employ a wide range of advanced research skills applied to complex tasks in highly specialized contexts</p>	<p>Generate new knowledge and applications through conceptualizing, designing and implementing a research project at the forefront of the field of study</p> <p>Make sound judgement on and provide new insights into complex issues based on systematic and supported analysis in specialist fields involving aspects of uncertainty</p> <p>Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultation and dissemination of new findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences</p>	<p>Demonstrate evidence of creating and interpreting new knowledge based on original and advanced research at the forefront of the field of study, to satisfy peer review and merit publication</p> <p>Analyse and synthesize comprehensively and critically a substantial body of knowledge in the field of study in order to elicit and establish relationships between the elements of the subject in the area of research</p> <p>Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts, propose new insights into the field of study and generate new knowledge</p> <p>Understand the limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study</p>	<p>Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget</p> <p>in a completely self-directed manner</p> <p>with full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of advanced research work and including management of resources and supervision of others</p>
9		Master, Post Graduate	<p>Carry out processes that: require a measure of originality and mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized and/or broad knowledge</p> <p>Involve the use of established techniques of research and enquiry, to internationally recognized standards, to create and interpret knowledge in the field of study</p> <p>require the application of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly</p>	<p>Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches, the underpinning methodologies, and where appropriate, propose new hypotheses or solutions</p> <p>Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic and innovative analysis in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty</p> <p>Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of</p>	<p>Demonstrate evidence of critical and systematic understanding of knowledge and current problems and/or insights at the forefront of their field of study or area of specialization</p> <p>Analyse and synthesize comprehensively and critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study</p> <p>Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss, compare specialized texts,</p>	<p>Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget</p> <p>in a completely self-directed manner</p> <p>with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.</p>

			varied and/or highly specialized contexts.	consultative and/or supervisory role	propose new insights into the field of study and possibly generate new knowledge Understand limits of the knowledge and the necessity for further research and continuous development in the field of study	
8		Post Graduate	Carry out processes that: require a mastery in the application of in-depth and specialized knowledge Involve the development and adaptation of procedures to specific and professional context in the field of study require the application and the consolidation of a wide range of skills applied to tasks in highly specialized contexts.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches and where appropriate, propose a range of solutions Make sound judgement on complex issues based on systematic analysis in specialized contexts involving aspects of uncertainty Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of consultative and/or supervisory role	Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical and systematic understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of their area of specialization Analyze and synthesize critically current research and advanced scholarship in the field of study Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts Understand limits of the knowledge acquired, its influence on analysis and interpretation and explore lines of research	Operate in accordance with broad development or strategic plan and budget Within a context of broad autonomy with responsibility and broad ranging accountability for management of resources and supervision of others.
7		Degree	Carry out processes that: require self-directed application of knowledge with substantial depth in some areas. involve the development and adaptation of standard procedures to specific context in the field of study. require the application of a range of technical and other skills to tasks in both varied and highly specific contexts.	Evaluate critically the appropriateness of different problem solving approaches in the field of study. Provide appropriate responses to new situations requiring synthesis and evaluation of heterogenous data in contexts involving aspects of uncertainty. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of supervisory and collaborative role.	Demonstrate knowledge and intellectual independence in the critical understanding of ideas, principles and concepts of the field of study, and of area of specialization Analyze, synthesize and evaluate rigorously a wide range of information including consideration of areas of uncertainty. Conceive, write, critically analyse, discuss and compare specialized texts. Understand the limits of the knowledge acquired and its	Involved in the planning, resourcing, managing processes and guiding or supervising the work of others. within a context of broad autonomy with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and /or group outcomes.

					influence on analysis and interpretation.	
6	Further Education and Training	Advanced National Diploma	Carry out processes that: require a command of highly specialised technical or academic, and basic research skills across a particular branch of a field of study. involve the application of a full range of procedures in the branch of study. are employed in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts	Propose appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems. Provide adequate responses to unfamiliar situation requiring synthesis and consideration of heterogeneous data. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in the context of professional consultation	Demonstrate specialised knowledge with depth in a particular branch of a discipline Analyse, reformat and evaluate a wide range of information Conceive, write and discuss specialised texts Understand and interpret fundamental and highly technical information in a particular field of study	Involved in planning, resourcing and managing processes within broad parameters and functions with responsibility for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and / or group outcomes.
5		National Diploma	Carry out processes that: require a wide range of specialized technical and/or academic skills involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures are employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts	Research, adapt and implement innovative and creative processes Determine appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems and with reference to some theoretical concepts. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in order to train or supervise	Employ broad knowledge base with substantial depth in some areas Analyse and interpret a wide range of data and make informed judgement Prepare, present and discuss oral and/or written reports Understand and interpret relatively complex technical information	Involved in activities with full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, under broad guidance, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes with some responsibility for the supervision of others.
4		Advanced National Certificate	Carry out processes that: cover a range of well-developed technical and/or academic skills involve a significant choice of procedures are executed within a range of familiar contexts.	Use a range of known responses to solve familiar problems Have a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in order to communicate information, to convince or care for others	Employ broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts Analyse and interpret information and make informed judgement. Prepare oral and written reports on work done or on incidents Understand working instructions and simple technical documents	Involved in directed activities, with some autonomy, under general supervision, with some responsibility for the quantity and quality of output for self and others with possible responsibility for supervising others.
3		National Certificate	Carry out processes that: cover a range of specialized technical skills in a precise field of study involve repetitive and familiar	Apply procedures and/or techniques in response to precise instructions in order to obtain expected results Propose new solutions, adjustments	Employ basic operational knowledge Refer to readily available information	Involved in directed activities under general supervision and quality control

			procedures are executed within closely defined parameters	and adaptations Exchange factual information	Use known solution to familiar problems Fill in working forms or other relevant formats Understand working instructions	with limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of their work with no responsibility for guiding others
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4	General Education	Advanced level	Carry out processes that: deal with advanced hypothetical propositions which will be directly linked to a concern, topic or theme require developed abstract thinking skills to solve complex problems Involve a wide range of procedures, often in non -standard combinations	Demonstrate the ability to gain and apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding at a detailed level Show evidence of the ability to analyze, synthesize a range of data and to comprehend material of reasonably complex nature Determine the proper methods and procedures to respond to a variety of problems Articulate the results of their study and research clearly, accurately, and in a balanced and rational manner	Demonstrate wide -ranging understanding of the subject(s) at hand but within depth knowledge of certain areas Prepare oral and written essays with coherency on research done	Involves a high degree of independent learning, but will often require input or guidance from others to complete of tasks Displays qualities and transferable skills useful in situations requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and judgement
2		Secondary	Carry out processes that: deal with hypothetical propositions involving abstract thinking and requires the combination of elements in a systematic way	Apply procedures and/or techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains Transfer skills in multiple contexts according to set procedures and use them to learn more effectively Apply critical and creative thinking to solve problems Communicate information, instructions, ideas and feelings in a range of different cultural, language and social contexts	Acquire broad-based knowledge and skills and develop desirable attitudes, to provide the basis for independent and future learning, and application of learning.	Involved in directed learning under guided autonomy and with close supervision with limited responsibility aiming towards increased autonomy by taking positions

1		Primary	<p>Carry out processes at a concrete (hands-on) level</p> <p>based on familiar content and involving logical groupings</p>	<p>Apply basic procedures and techniques related to language, mathematical, ICT, scientific, historical, socio-cultural and environmental domains</p> <p>Apply repetitive and other learning skills to instil sound elementary knowledge, attitudes and values</p> <p>Demonstrate basic communication skills to inform, recall and express facts, ideas, views, opinions and feelings</p>	<p>Acquire basic, broad-based knowledge and skills (operational literacy in terms of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) and develop desirable attitudes and values.</p>	<p>Involved in basic directed learning</p> <p>under continuous guidance with close supervision</p> <p>with limited responsibility and autonomy</p>
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