DEVELOPING THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL
QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (ACQF)

GUIDELINE 06

Registers and databases of qualifications

ACQF
African Continental
Qualifications Framework

African Union

THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of acronyms

ACQF	African Continental Qualifications Framework
ANEP	Autoridade Nacional de Educação Profissional
ARES	Autoridade Reguladora do Ensino Superior
ASG-QA	African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BQA	Botswana Qualifications Authority
CNQP	Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações Profissionais
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EU	European Union
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NCQF	National Qualifications and Credit Framework
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
PAQAF	Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework
QA	quality assurance
REC	Regional Economic Community
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RQF	Regional Qualifications Framework
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
UC-SNQ	Unidade de Coordenação do Sistema Nacional de Qualificações
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

1. Introduction to the Guideline 6 on registration and databases of qualifications

As a Meta and referencing qualifications framework for the African continent, the ACQF aims at connecting the national and regional qualifications frameworks of the community of African Union (AU) member states. This core function is based on the process of referencing national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) or systems to the ACQF, following agreed criteria and procedures, and peer review by the Member States.

The ACQF is envisioned as an overarching qualifications framework for the African continent, based on the principles of:

a) Inclusiveness of all types of learning and levels of qualifications (all sub-systems of education and training);

b) Openness to learners' and stakeholders' needs, to policy learning and lessons from other qualifications frameworks; and

c) Innovation-readiness: notably to the transformation of skills and learning in the context of digitalisation, greening and beyond Covid-19 reconstruction.

The objectives of the ACQF are:

a) Comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications and support to people´s lifelong learning;

b) To facilitate recognition of diplomas and certificates, and support mobility (learners, workers and businesses);

c) Work in cooperation and complementarity with National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and Regional Qualifications Frameworks (RQFs) and support the creation of an African education and qualifications space; and

d) Promote cooperation, alignment/referencing between qualifications frameworks (national and regional) in Africa and worldwide.

In order to facilitate the attainment of the ACQF objectives, the African Union has embarked on the development of guidelines that will:

a) Generate a set of applicable concepts, principles, criteria and procedures, as well as tools, contributing to common understanding and application across countries and regions to ease the implementation of ACQF at continental, national and regional levels;

b) Present and elaborate on specific tools;

c) Clarify how the given policy or mechanism (for example, RPL) relates to the ACQF and what are the related key requirements for countries engaging in referencing/alignment to the ACQF;

d) Provide conceptual and technical orientations to countries/RECs to support improvement/consolidation of their own systems (for example, credit accumulation and transfer and links with NQF and the ACQF). This corresponds to Objective 3 of the ACQF ('work in cooperation and complementarity with the NQFs'); and

e) Seek synergy and complementarity with already existing AU policies and instruments, such as PAQAF and African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA).

This guideline is one of the ten ACQF guidelines. It focuses on the registration of qualifications on the ACQF and the establishment of the ACQF register/ database of qualifications.

1.1 Purpose of this guideline

The guideline on registration and database of qualifications has been developed as part of the process for the development of an African Continental Qualifications Framework. The guideline outlines concepts, principles and benefits of qualifications registers and proposes the specific features and uses of the future ACQF Qualification Platform/database.

This Guideline is a recommendation and orientation on the registration and database of qualifications for AU Member States. The Guideline does not have a legally binding force, regulatory function nor does it replace or supersede national policies. The Guideline is a collection of the most relevant information on concepts and theoretical underpinnings concerning the registration of qualifications. It recommends common principles, steps, tools and sources for further reference to help countries and regions in developing, consolidating, reviewing and implementing systems related to the registration of qualifications. The Guideline refers to existing AU policies, standards and guidelines in the domain of education and training for the sake of coherence and synergy.

1.2 Guideline structure

This guideline has three major sections addressing the following:

a) Registration of qualifications;

b) Technical design and main specifications for the ACQF platform/database of qualifications; and

c) Use of ACQF levels in qualifications registers and databases.

As one of the ACQF instruments, the guideline complements other ACQF guidelines and makes reference to the existing African Union policies, instruments and recommendations.

1.3 Target users

This guideline will be used as a reference document by various stakeholders within the continent of Africa such as:

a) Competent recognition authorities;

b) Quality assurance agencies;

c) Competent authorities involved in curriculum development;

d) Other related stakeholders in the management of qualifications; and

e) Policy makers.

1.4 Objectives

The registration and database of qualifications guideline aims to:

a) Recommend the main features of the Platform/database of qualifications;

b) Specify the minimum fields of information on qualifications for electronic publication in digital ACQF database of qualifications;

c) Highlight the possible uses of ACQF levels in qualifications registers and databases; and

d) Identify the potential uses of the ACQF Qualifications platform/database.

1.5 Links between the registration and database of qualifications guideline and other ACQF guidelines

The guideline on registration and database of qualifications has links to the following ACQF guidelines:

a) Guideline (3) – Referencing NQF-ACQF: criteria, process, tools:

The outcome of the referencing of NQFs to the ACQF is important to the process of registration of qualifications on the ACQF database of qualifications.

b) Guideline (4) – Validation and recognition of learning:

Availability of qualification databases makes the process of validation and recognition of learning easier as they provide credible and reliable information on qualifications, NQFs and NQSs.

c) Guideline (5) – Quality Assurance:

The quality assurance process is critical to the process of registration of qualifications on databases. This is because the process requires that there be transparent processes and procedures for registering qualifications on the NQF or for describing the place of qualifications in the NQS. Further, information on quality assured qualifications is accessible, trustworthy and verifiable in a national register(s) of qualifications.

d) Guideline (9) – Innovation and Technology in NQFs/ACQF:

Innovation and technology facilitates for registration in databases of qualifications that are premised on technology such as micro-credentials. Further, technology supports the creation and maintenance of registers of qualifications.

e) Guideline (10) – Qualifications, NQFs, NQS - systemic view:

Availability of NQFs and NQSs makes the process of registering qualifications easier as they provide credible and reliable information on nationally quality assured qualifications.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 Introduction

Registration of qualifications is an important measure that enhances quality and regulation of qualifications. It provides greater protection for the public and employers. Members of the public and employers can have confidence in the qualifications knowing that the quality of qualifications has been independently verified and assured by a competent authority.

In the context of this guideline, registration is a process through which nationally quality assured and registered qualifications are placed on the ACQF platform/database of qualifications.

The ACQF is a meta framework for referencing with national qualifications frameworks and systems and supports the development of operational instruments contributing to comparability qualifications and to transparency of qualifications frameworks. This Guideline proposes a range of modalities for use of the ACQF Qualifications Platform/database, which does not aim at replacing the national registers, but to complement, link and support them for continental information-sharing.

2.2 Purpose of registration of qualifications

The purpose of registration of qualifications is to:

a) Provide users with information for study and career choices and management;

b) Enhance mutual understanding, acceptability and recognition of qualifications amongst member states across the African Continent;

c) Provide for smooth verification and evaluation of qualifications;

d) Promote the quality of education and training provision; and

e) Enhance mobility and portability of qualifications thereby creating opportunities for access to learning, transfer of learning and progression in learning among member state nationals.

2.3 Benefits of registration of qualifications at National, Regional and Continental Levels

The process of registering qualifications brings with it a number of benefits at national, regional and continental levels, as outlined below:

a) Transparency of information on qualifications for different uses (comparison, career information for learners);

b) Enhances quality and recognition of qualifications;

c) Facilitates mobility of learners and workers from one country to another as well as across regions and continents;

d) Protecting learners, employers and the public from misrepresented qualifications;

e) Deepens integration and harmonisation of qualifications among states;

f) Eases recognition and transfer of credits;

g) Provides real time statistics of qualifications for education and economic decision making and policy development; and

h) Facilitates for smooth verification and evaluation of qualifications.

2.4 Cases and experiences: registers and databases of qualifications and credentials in Africa

2.4.1 Trends and developments

Databases / registers of qualifications are important instruments for transparency about the panorama of qualifications of different countries. The quality, completeness and accessibility to this information is fundamental for the end-users (learners, training providers, employers, and workers) at national level, but also for qualifications and recognition bodies globally. Databases / registers of qualifications offer a view on the actual status of implementation of NQFs, and contribute to monitoring and evaluation of the qualifications system.

In many countries in Europe, Africa, America, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the authorities and departments managing qualifications at national level are taking steps to improve and modernise the tools, technology and methods used to structure, manage, and visualise information and data on qualifications. For improved global transparency on qualifications and efficient information-sharing between NQFs across continents and between regions, a number of themes need shared views, e.g.:

- Role of qualifications databases / register for efficient information-sharing - reliable and up-to-date data on standards, programmes, qualifications and credentials
- Interoperability between databases: technical and conceptual aspects
- Minimum fields of information on qualifications and credentials for electronic publication in digital databases
- Concise formulations of learning outcomes of qualifications and credentials for electronic publication in digital databases
- Support to countries and regions in developing and implementing interoperable databases of qualifications and credentials, capacity development.
- Information-sharing and cooperation of national / regional databases of qualifications and credentials with bodies and councils managing quality assurance of education and training and recognition of qualifications.

2.4.2 Snapshot on some national registers / databases in Africa

This brief overview is based on web search (online registers and databases), the ACQF feasibility study (2021), ACQF Mapping study (2021) and the poll results of the ACQF training conducted between 18th and 22nd April, 2022.

This brief section explores three main questions:

- What can we learn from NQF registers and databases?
- Which qualifications are included in NQF registers and databases – by levels and by sectors?
- What is the state-of-play of databases/ registers of qualifications?

The ACQF Feasibility study (2021) explored existing and accessible registers of qualifications in five countries: Cape Verde, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique and South Africa. We further add information on the

register of Botswana National Qualifications and Credit Framework (NCQF). We are grateful to the national experts who shared information and data for ACQF Feasibility study and this Guidelines.

Table 1: Overview on registers / databases of qualifications (associated with the NQFs)

Country	Register / database of qualifications	Qualifications included	Key features
Botswana	Botswana Qualifications Authority – Register of qualifications	529 full qualifications - all levels of NCQF and fields of study. The number of qualifications published on the register online increased by 30% between April and May 2022.	The register is searchable by title of qualification (search by key word tool). Qualifications documents can be viewed and downloaded. The online register publishes a list of qualifications (title, type, level, field and document). All registered qualifications are formatted based on a standardised model. Section B of the model - Qualifications Specifications contains: graduate profile (learning outcomes) and the associated assessment criteria (detail and clarify the learning outcomes).
Cape Verde	National Catalogue of Qualifications	64 full qualifications (levels 2 to 5 of the NQF).	The digital online Catalogue is accessible as a repository of qualifications documents (PDFs). All qualifications are structured based on a standardised format, including: professional profile, units of competence (learning outcomes and assessment criteria), training programme (modules) and training module in the real context of work. The qualifications in the Catalogue are distributed in 15 professional families. The Catalogue also includes a new Transversal Training Module of 3 units (entrepreneurial competences).
Kenya	New : National Qualifications Information Management System (NAQIMS) Register of qualifications (of accredited bodies)	1 262 qualifications at all levels of NQF	NAQIMS is a system for automating processes, based on Blockchain technology to register: a) qualifications awarding institutions (QAIs), b) qualifications and c) learners' records. Managed and maintained by KNQA
Morocco	Vocational training in figures (2019-2020) Summary of all registered	352 TVET programmes leading to	Not a digital database of qualifications, but a statistical overview of the TVET system including the full set of available programmes and qualifications (formal initial TVET)

	qualifications maintained by TVET Department. Annual update	qualifications in 4 levels of NQF	Distribution of programmes by levels of qualification and sectors: - 4 levels: specialization, qualification, technician, technician specialist - 21 sectors
Mozambique	National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNQP) Managed and maintained by ANEP	164 qualifications registered, at levels 2 to 5 of Professional qualifications framework. Published on the online Catalogue- (22/05/2022): 153. 19 independent modules	The digital online Catalogue is accessible as a repository of qualifications documents (PDFs). All qualifications are structured based on a standardised format, including: general information, units of general competencies, units of vocational competencies, training modules (general and vocational), training programme (modules) and training module in the real context of work. The qualifications in the Catalogue are distributed in 16 professional families. Moreover, the Catalogue also includes 19 independent modules.
South Africa	SAQA: register of qualifications and part-qualifications Managed and maintained by SAQA	Large number of qualifications all levels (over 22 000)	SAQA online register contains searchable databases: 1. All qualifications and unit standards (no matter their status) 2. Registered qualifications and unit standards (NQF qualifications) 3. Qualifications and unit standards that have passed their registration end date 4. Professional Bodies and Professional Designations

What else do we learn from this overview of six African cases?

- The NQF qualifications registers and databases of the six cases are differently structured. But the digitalised information on the format and content of qualifications accessible online for users is very useful for such objectives as:

    ○ Comparison of qualifications between countries – learning outcomes, assessment criteria, volume of learning in various credit accumulation and transfer systems, links to classifications (fields of study, occupations).

    ○ Transparency on the learning outcomes behind the diplomas and certificates held by graduates.

    ○ Support for career orientation and progression, and choice of study pathways and programmes – for different types of learners, and for career guidance professionals.

- ○ For mobility of learners and workers – reference to the qualifications register of the sending and receiving country helps shedding light and clarifying the nature, outcomes and place of programmes and qualifications.

- ○ For recognition of qualifications (for further study and employment): ease access to targeted and reliable data for recognition bodies, higher education institutions, employers.

- ○ For digital credentials and certification: registers / databases of qualifications provide reliable information on the learning outcomes, volume of learning and quality assurance of qualification.

- In five out of the six countries mentioned in this analysis, the national registers of qualifications are available online and maintained on the website of the institution tasked with the coordination and implementation of the NQF. Morocco publishes annual reports updating information on existing qualifications and has developed a version of a comprehensive digital searchable information system of TVET standards, programmes and qualifications (to be launched online for all users). Morocco plans to establish a comprehensive register of the NQF at a later stage.

- SAQA ensures the integrity and maintenance of the [Register of qualifications and part-qualifications](). The Register contains four searchable databases (more information in table 1), and a large number of qualifications at all levels of the NQF.

- KNQA, as the custodian of national qualifications, developed NAQIMS, based on Blockchain technology. At the moment access to qualifications documents is possible via this [KNQA database.]() Qualifications in the database are structured by institution, and currently the number of qualifications of TVET institutions largely exceeds the number of qualifications of other bodies (university bodies, professional bodies, foreign qualifications awarding bodies, basic level bodies).

- Botswana: [Botswana Qualifications Authority – Register of qualifications]() contains 529 qualifications at all levels of the NCQF. Registered and accredited Education and Training Providers (ETPs) are encouraged to develop learning programmes, based on the registered qualifications, for accreditation in Botswana. The search function allows queries by title of qualification.

- Cape Verde is implementing an inclusive and already reviewed eight-level NQF. The NQF register ([National Catalogue of Qualifications]()) is available online and is managed by the leading NQF institution – the Coordination Unit of the National Qualifications System (UC-SNQ). However, it includes only TVET qualifications (levels 2–5). All qualifications in the NQF register are displayed according to a standard template, which includes the qualifications profile, the training standards and assessment, described in learning outcomes. Qualifications of the higher education system are registered by the regulatory authority of higher education, Agência Reguladora do Ensino Superior (ARES).

- Mozambique has significantly advanced the process of design and consultation of the integrated comprehensive NQF, and its decree is to be approved in 2022 by the Cabinet of Ministers. Historically Mozambique implemented two sectoral qualifications frameworks, which work in parallel (TVET and Higher education). Each framework is based on a different legal basis, defining the level descriptors, types of qualifications and quality assurance requirements. The TVET qualifications framework is implemented by the National TVET Authority (ANEP), while the Higher education qualifications framework is coordinated by the National Council for Quality Evaluation (CNAQ). Data on the higher education qualifications is not available in an online register, but can

be obtained via a request to CNAQ. All qualifications in the TVET qualifications framework database (National Catalogue of Qualifications) are displayed according to a standard template.

The poll results of the ACQF virtual training programme conducted from 18th to 22nd April 2022 on the state-of-play of databases/ registers of qualifications in African countries were as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Poll results from the ACQF Training Session

SN	Response	Number of replies
1.	Database includes all qualifications of all levels and types delivered in the country	18
2.	Database includes only quality-assured qualifications with NQF levels	11
3.	Different databases of qualifications for different sub-sectors (VET / Higher education / others	7
4.	Developing new database(s) of qualifications	9
5.	Information from the qualifications databases is accessible online for the wider public	13
6.	The qualifications database(s) is / are not operational	15

The results of the poll show that the databases/ registers of qualifications differ in terms of scope and coverage of the different sectors of education and training, online accessibility to the wider public, and status of implementation.

2.5 Qualifications registers and databases in other parts of the world: some examples

2.5.1 Europe – European Qualifications Framework

Implementation of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and availability of targeted funding from the EU budget (Erasmus+ and other programmes) has contributed to development and operationalisation of NQFs across the 38 involved countries, including qualifications databases accessible online. An overview of progress of EQF implementation is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Main outcomes of EQF implementation (as of February 2022)

Feature	EQF
Region / community	European Union and other countries with specific status of cooperation. 38 countries: 27 EU Member States and 11 countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey).
Establishment and legal basis	Council Communication: 2008 Council Recommendation revised in 2017, repealing the Council Recommendation of 2008
RQF scope and levels	- Comprehensive; Inclusive of all sub-sectors and modes of learning (including non-formal and informal). - 8 levels - Descriptors: knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy

Countries that referenced / aligned NQFs to RQF	36 countries (out of 38) referenced to EQF and these reports are published. 5 countries have updated referencing reports in the period 2019-Feb 2022 (The Netherlands, Latvia, Ireland, France and Italy)
Use of EQF levels by countries	33 (out of 38) use EQF levels on their qualifications documents (diplomas, certificates, supplements) 23 countries use EQF levels on their national qualifications databases
Countries with functioning NQFs	37 (out of 38) The large majority have developed and made accessible online digital qualifications databases / registers.

The most recent update on the status of NQF implementation in EQF countries provides information on NQF databases / registers. Table 5 contains the URLs to the existing and accessible national qualifications databases / registers. Some EQF countries are not included in the table due to lack of information on the most recent and functioning online register of qualifications.

Table 5: EQF countries: national qualifications databases / registers

Country / NQF	Database / register of qualifications
Austria	Qualifications Register Connection to Europass in preparation
Belgium (Francophone)	Qualifications register Connected to Europass
Belgium (Flandres)	VKS Database connected to Europass (phase of testing)
Bulgaria	List of TVET qualifications: NAVET
Czech Republic	National Register of Qualifications Connected to Europass 1 448 qualifications
Denmark	UddannelsesGuiden (Education Guide)
Estonia	Qualifications Register-search Connected to Europass 4 279 qualifications
Finland	StudyInfo
France	RNCP – search Connection to Europass in testing phase
Germany	Qualifications Register-search Connected to Europass
Greece	Qualifications Register-search Connected to Europass
Ireland	Irish Register of Qualifications - QQI Connected to Europass
Latvia	Latvian Qualifications Database Connected to Europass

Lithuania	AIKOS – register of qualifications
	Connected to Europass
Hungary	Hungarian Qualifications Framework – register
	Connected to Europass
Malta	Malta Qualifications Database
	Connected to Europass
	633 qualifications of all levels
Netherlands	NLQF Qualifications Database
	Connected to Europass
Poland	Integrated Qualifications Register
	Connected to Europass
Portugal	Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações
	Connected to Europass
	391 qualifications (levels 2-5), 3 702 competence units, 8 536 units of short-duration training
Slovenia	SQF Register
	Connected to Europass
Slovakia	SOK Register of qualifications
Sweden	NQF register of qualifications
	Connected to Europass

2.5.2   America, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong

Other countries have well-developed and functional registers / databases of qualifications and credentials.

United States

- Credential Engine (United States) has a sophisticated technology, and services and analytical capabilities.

  o Credential Finder: is a tool for exploring all of the information published to the Credential Registry. As of 22/05/2022, the Registry contains 32 980 credentials

  o Credential Publisher: Publish to the Credential Publisher

New Zealand

- The search tool to find qualifications is integrated in the website of NZQA - New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

  As an example of the search function accessible for users of the register we found 1 116 qualifications of the type "Diploma" and 1 240 of the type "Certificate"– all levels and subject areas.

- The register of NZQA-approved Micro-Credentials contains 245 micro-credentials (as of 22/05/2022) at different levels of the NQF (levels 2 to 8).

Australia

- Australia: The TVET database integrates all accredited qualifications and units of competency and the details of all registered providers and their approvals to deliver specific education and training services.

Hong Kong

Qualifications Register (QR).

QR is a centralised online database containing information on quality assured qualifications and their operators and assessment agencies for Recognition of Prior Learning. All qualifications listed on the QR are quality-assured and recognised under the Qualifications Framework. Under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications is specified as the QR Authority.

3. Main indicative specifications for technical design of the ACQF qualifications platform

The ACQF platform/database of qualifications is a strategic tool that will be used to generate and access vital information and statistics about most aspects of recognised qualifications in Africa. Hence, with proper and up-to-date maintenance of the platform/database of qualifications, the ACQF is poised to become a key continental source of information for human resource and skills development in policy, infrastructure and planning. In addition, the platform/database will help to shape policies and incentives to steer the education and training system in a more positive direction on the continent. Further, the platform/database will provide availability of information for decision making in the recognition of qualifications and aid in the enhancement of quality of qualifications.

The ACQF platform/database of qualifications will provide information on registered qualifications in African Member States, together with their respective NQF levels and how they compare to the ACQF levels. As a transparent instrument for users' information and guidance, the ACQF Qualifications platform/database will serve and support the national qualifications authorities and the awarding bodies, countries, regions, and the continent.

In the context of the large size of the continent, the diversity of qualifications systems and ongoing rapid developments related with new types of qualifications and credentials, digitalisation, recognition of knowledge and skills acquired in non-formal and informal contexts, the ACQF Qualifications platform/database will be conceived to operate for different use cases, each supported by adequate and transparent procedures.

3.1 Main features of the qualifications platform / database

a) Security – the platform/database should protect against unauthorised access to data. The database should clearly specify access restrictions.

b) Accessibility – should be easily accessible from any part of the world at any time and allow for multi-user data access.

c) Usability – the platform/database should be simple and user-friendly.

d) Stability – the platform/database should be designed in such a manner as to prevent the loss of data due to among other things system crushes.

e) Interoperability – the platform/database should allow for communication and interchange of information with other national and regional databases.

f) Dependability – the platform/database should produce data that is reliable, consistent and accurate.

g) Flexibility – the platform/database should allow for modifications as and when need arises.

h) Recoverability – the platform/database should allow for recovery and restoration of lost or manipulated data.

3.2 Uses of the ACQF Qualifications Database

As a transparent instrument for users' information and guidance, the ACQF Qualifications Platform/database serves and supports the national qualifications authorities and the awarding bodies, end-users (for example, learners, employers, career counsellors, teachers, and trainers) and in wider terms, the countries, regions and the continent as a whole. The ACQF Qualifications Platform complements, supports, and can interoperate with national and regional databases, and does not aim at replacing or changing existing national qualifications databases.

The ACQF Qualifications Platform/database will be conceived for distinct use cases, each supported by adequate and transparent procedures.

The scope of the ACQF Qualifications Platform/database will notably support the following uses:

a) **Use by national qualifications frameworks or systems** – notably in two ways:

- Information sharing on national qualifications included in national qualifications frameworks or systems referenced to the ACQF. The ACQF offers the infrastructure as a free public service for NQFs that have referenced to the ACQF. These NQFs may link their qualifications databases to the ACQF Platform. Having referenced to ACQF levels, the national qualifications of these NQFs and national registers are automatically associated with the ACQF levels. This information is shared publicly for different target users.

- The ACQF Platform can be used at national level – countries may adopt the technology and infrastructure provided by the ACQF Platform as a free service to list and manage their national qualifications. The national qualifications database is managed by the competent national authorities but can be built on the infrastructure provided by the ACQF Qualifications Platform (database), upon the necessary feasibility analysis and agreement on terms and conditions.

b) **International qualifications** with high labour market, societal, technological value and currency can contribute to AU policies of economic integration, growth, and innovation. International qualifications are awarded by a legally established international body (association, organisation, professional sector, or company) or by a national body acting on behalf of an international body, are used in more than one country and include learning outcomes assessed with reference to standards established by an international body. Such qualifications may not be included in the NQF and may not have a NQF level. Inclusion of international qualifications in the ACQF Qualifications Platform (database) contributes to transparency and trust, and their registration builds on transparent procedures based on accepted state-of-the-art practice, on relevant aspects of the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA), and other relevant guidelines and regulations.

c) **Common continental qualifications profiles** related to priorities and sectors of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and other AU policies. Such qualifications profiles/standards should focus on high labour market, societal, technological value for the continent and be developed by multi-country teams based on agreed methodology and quality assurance to ensure acceptability

and endorsement across borders in Africa. These common profiles are free for countries to use to design national courses and programmes in secondary and tertiary education, continuing training, and employment training. The related full qualifications are awarded by the countries' competent bodies.

d) **Qualifications from sectoral organisations and other institutions awarding micro-credentials:** This approach involves the registration of qualifications on the ACQF from sectoral organisations and institutions awarding micro-credentials. Under this approach, the awarding institution should first register the qualification in the Member State where they intend to award the qualification. This is to ensure that only quality assured qualifications are registered on the ACQF platform/database. The registration of such qualifications on the ACQF platform/database will be undertaken according to Approaches 1 and 2 above.

3.3 Minimum fields of information on qualifications for electronic publication in digital ACQF database of qualifications

Contribution to enhanced transparency, quality and comparability of qualifications is a major objective of the ACQF. Across the continent, the information described in existing qualifications documents and databases varies in terms of structure, data fields and format of the main learning outcomes. The rich diversity of qualifications systems on the continent is not an impediment on the way towards comparability and readability of qualifications, which can ease recognition of qualifications of all levels, and contribute to improving mobility and to getting employment in jobs matching the acquired qualification.

ACQF countries are invited to consider the following minimum fields in structuring the information on qualifications included in the NQF/NQS referenced to the ACQF. The ACQF implementation structure will provide practical guidance to national qualifications institutions on the implementation of this recommendation.

a) **Required:**
   1. Title of qualification
   2. Field of education and training (according to ISCED-2013, fields of education and training – ISCED-F 2013)[1]
   3. Country code
   4. NQF level – ACQF level
   5. Type of qualification
   6. Awarding body or competent authority
   7. Description of the qualification: short statements on the learning outcomes – what the learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do
   8. Credit points/notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (if available)
   9. Expiry date (if available)
   10. Link to qualifications database (if available).

b) **Optional:**
   1. Unique qualification code
   2. External quality assurance/regulatory body
   3. Ways to acquire the qualification
   4. Relationship to occupations or occupational classification

---

[1] ISCED-F 2013, at: http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/isced-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-en.pdf

5. Other   fields.

Required minimum fields of information on qualifications:

3.3.1   Title of qualification

The title should be concise, distinctive, appropriate and indicative of the type and area of specialisation of the qualification, for example, Bachelor of Arts in Economics. In this example, Bachelor is the type of qualification and Economics is the area of specialisation.

3.3.2   Field of education and training

The qualifications must be classified[2] according to the areas of specialisation or field of education and training. For example, the areas of specialisation would include Marketing, Engineering, Accountancy, Legal Studies, Medical Sciences, etc.

3.3.3   Country of origin (country code)

The country of origin of the qualification will be indicated for purposes of registration.

3.3.4   Level (NQF, RQF, ACQF)

This field will indicate the level of the qualification (NQF or NQS, RQF, ACQF – as adequate).

3.3.5   Type of qualification

The qualifications should be categorised by their type, that is, Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees.

3.3.6   Authority

Name of competent recognition authority

The name of the competent recognition authority responsible for the registration of the qualification in the country of origin.

Name of awarding body

The name of the awarding body responsible for awarding the qualification in the country of origin.

3.3.7   Description of the qualification

This field will provide a short statement on the aim and learning outcomes of the qualification.

3.3.8   Study hours/credits

The notional study hours and credits needed to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualification should be provided, where applicable.

3.3.9   Expiry date

Qualifications referenced on the ACQF platform/database should be assigned an expiry date, after which registration of qualifications on the ACQF platform/database should be renewed.

3.3.10   Link to National Qualifications Database

Optional minimum fields of information on qualifications:

---

[2] ISCED-F 2013. http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/isced-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-en.pdf

3.3.11 Unique qualification code

National qualifications have a unique identification code given in accordance with national rules and procedures. Qualifications linked to ACQF Qualifications Platform should have a code comprise the country alpha code, qualification classification code and number.

3.3.12 External quality assurance/regulatory body

Information on external quality assurance process / competent regulatory body

3.3.13 Ways to acquire the qualification

Information on access, assessment and certification, including RPL procedure.

3.3.14 Relationship to occupations or occupational classification

Information on links to occupational classification (national, sectoral, international).

3.3.15 Other fields

4. Use of ACQF levels in qualifications registers and databases

Competent authorities will reference their NQFs or qualifications to the ACQF level descriptors as recommended under Guideline 3 of the ACQF.

Competent authorities who have referenced their NQFs or qualifications to the ACQF level descriptors will then be invited to indicate the ACQF level against all qualifications registered on their national registers/databases.

African Union member states are encouraged to use the ACQF Qualifications platform/database to publish information on their NQF and their national qualifications.

ACQF supports information-sharing on NQFs in Africa to facilitate recognition and portability of qualifications. Moreover, ACQF contributes to innovation in the domain of qualifications and credentials. ACQF's main instruments for information-sharing are the website and the Qualifications platform/database.

5. Sources

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2020. *Cape Verde - Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: E Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/cape-verde-country-report

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2020. *Kenya - Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: Overeem M., https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/kenya-country-report-acqf-mapping

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2020. *Morocco - Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: E Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/morocco-country-report

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2020. *Mozambique - Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: E Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/mozambique-national-report

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2021b. *Towards the African Continental Qualifications Framework – Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: J. Keevy, A. Bateman, E. Castel-Branco, L. Mavimbela, J. Adotevi, L. Sutherland, R. Matlala, U. Kyari and T. Sibiya. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/acqf-mapping-report-comprehensive

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2021c. *Towards the African Continental Qualifications Framework – Synthesis.* AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: J. Keevy, A. Bateman, E. Castel-Branco, L. Mavimbela, J. Adotevi, L. Sutherland, and R. Matlala. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/acqf-mapping-report-synthesis

ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework). 2021d. *Cape Verde - Updated Mapping report*. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: E Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/cape-verde-country-report-update

ACQF. 2021a. *Feasibility report. Rationale, scenarios and plan*. Authors: E. Castel-Branco. E. Mukhwana et al. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/feasibility-study

ACQF. 2021b. ACQF Capacity Development Programme. Thematic Brief 1. Concepts and definitions on qualifications and qualifications frameworks. Author: Castel-Branco, E. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-1-concepts-and-definitions

ACQF. 2021c. ACQF Capacity Development Programme. Thematic Brief 3.1. Level descriptors in qualifications frameworks. Overview from 24 African Qualifications Frameworks. Author: Castel-Branco, E. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-3-1-level-descriptors

ACQF. 2021d. ACQF Capacity Development Programme. Thematic brief 4.1. Regional qualifications frameworks (RQF) – 3 case studies: SADCQF, ASEAN QRF, EQF. Author: Castel-Branco, E. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-4-1-regional-qualifications-frameworks-rqf

ACQF. 2022a. Guideline 1: Learning outcomes in the context of NQFs and ACQF. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022b. Guideline 2: Levels and level descriptors in the context of ACQF. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022c. Guideline 3: Referencing to ACQF. Authors: C. Jaftha, E. Castel-Branco.
https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022d. Guideline 4: Validation and recognition of learning. Authors: M. Chiyaba, M. Hamalabbi, F. Cheelo, J. Mwewa. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022e. Guideline 5: Quality assurance in the context of ACQF. Authors: E. Castel-Branco, K. Allgoo. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022f. Guideline 6: Registers / databases of qualifications. Authors: M. Chiyaba, M. Hamalabbi, F. Cheelo, J. Mwewa. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022g. Guideline 7: Monitoring and evaluation in the context of NQF and ACQF. Authors: E. Hazell, Z. MacDonald. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022h. Guideline 8: Communication and outreach in the context of NQF and ACQF. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022i. Guideline 9: Innovation and technology in the context of NQF and ACQF. Authors: K. Shiohira, P. Molokwane et all. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022j. Guideline 10: Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks – the systemic view. Author: A. Bateman. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

ACQF. 2022k. Training module 1: Learning Outcomes in Qualifications Frameworks and Systems. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-1-learning-outcomes

ACQF. 2022l. Training module 2: Levels and level descriptors. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: C. Jaftha. Contributors: A. Bateman, E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-2-levels-and-level-descriptors-in-the-context-of-acqf

ACQF. 2022m. Training module 3: Referencing to ACQF. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: C. Jaftha, E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-3-referencing-to-acqf

ACQF. 2022n. Training module 4: Validation and recognition of learning. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: M. Chiyaba, M. Hamalabbi, F. Cheelo and J. Mwewa. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-4-validation-and-recognition-of-learning

ACQF. 2022o. Training module 5: Quality Assurance in the context of ACQF. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: E. Castel-Branco, K. Allgoo. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-5-quality-assurance-in-the-context-of-the-acqf

ACQF. 2022p. Training module 6: Registration and databases of qualifications. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: M. Chiyaba, M. Hamalabbi, F. Cheelo and J. Mwewa. Contributor: E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-6-registers-databases-of-qualifications

ACQF. 2022p. Training module 7: Monitoring and evaluation in the context of qualifications frameworks or systems. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: Eleanor Hazell, Zahraa McDonald et al. Contributor: E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-7-monitoring-and-evaluation-the-context-of-nqfs-and-acqf

ACQF. 2022r. Training module 8: Communication and outreach in the context of NQF and ACQF. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-8-communication-and-outreach-in-the-context-of-nqf-acqf

ACQF. 2022s. Training module 9: Innovation and technology in the context of qualifications systems. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Authors: K. Shiohira, P. Molokwane. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-9-innovation-and-technology-in-the-context-of-qualifications-and-nqfs

ACQF. 2022t. Training module 10: Qualifications and qualifications frameworks: the systemic view. AU-EU Skills for Youth Employability Programme – SIFA Technical Cooperation. Author: A. Bateman. Contributor: E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules/training-modules-1-to-10-english/training-module-10-qualifications-and-qualifications-frameworks-a-systemic-view

ACQF. 2022u. Thematic Brief 8: Qualifications Frameworks in a changing world. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-8-qualifications-frameworks-in-a-changing-world

ACQF. 2022v. Thematic Brief 9. Competence-based training – a brief overview Author: E. Castel-Branco. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-9-competence-based-training-cbt-a-brief-overview

ACQF. 2022x. Thematic Brief 10. ACQF level descriptors, the story of the development journey. Author: C. Jaftha. https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-10-acqf-level-descriptors-the-story-of-the-development-journey

ACQF. 2022z. 12 NQFs in Africa: key features. https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/12-nqfs-in-africa-key-features-2022

ACQF. 2022aa. Progress report ACQF project presented to 5th meeting of Advisory Group ACQF (26/05/2022). https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/webinars/progress-report-of-acqf-development-project-presented-to-acqf-ag-5-meeting-26-05-2022

ACQF. 2022bb. Rapport d'avancement du projet ACQF présenté à la réunion du Groupe Consultatif ACQF (26/05/2022). https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/webinars/rapport-davancement-du-projet-acqf-presente-a-la-reunion-do-groupe-consultatif-de-lacqf-26-05-2022

ACQF. 2022cc. Relatório de progresso do projeto ACQF apresentado à reunião do Grupo Consultivo do ACQF (26/05/2022). https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/webinars/relatorio-de-progresso-do-projeto-acqf-ate-17-maio-2022

ACQF. 2022dd. A Brief Handbook on the ACQF. https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

Botswana: Register of qualifications: https://www.bqa.org.bw/qualifications/

Cape Verde: National Catalogue of Qualifications: https://acqf.africa/resources/mapping-study/cape-verde-country-report-update/@@display-file/file/Cabo%20Verde_NQF%20UPDATE%202021.pdf

Cedefop. 2022. Defining, writing, and applying learning outcomes. A European Handbook. Second edition. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4109_en_0.pdf

Cedefop. 2022. National Qualifications Frameworks – online tool. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/nqfs-online-tool

Department of Vocational education and training of Morocco, 2020 https://www.dfp.gov.ma/publications/330-la-formation-professionnelle-en-chiffres.html

EQF: https://europa.eu/europass/en/european-qualifications-framework-eqf

ETF. 2021a. Orientation note on Regional Qualifications Frameworks. Author: Andrea Bateman. https://acqf.africa/resources/library/publications-from-international-sources/etf-orientation-note-on-regional-qualifications-frameworks-2021

ETF. 2021b. Regional Qualifications Frameworks Initiatives around the Globe. https://acqf.africa/resources/library/publications-from-international-sources/etf-regional-qualifications-frameworks-initiatives-around-the-globe-2020

European Commission, 2022. EQF Advisory Group Note EQF 58-2 Synthesis of national developments related to the implementation of the Council Recommendations on EQF and VNFIL

Kenya: National Qualifications Information Management System (NAQIMS): https://naqims.knqa.go.ke/; https://www.knqa.go.ke/index.php/registered-qualifications/

Morocco: Vocational training in figures (2019-2020): https://www.dfp.gov.ma/publications/330-la-formation-professionnelle-en-chiffres.html

Mozambique: National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNQP): http://www.anep.gov.mz/QUALIFICA%C3%87%C3%95ES/Qualifica%C3%A7%C3%B5es

South Africa: Register of Qualifications and Part-qualifications: https://www.saqa.org.za/registration-qualifications-and-part-qualifications?language_content_entity=en

UNESCO. 2014. ISCED Fields of education and training 2013 (ISCED-F 2013). http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/isced-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-en.pdf

UNESCO. 2014. Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49282&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html#STATE_PARTIES

UNESCO. 2019. Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education 2019. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49557&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Websites of Qualifications Frameworks, Qualifications Authorities and Registers of qualifications – indicated in the text

Zambia Qualifications Authority (2021). *Guidelines for the Registration and Accreditation of Qualifications on the Zambia Qualifications Framework*, Lusaka. https://www.zaqa.gov.zm/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Revised-Guidelines-for-the-Registration-and-Accreditation-of-Qualifications-on-the-ZQF-25-February-2021.pdf

6. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Glossary

Access: The possibility for eligible candidates to apply and to be considered for admission to education.

African Continental Qualifications Framework: The ACQF is a policy initiative of the African Union and its development process is underway (2019-2022). The current vision for the ACQF is: to enhance comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications from all sub-sectors and levels of education and training; facilitate recognition of diplomas and certificates; work in cooperation and complementarity with national and regional qualifications frameworks; promote cooperation and alignment between qualifications frameworks (national and regional) in Africa and worldwide.

Awarding body: A body issuing qualifications formally recognising the achievements of an individual, following a standard assessment procedure.

Competent recognition authority: An entity which, in accordance with the laws, regulations, policies, or practices of a Member State, assesses qualifications and/or makes decisions on the recognition of qualifications.

Credit: Means confirmation that a part of a qualification, consisting of a coherent set of learning outcomes has been assessed and validated by a competent authority, according to an agreed standard; credit is awarded by competent authorities when the individual has achieved the defined learning outcomes, evidenced by appropriate assessments and can be expressed in a quantitative value (e.g. credits or credit points) demonstrating the estimated workload an individual typically needs for achieving related learning outcomes.

Education: All programmes of learning, study, or sets of courses of study, training, or training for research which are recognised by the relevant authorities of a Member State as belonging to its education system.

Education Institution: An institution providing education and recognised by the competent authority of a Member State as belonging to its education system.

Knowledge: Knowledge is central to any discussion of learning and may be understood as the way in which individuals and societies apply meaning to experience. It can therefore be seen broadly as the information, understanding, skills, values and attitudes acquired through learning. As such, knowledge is linked inextricably to the cultural, social, environmental and institutional contexts in which it is created and reproduced.

Learning outcomes:

- Results of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process.

- Statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

Level: One of the series of levels of learning achievement according to which an NQF or RQF is organised. Levels are typically arranged in ascending order, from lowest to highest, depending on the number of levels in the NQF or RQF.

Level descriptor: A statement describing learning achievement at a particular level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification at that level.

Lifelong learning:

- Education through experience and formal or informal studies covering the entire span of one's life

- Learning that takes place in all contexts in life – formally, non-formally and informally. It includes learning behaviours and obtaining knowledge; understanding; attitudes; values and competencies for personal growth, social and economic wellbeing, democratic citizenship, cultural identity and employability.

National Qualifications Framework:

- A policy and instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims at integrating and coordinating national qualifications subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

- An instrument for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies along a continuum of agreed levels. It is a way of structuring existing and new qualifications, which are defined by learning outcomes – clear statements of what the learner must know or be able to do, whether learned in a classroom, on the job, or less formally. The qualifications framework indicates the comparability of different qualifications and how one can progress from one level to another, within and across occupations or industrial sectors (and even across vocational and academic fields if the NQF is designed to include both vocational and academic qualifications in a single framework).

Prior learning: Learning and/ or experience that have already been acquired in different ways either formal or informal.

Qualification: Any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by an accredited education institution attesting the successful completion of an approved education programme.

Qualifications Frameworks: Systems for classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality assured qualifications.

Quality assurance:

- An ongoing process of evaluating and enhancing the quality of a higher education system, institutes or programs to assure stakeholders that acceptable standards are maintained and enhanced

- Processes and procedures for ensuring that qualifications, assessment and programme delivery meet certain standards

Recognition: A formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of a party of the value of a foreign education qualification or a validated training.

Region: A sub-part of the African continent.

Regional Qualifications Framework: A broad structure of levels of learning outcomes that is agreed by countries in a geographical region. A means of enabling one national framework of qualifications to relate to another and, subsequently, for a qualification in one country to be compared to a qualification from another country.

Skills:

- A bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learnt and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning.

- Skills means the ability to apply knowledge and use know how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

Stakeholder: A person or organisation with an interest or concern in something. In vocational education and training, stakeholders include government, providers of training, industry, clients and the community.