NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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ح Education & Training Evaluation Commission

هيئة تقويم التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Evaluation Commission

Content

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The National Qualifications Framework was approved by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission Board of Directors at its first meeting, Second Session on 161441/06/H-102020/02/G

INTRODUCTION

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia seeks to develop education and training systems of sound methodology, drawing on advanced international education and training practices and experience. Both education and training provide considerable impetus for sustainable national intellectual, economic development and growth and are the foundation for achieving the ambitious goals of Vision 2030 in the Kingdom. Equally important, Vision 2030 forms the basis for the empowerment of its people to acquire superior measurable skills and knowledge while fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship and providing lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Pursuant to Decision No. 108 by the Council of Ministers, dated 14/2/1440A.H (25/10/2018), which states in Article 4 of Paragraph 11: "The development of a national qualifications framework which sets out the relevant rules, regulations, standards, descriptors, terms and conditions and special procedures, approved and supervised by the Council." The Education and Training Evaluation Commission (ETEC) developed a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to make its terms of reference a guide to education and training institutions when building, developing, and restructuring their qualifications, while also functioning as a term of reference for recruiting agencies to draw on when identifying the set of skills of graduates and their qualifications.

The NQF represents a comprehensive and uniform system for building, organizing and categorizing qualifications into levels based on learning outcomes. Equally significant, the Framework also provides a common language and a sound reference for comparison purposes. Furthermore, it is a functional tool to better facilitate the transfer of knowledge, skills, and values across the various work environments at both national and international levels. Notably, the NQF acts as a key nexus that cements and consolidates the relationship between education and training on the one hand, and the practical and realistic requirements of the labor market on the other. This relationship functions in such an interactive manner in which education and training respond to and accommodate the conditions, aspirations and capabilities of the society, while also fulfilling the requirements of sustainable development in Saudi Arabia.

DEFINITIONS

National Qualification Framework (NQF)

An organizational structure used to place, design, develop and recognize qualifications in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Cross-Disciplinary Programs

Programs in which more than one discipline is involved, with specific learning outcomes that cannot be achieved through a single specialized knowledge, provided that the total body of knowledge gained from existing modules does not exceed 10%.

Early Graduation

A certificate of qualifications accredited by the awarding body for a specific degree, which is completed halfway towards a long academic or applied program such as a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree program. The degree or certificate is granted to a learner if a certain level of knowledge, skills, and values in a specific discipline is achieved. This certificate is not equivalent to a full degree; rather, it is a recognition that a learner has fulfilled the required level of knowledge, skills and values that qualify such a learner for an academic level of early graduation.

Major Specialization

Another subject-area of specialty taught to learners in college or any other recognized educational institution, with their basic area of specialization. The educational institution determines the requirements for a Major Specialization that must not to be less than 30% and not more than 60% of the program requirements for the specialization. The university requirements are not included thereof. These requirements should be included in the learner's transcript.

Minor Specialization

A support specialization outside the primary area of specialization taught to learners in college or any recognized educational institution. The number of credit hours must not be less than 25% and not more than 30% of the primary requirements for the minor specialization. This should be included in the learner's transcript along with the name of the specialization.

Qualification Placement

The linkage of qualifications with the associated levels of the NQF. Considerations include the education and training issued by recognized national or international academic institutions working in Saudi Arabia, as well as accrediting and awarding bodies.

Distance Education

The use of Information and communication technology (ICT) tools or other alternative tools to proceed and manage the educational process asynchronously and synchronously Where the teacher/faculty member and the learner are not in the same place, according to what is approved by governing laws and regulations. Distance education includes correspondence and integrated education. Educational or training entities awarding qualifications can provide educational or training programs, in whole or in part, through distance education.

Awarding Body

An educational institution licensed by the competent authorities, in accordance with a foundation decision that provides educational and training programs. Such an awarding body conducts its business in light of the laws and regulations in effect at the national or international level.

Credit Hours

Number of hours required for a qualification. It is calculated by the number of hours of instruction required to achieve the learning outcomes of a qualification.

Learning Areas

Consist of the knowledge, understanding, skills, and values learners are expected to exhibit at specific qualification level. Learning outcomes detail specific requirements under a given learning area category.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what learners are expected to know and are able to do related to a particular learning area and at a particular level. Learning outcomes can be measured using evaluation tools consistent with the associated level.

Framework Levels

Framework levels are eight levels encompassing the qualifications of public education, technical and vocational training and higher education sectors: academic, applied, research, civil and military sectors.

Qualification Alignment

Place qualification issued by educational or training institutions (foreign mostly), authorized by Saudi Arabia authority competent, on NQF levels associated with.

Qualification

Qualification is issued by educational or training institutions as recognized awarding body,
in the form of a certificate, diploma, or degree when a learner has attained a required set of learning outcomes and credit hours.

The regulation of the national qualifications by standardizing the planning processes and the design and development of uniform standards in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The realization of the principle of lifelong learning by recognizing various learning styles that provide a reference for the progress of individuals through education and training.

The facilitation of opportunities for learners to transfer between education and training sectors and the labor market, nationally or internationally so learners are able to move through the different pathways associated with the qualification.

OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The NQF aims to provide an integrated system that incorporates a high level of quality, competitiveness, and international recognition of national qualifications, through

The complementary integration of the types of national qualifications in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure consistency and quality to ensure further improve confidence between educational and training institutions.

The maintenance of consistency between qualifications and outputs in line with the national trends, development requirements, and the labor market.

The creation of a common language that provides transparency and makes it easy to understand the qualification levels of education and the training required by the recruitment institutions.

IMPORTANCE OF THE FRAMEWORK

A Term Of Reference To Design Qualifications:

The NQF Considered as a reference that guide educational and training institutions and employers when planning, building and developing their qualifications. Recruitment agencies also draw on it to identify the skills of the national qualifiedn capabilities.

Alignment With Development and Labor Market Requirements:

The framework is based on knowledge, skills and value systems aligned with national development requirements. These requirements are embodied in the specifications of learning outcomes to ensure that the national character is built in a comprehensive manner and in line with the requirements of development and the needs of the labor market.

International Alignment:

The Framework is aligned with the main characteristics of other regional and international frameworks to ensure continuous improvement and opportunities. The goal of this alignment is to identify common features and specifications that provide mutual reliability and provide graduates with an array of opportunities for education, training and employment at the national and international levels.

Realizing Equity And Equality:

The Framework aims to achieve equitable opportunities for graduates of educational and training institutions and the recruitment agencies. The intention is to increases the level of confidence among learners and to ensure that they benefit from equitable opportunities, to enhance life-long learning and training opportunities for all, including persons with disabilities.

Increase Confidence In National Capabilities

The Framework enhances confidence among employers about knowledge, skills, and values of graduates and the specifications required by the labor market.

Tool to Compare Qualifications:

The NQF represents a tool for comparing the relevant qualifications issued by all official educational and training institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and international qualifications. This enhances the opportunities for individuals to move through different educational institutions and achieve mutual recognition

LEVELS

The Levels are tiered vertical pathways graded according to the depth of learning areas and their accumulation in educational programs. They begin at early childhood education for the entry level and end at level 8, the doctoral program. Each level has a specific Scope and depth, whereby the levels cover the sectors of Public education, technical and vocational training, and academic, practical, civil and military higher education. Each level represents a scientific progression of the learning outcome and each includes a description of the associated knowledge, skills, and values. Individual levels collectively form a matrix of levels of the NQF.

National Qualifications Framework Levels

Level 8
Doctoral Degree

Level 7
Master's Degree and Equivalent

Level 6
Bachelor's Degree and Equivalent

Level 5
Graduate Diploma and Equivalent

Level 4
Associate Diploma and Equivalentand Equivalent

Level 3
Secondary Education and Equivalent

Level 2
Intermediate Education and Equivalent

Level 1
Primary Education

Entry
Early Childhood Education
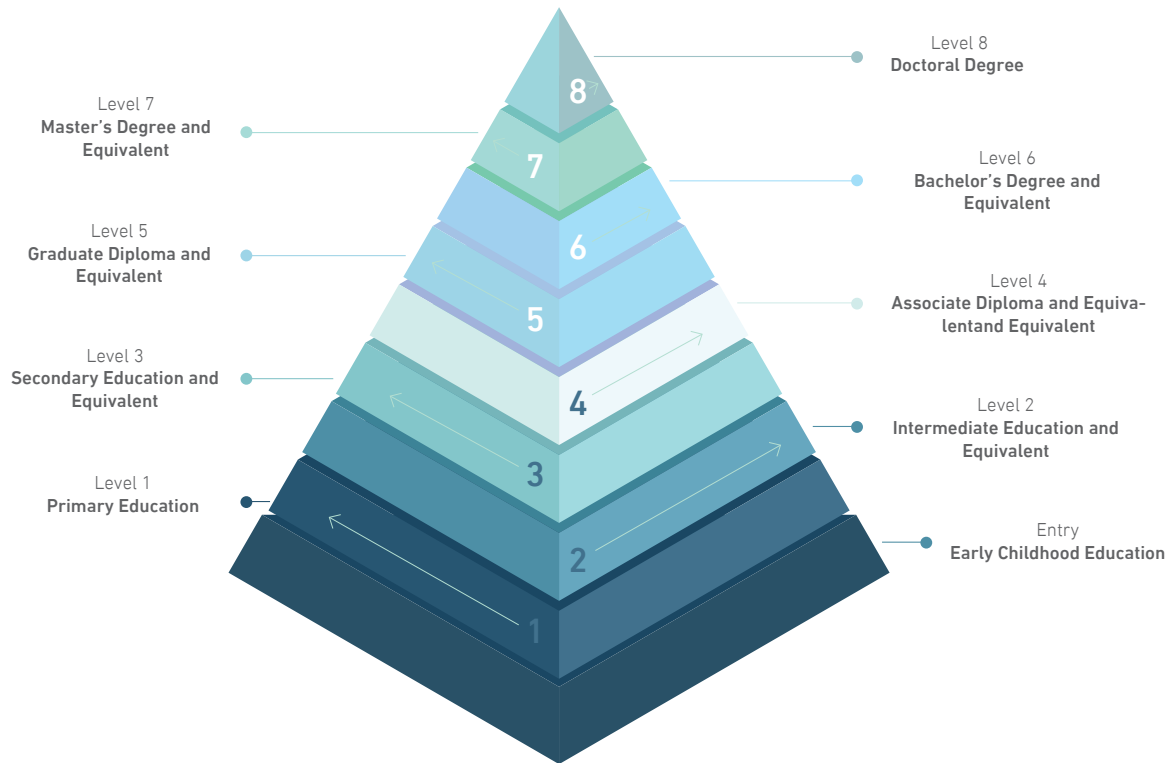
LEARNING AREAS

Learning areas describe the education which a learner needs, including the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values to obtain an associated qualification. They are organized according to each level specified in the Framework. These levels are progressive in terms of scope and sequence, from level 1 (early childhood education) to level 8 (doctoral education).

They are expressed in terms of cognitive dimensions, skills and values according to the following criteria:

Knowledge and Understanding

This includes the knowledge and understanding of a leaner in the area of learning, work or profession:

- Extensive deep knowledge, understanding of facts, concepts, principles, theories, processes, and procedures provided for in the area of learning, work, or profession.
- Depth of knowledge can be general or specialized.
- Breadth of knowledge can range from a single topic to multi-disciplinary area of knowledge.
- Types of knowledge range from concrete to abstract, from segmented to cumulative.
- Complexity of knowledge refers to the combination of knowledge type, depth and breadth.

Skills

are what a graduate can exhibit in applied settings (such as in school, training, internships, work, etc.) and include:

- Cognitive skills:

These include critical thinking and problem-solving skills, inquiry and creativity.

- Practical and physical skills:

These include using appropriate materials, devices and tools, and applying motor and manual skills with ingenuity.

- Communication and information technology skills:

These include written, verbal and non-verbal communication, numeracy skills, and the use and production of information and communication technology.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

These include what a learner exhibits in terms of principles, ethics and standards for personal and professional success and well-being. They include:

- Academic, professional values, and ethics.

- Continued self-learning and autonomy.

- Teamwork and responsibility.
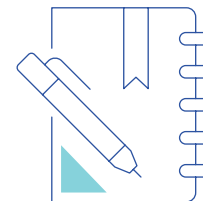
NQF Level Descriptors .... Levels ....

1 — Level 1

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- Basic factual and procedural knowledge within general subjects;
- General foundational knowledge for everyday life and further learning;
- Basic knowledge and understanding of simple facts and ideas, and the most common tools and materials in everyday life, and their uses.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within simple, familiar and highly structured contexts, will:

Values and Ethics

- Demonstrate simple awareness and understanding of values and ethics required to carry out basic tasks and deal with everyday aspects of life including citizenship and a sense of belonging.

Autonomy and Responsibility

- Demonstrate the desire to learn or work with limited autonomy;
- Darry out basic routine activities on time and under direct supervision;
- Participate with colleagues in carrying out simple assigned tasks with limited responsibility;
- Demonstrate concern for personpublic health and hygiene.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have basic cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills:

- Apply foundational knowledge in familiar contexts, in everyday life;
- Identify and solve problems in simple, familiar and highly structured contexts, in everyday life issues or field of study;
- Employ basic intuitive and logical thinking in simple and familiar contexts, in the field of study;

Practical and Physical Skills

- Use common basic tools and materials to deal with simple and familiar practical activities, safely;
- Carry out simple, familiar, and highly structured practical tasks based on well- defined procedural guidelines;

Communication and ICT Skills

- Apply basic literacy, listening and speaking skills for participation in everyday life;
- Carry out simple arithmetic operations in familiar contexts;
- Use familiar digital technology tools and applications to obtain and process information, and to support learning and communication with others based on well-defined and highly organized guidelines.

2 Level 2

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- A range of basic factual and procedural knowledge for a field of study or work;
- Basic knowledge and understanding of a range of simple facts, ideas, tools, materials, and/or terminology, relevant to a field of study or work.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within simple, familiar and structured contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- Represent the values and ethics required for dealing with others and life related matters, and demonstrate awareness and understanding of citizenship, belonging and consideration of others;

Autonomy and Responsibility
- Plan for learning or work, and make simple decisions regarding learning and /or tasks, with limited autonomy;
- Carry out major activities on time and under direct supervision;
- Participate with colleagues in carrying out defined tasks with limited responsibility, and lead some activities;
- Demonstrate care of health and emotional aspects, and basic social relations

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a range of basic cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills
- Apply basic knowledge in familiar contexts, in a field of study or work;
- Systematically solve problems in simple, familiar and structured contexts, in the field of study or work;
- Employ appropriate thinking methods in simple and familiar contexts, in the field of study or work;

Practical and Physical Skills
- Use basic tools and materials to deal with simple and familiar practical activities, safely and effectively;
- Carry out a range of simple, familiar, and structured practical tasks and activities based on well- defined procedural guidelines, in the field of study or work;

Communication and ICT Skills
- Communicate in written, verbal and non-verbal forms (in Arabic – and another language) to express a range of ideas, information, and emotions to others in familiar contexts;
- Carry out mathematical operations in simple and familiar contexts;
- Use a range of standard digital technology and ICT tools and applications to obtain and process information, and to support and enhance learning and communication with others based on well-defined and organized guidelines.

3 Level **3**

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will exhibit:

- A range of factual and procedural knowledge relevant to a field of study or work;
- Basic theoretical and technical knowledge and understanding within a discipline or field of work;
- Basic knowledge and understanding of a range of facts, concepts, principles, tools, materials and/or terminology relevant to a certain discipline or field of work;
- Basic knowledge of research and inquiry techniques.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within moderately complex and familiar contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- Demonstrate commitment to society's values, public morals and systems, and exhibit responsible citizenship, consideration of others and coexistence with them;

Autonomy and Responsibility
- Plan for personal development, organize study or work tasks, and take decisions regarding learning and /or tasks, with some autonomy;
- Perform major tasks and activities and complete them under limited supervision;
- Work collaboratively and take some responsibility in managing small groups to achieve common goals;
- Demonstrate care of health, emotional and social aspects.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a range of cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills:

- Apply basic theoretical and technical knowledge in familiar contexts, in a field of study or work;

- Solve problems in moderately complex and familiar contexts, in a field of study or work;

- Employ critical and creative thinking, in moderately complex and familiar contexts, in a field of study or work;

- Deploy basic techniques of inquiry in familiar issues and/or problems;

Practical and Physical Skills

- Select a range of tools and materials to deal with moderately complex and familiar practical activities, and use them safely and effectively;

- Carry out moderately complex and familiar practical tasks and procedures, based on defined guidelines, in a field of study or work;

Communication and ICT Skills

- Communicate in written, verbal (in Arabic – and another language) and non-verbal to effectively express a range of ideas, information, and emotions to others, in familiar contexts;
- Carry out mathematical operations in moderately complex and familiar contexts;
- Use a moderate range of standard digital technology and ICT tools and applications to obtain, generate, process and analyze information and data, and to enhance learning and communication with others.

4 Level 4

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- A limited range of theoretical and technical knowledge and understanding with some depth in some areas within a discipline or field of work;
- A limited range of specialized knowledge and understanding of various facts, concepts, principles, processes, techniques, practices, tools, materials and/or terminology relevant to a certain discipline or field of work;
- Basic knowledge of research methodology and inquiry techniques.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within moderately complex and unfamiliar complex contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- Demonstrate a broad awareness of the values and ethics associated with professional practices in a discipline or work, and demonstrate responsible citizenship, consideration of others and coexistence with them.

Autonomy and Responsibility
- Self-manage learning and working, work towards achieving goals and plans, and take decisions regarding learning and /or tasks based on defined evidence, with moderate autonomy;
- Manage major tasks and activities related to the discipline and /or work under indirect supervision;
- Work collaboratively with various work teams, supervise the performance of tasks with moderate responsibility, and work to achieve common goals;
- Demonstrate the ability to self-manage the psychological and social health aspects of life and work.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a limited range of specialized cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills
- Use and adapt theoretical and technical knowledge in specific and unfamiliar contexts in a specialization related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- Solve specific issues and problems in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts in specialization related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- Employ critical and creative thinking, in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts, in specific area within a discipline or field of work;
- Undertake research or investigation into unfamiliar issues and/or problems.

Practical and Physical Skills
- Select and use processes, techniques, tools, instruments, and/or materials, that are specific, to deal with moderately complex and unfamiliar practical activities;
- Carry out moderately complex and unfamiliar practical tasks in in specific area related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work.

Communication and ICT Skills
- Communicate in a variety of forms to transfer specialized knowledge and skills to a group of audiences;
- Use and interpret numerical data and graphical representations in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts in specific area related to a discipline, or field of work;
- Use and adapt a broad range of standard digital technology and ICT tools and applications to search, process, combine and analyze information and data.

5 Level 5

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will exhibit:

- a range of theoretical and technical knowledge and understanding with depth in one or more specialist areas related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- a range of specialized knowledge and understanding of various facts, concepts, principles, techniques, practices, tools, materials and/or terminology relevant to a certain discipline or field of work;
- basic knowledge of research methodology and methods and inquiry techniques.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- adhere to the values and code of ethics associated with professional practices in a discipline or work, and demonstrate responsible citizenship, consideration of others and coexistence with them.

Autonomy and Responsibility
- self-manage learning or work, set goals and work towards achieving them, and take decisions regarding learning and /or tasks based on different types of evidence, with moderate autonomy;
- manage tasks and activities related to specialization and /or work under indirect supervision;
- work collaboratively and lead the teamwork to perform a range of tasks with moderate responsibility, and work towards achieving common goals effectively;
- promote health, psychological and social aspects.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a range of specialized cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills:
- use and adapt a range of theoretical and technical knowledge in specific and unfamiliar contexts, in specialist area related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- solve issues and problems, in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts, related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- apply critical thinking and foster creativity and innovative practical solutions, in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts, related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- plan and undertake research or investigation into specialized unfamiliar issues and/or problems.

Practical and Physical Skills
- select and adapt processes, techniques, tools, instruments, and/or materials, that are specialized, to deal with moderately complex and unfamiliar practical activities;
- carry out moderately complex and unfamiliar practical tasks in specialist area related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work.

Communication and ICT Skills
- communicate in appropriate forms to demonstrate understanding of knowledge, and transfer knowledge and specialized skills to a range of audiences;
- analyze and interpret numerical data and use graphic representations in moderately complex and unfamiliar contexts related to a discipline or field of work;
- use various digital technology and ICT tools and applications to search, process, analyze a variety of information and data.

6 Level 6

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- broad in-depth integrated body of knowledge and understanding of the underlying theories, principles, and concepts in one or more disciplines or field of work.
- in-depth knowledge and understanding of processes, materials, techniques, practices, conventions and/or terminology;
- a broad range of specialized knowledge and understanding informed by current developments of a discipline, profession or field of work;
- knowledge and understanding of research methodology and inquiry techniques.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within various complex contexts, will:

Values and Ethics

- demonstrate commitment to professional and academic values and standards and ethical code of conduct, and represent responsible citizenship and coexistence with others;

Autonomy and Responsibility

- develop plans for academic and / or professional self-development, and work to achieve them effectively, assess own learning and performance, and take decisions regarding self-development and /or tasks based on convincing evidence, with autonomy;
- manage tasks and activities related to the discipline and /or work in a professional manner and with autonomy;
- work collaboratively and constructively, and lead diverse teams to perform a wide range of tasks with responsibility, and play a major role in joint work planning and evaluation;
- participate actively in development of the discipline and society.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a broad range of advanced cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills

- pply broad integrated underlying theories, principles, and concepts in various contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- solve problems in various complex contexts in one or more disciplines or field of work.
- use critical thinking and develop creative solutions to current issues and problems, in various complex contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- practice methods of inquiry, investigation and research for complex issues and problems;

Practical and Physical Skills

- use and adapt processes, techniques, tools, instruments, and/or materials that are advanced to deal with various complex practical activities;
- carry out various complex practical tasks and procedures related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;

Communication and ICT Skills

- communicate in main forms to demonstrate an understanding of theoretical knowledge and transfer specialized knowledge, skills and complex ideas to a variety of audiences;
- use mathematical operations and quantitative methods to process data and information in various complex contexts, related to a discipline or field of work;
- select, use and adapt various standard and specialized digital technology and ICT tools and applications to process and analyse data and information, and to support and enhance research and/or projects.

7 Level **7**

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- in depth and specialized body of knowledge and understanding that covers theories, principles and concepts in main areas of a discipline, profession or field of work;
- critical knowledge and understanding of processes, materials, techniques, practices, conventions and/or terminology relevant to a certain discipline, profession or field of work;
- advanced knowledge and understanding of recent development in one or more disciplines or areas of practice or profession;
- advanced knowledge and understanding of a range of established and specialized techniques of research and/or inquiry in a discipline, profession or field of work.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within complex and advanced contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- represent integrity and professional and academic values when dealing with various issues.

Autonomy and Responsibility
- initiate professional planning for learning and/or work, and professional development, monitor learning and performance, and take part in academic and / or professional strategic decisions, with high autonomy;
- manage specialized tasks and activities in a discipline, work or field of practice effectively, with high autonomy;
- collaborate and participate effectively with research or professional projects or groups, take leadership role, and take high responsibility of the work;
- contribute to the fostering of the quality life for the community.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a range of advanced and specialised cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills:
- apply specialized theories, principles, and concepts in advanced contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- solve problems in complex and advanced contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- assess, critically review and reflect on the main concepts, principles, and theories; and provide creative solutions, in complex and advanced contexts, to current issues and problems, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- carry out advanced research or professional project using specialized techniques of research and enquiry in a discipline, profession or field of work.

Practical and Physical Skills
- use processes, techniques, tools, instruments, and/or materials that are advanced and specialized to deal with complex and advanced practical activities;
- carry out complex and advanced practical tasks and procedures in specialized area related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work.

Communication and ICT Skills
- communicate in various forms to disseminate knowledge, skills, research results, and innovations related to a discipline or filed of work to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- use quantitative and/or qualitative methods to process data and information in complex and advanced contexts, related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- select, use and adapt advanced digital technology and ICT tools and applications to process and analyyse a variety of data and information forms to support and enhance leading research and/or projects, related to a discipline, professional practice

8 — Level 8

Knowledge and understanding

The graduate at this level will have:

- a substantial body of knowledge and understanding at the most advanced frontier of a field of study or work, that integrates complex information, specialized theories, leading principles and concepts necessary to create new and leading knowledge, including the interface between fields/disciplines;
- detailed critical knowledge and understanding of various processes, materials, techniques, practices, conventions and/or terminology relevant to a discipline, profession or field of work;
- thorough knowledge and understanding of recent development and emerging issues and challenges in one or more disciplines or areas of practice or profession;
- new advanced knowledge gained through original research and scholar activities that significantly contributes to in a discipline, profession or field of work.

Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

The graduate at this level, within highly complex and new contexts, will:

Values and Ethics
- exemplify high level of integrity and professional and academic values when dealing with emerging ethical and professional issues, research and knowledge; and promote them.

Autonomy and Responsibility
- develop professional experience continuously, and take academic and / or professional strategic decisions, with substantial autonomy;
- manage specialized and at the forefront tasks and activities in a discipline, work or field of practice, with substantial autonomy;
- collaborate and participate in groups in various research and/ or professional projects, with high professionalism, take initiative and lead in them, and take full responsibility for the work;
- foster professional relationships, knowledge-based society, and quality of life.

Skills

The graduate at this level will have a range of highly advanced and at the forefront cognitive, practical and physical, and communication and ICT skills to:

Cognitive Skills
- apply at the forefront theories, principles, and concepts in highly complex contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- solve problems that are at the most advanced frontier, in highly complex contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work;
- evaluate, synthesize and critically review and reflect on emerging concepts, principles, and theories; and develop creative and innovative solutions to emerging and challenging highly complex issues and problems in one or more disciplines or areas of practice or profession;
- develop, adapt and implement highly advanced research or inquiry methodologies to generate original knowledge that contribute significantly to a discipline, profession or field of work.

Practical and Physical Skills
- use processes, techniques, tools, instruments, and/or materials that are highly advanced and new in one or more specializations, to deal with emerging and challenging highly complex practical activities;
- carry out a range of highly complex and advanced practical tasks and procedures in forefront area related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work.

Communication and ICT Skills
- communicate in numerous forms to disseminate and promote original knowledge and new insights, and to conduct scientific and professional dialogue with peers and the community, and the society at large;
- process and interpret quantitative and/or qualitative data and use them in highly complex and new research, projects, or innovations related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work;
- apply and adapt highly advanced and up-to-date digital technology and ICT tools and applications to support and enhance research and innovations in a discipline, professional practice, or field of work.

Types of Qualifications

Qualifications represent the completion of an educational curriculum, which can be academic, applied, professional, or technical. These qualifications are aligned with labor market needs and developments. Rapid changes in professional and technical requirements demand that learners to continuously update their existing knowledge and skills. To this end, the NQF has defined two types of qualifications: Major Qualification and Additional Qualification.

Major Qualification

a qualification associated with formal education and formal recognition and which represents an integrated curriculum of knowledge, skills, and values that qualify the learner to enter the labor market or to continue learning in a formal educational setting. Examples of a Major Qualification include secondary education certificates, and academic degrees (bachelor's, master's doctoral), among others.

Additional Qualification

a qualification associated with formal and informal education encompassing a set of knowledge skills and values, but that occurs in shorter duration and to a lesser degree of depth than a Major Qualification. This type of qualification is often used for purposes of meeting job performance requirements, or equivalent, to further pursue education in later stages, or to obtain increased responsibilities or recognition in a profession or job. Examples include, but are not limited to diplomas, and professional certifications at various levels.

The qualifications derive from major specialized programs that are built on a scientific basis (based on scientific data) that represents one knowledge discipline, or cross-disciplines, based on scientific evidence in which more than one discipline is involved, with specific outcomes that cannot be achieved through a single knowledge discipline, provided that the total knowledge gained from other modules does not exceed 10%, in light of the following:

- **A Major Specialty:** is another major area of specialty taught to the learner in their college or authorized institution of learning, with their basic area of specialization according to specifications as not being less than 30%, and not more than 60% of the requirements for the specialization. The university requirements are not included thereof. This should be included in the learner's transcript.

- **A Minor Specialty:** outside the main area of specialization, taught to the learner in their college or another authorized institution of learning, and in which the number of credit hours must not be less than 25%, and not more than 30% of the requirements for the minor. This should be included in the learner's transcript along with the name of the qualification.

Key Qualification Levels

All levels of qualifications approved by NQF have been defined for all sectors of education and training, including Public education programs, academic and applied higher education; and civil and military technical and vocational training, according to the following Key Qualification Levels:

KEY Qualifications LEVELS

Levels	Public Education	Higher Education (Academic and Applied)	Vocational and Technical Training	Military Education
8	-	Doctoral Degree and Equivalent	-	Doctoral Degree and Equivalent
7	-	Master's Degree and Equivalent	Applied Master's Degree	Technical / Applied Master's Degree and Equivalent
6	-	Bachelor's Degree	Vocational / Technical / Applied Bachelor's Degree	Technical / Applied Bachelor's Degree and Equivalent
5	-	Advanced Diploma	Vocational / Technical / Applied Advanced Diploma	Vocational / Technical Advanced Diploma Vocational / Technical Graduate Diploma
4	-	Graduate Diploma	Vocational / Technical / Applied Graduate Diploma	Vocational / Technical Associate Diploma
3	Secondary Education	-	Secondary Education Vocational/Industrial	-
2	Intermediate Education	-	Intermediate Education Vocational/Industrial	-
1	Primary Education	-	-	-
Entry	Early Childhood	-	-	-

DETERMINATION OF CREDIT HOURS (ACCREDITED UNITS)

Credit hours is the number of hours a learner spend in a course, or the amount of time required to obtain a qualification. Credit hours are calculated by the number of hours required to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualification. It is based on the following regulations:

- The number of credit hours (accredited units) accredited for each Course or program is an indication of the expected amount of learning, and these expectations are linked to the number of actual hours of study in different learning activities, such as classes, auxiliary classes and laboratories.
- The academic endeavor represents the total number of units of study in which the learner is allowed to register, and the lowest and highest levels are determined according to the rules governing educational and training institutions, provided that they are not less than (12) hours (units) accredited for the learner with a full-time program in one semester, and (24) hours (units) accredited in one academic year of two semesters.
- Fifteen-credit hours (15) (accredited units) were taken, as a measure of the minimum amount of teaching and learning time usually expected for regular learners at graduate levels in one semester, and (30) credit hours (accredited units) accredited in a two-semester academic year.
- The minimum teaching hours for a Bachelor's Degree are (120) credit hours (accredited units).
- The minimum learning in one semester is (15) weeks for a full-time program, or its equivalent carried out part-time.

NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS (ACCREDITED UNITS) FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Associate Diploma

Obtaining this qualification requires passing at least (24) credit hours (accredited units), which takes one academic year full-time, or equivalent part-time in higher education. This qualification is awarded at the post-secondary level, either as an extension of Public education after secondary school, or for the purpose of qualification for employment in an administrative or vocational field, which requires limited specialized experience, although this degree per se is an eligible qualification. However, these studies are usually offered to provide students with the bases necessary for later studies to obtain a higher qualification.

Graduate Diploma

Obtaining this qualification requires passing a minimum of (60) credit hours (accredited units), which takes two academic years of study full-time, or an equivalent part-time program in higher education. A "graduate diploma" degree is designed to develop the knowledge and skills needed for employment in administrative fields, or professional support fields. This qualification leads to the acquisition of general and theoretical knowledge foundations, which represent the scientific background required for the ability to further pursue to obtain a Bachelor's Degree. When this degree is awarded in a specific field related to a vocational field, the study must adequately cover knowledge, skills, values and trends directly related to employment in that field. Such coverage is usually at least 50% of the program components.

Advanced Diploma

Obtaining this qualification requires passing 72 hours (accredited units), which takes three academic years of study a full-time, or an equivalent part-time program in higher education. This qualification leads to the acquisition of general knowledge and theoretical foundations that represent the academic background required for a specific field. This qualification is usually awarded for specializations, the qualification of which does not require obtaining a Bachelor's Degree, or it is awarded as an exit point for the graduate stage when building the program, as the learning outcomes for this qualification are identical to the learning outcomes for the graduate diploma qualification, with different credit hours.

Bachelor's Degree

Obtaining this qualification requires passing at least (120) credit hours (accredited units), which usually requires between (3-4) academic years a full-time, or an equivalent in higher education. The length of the program varies according to specialization. The minimum requires passing (120) credit hours (accredited units) in most specializations; however, there are specializations that end with a Bachelor's Degree and require passing a greater number of accredited units. When Bachelor programs require a greater number of units, and a longer time as is the case in some vocational disciplines; the qualification remains the same in terms of the terminology and level. The accredited units are registered in the academic record for the purpose of documenting t the additional amount of learning-time required for these specializations, with the exception of some specializations that require (6) years of study or more full-time, such as medical specialties and others.

Postgraduate Diploma

Obtaining this qualification requires passing at least (24) credit hours (accredited units) after obtaining the Bachelor's Degree, and the study takes no less than two semesters full-time, or its equivalent. The programs that end with this qualification aim to provide advanced academic and professional studies for learners who want to improve their professional knowledge and skills. It usually includes a set of advanced courses related to a specific professional specialization, and may require the completion of a major or secondary project. Holders of a postgraduate diploma degree can continue to study directly at the Master's Degree level, and in certain cases they may be required to complete additional theoretical or applied studies.

Master Degrees

This qualification requires passing at least (24) credit hours (accredited units) after obtaining a Bachelor's Degree of graduate courses in course-based programs, in addition to submitting a scientific dissertation, the accredited units of which are not less than (6) units, or passing at least (30) credit hours (accredited units) after obtaining a Bachelor's Degree of graduate courses in course-based programs of a professional nature, provided that among them is a research graduation project, the accredited units of which are not less than (3) units. Obtaining a Master's Degree, after completing a Bachelor's Degree, takes a period of no less than four semesters in a full-time program or its equivalent.

Master's Degrees that are focused on scientific research are awarded and require the submission of a dissertation, in addition to passing a number of courses with titles such as Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MSc).

Doctoral Degree

Obtaining this qualification requires passing at least (30) hours (accredited units) of advanced courses, after obtaining a Master's Degree, in addition to submitting a scientific dissertation. Obtaining this qualification usually takes at least six semesters full-time, or its equivalent. There is another system for doctoral programs in some educational institutions, in which the focus is placed on autonomous research in a specific field of study with courses, provided that it is not less than (12) credit hours (accredited units) designed for directed studies, seminars or research, according to the learner's scientific background and minor specialty.

EARLY GRADUATION FROM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Desiring to achieve flexibility in the transition through educational levels in education and training, providing continuity in progressing across levels, and achieving the principle of continued learning, the National Qualifications Framework outlines early graduation procedures and actions when certificates are awarded for qualifications accredited by the accredited authorities for a specific degree. Halfway towards long-term academic, applied, or vocational programs, such as Bachelor's Degree programs, Master's Degree programs, or Doctoral Degree programs, awarded to the learner if the required level of knowledge and skills in a specific discipline is fulfilled and met. The academic degree of the qualification is not equivalent to the program in which it was initially registered, rather, it is considered a recognition that the learner fulfills the required level of knowledge and skills that qualify them for an academic or vocational level, which is determined during the construction and design of the educational or training program. As such, the certificate awarded falls within the previous educational level of the qualification awarded by the program and complies with the following controls:

1. Describing early graduation points is an integral part of the program design.

2. Determining the level of qualification for early graduation points and the title of the certificate in light of the controls of the National Qualifications Framework to be an autonomous and recognized qualification.

3. Allowing the learner enrolled in the program to graduate early to complete the degree for the qualification if such a learner meets the academic requirements, with the average required to complete the degree.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFICATION PLACEMENT

Placement of national qualifications in the education or training sector requires that the qualification be of complete components. The National Qualifications Framework has identified six general requirements for national qualifications, which must be fulfilled in order for these qualifications to be placed at each level of the Framework, as follows:

1

Formal Approval

The qualification shall obtain the approval of the competent awarding and accrediting body in the educational or training institution.

2

Stakeholder Engagement with Entities

The qualifications shall be designed and reviewed with the engagement of stakeholders and subject–matter experts.

3

Qualification Objective

The qualification shall have a specific objective, which explains the actual needs and motivations for its design and offer.

4

Qualification Title

An appropriate title shall be used, specifying clearly specialization.

5

Qualification Components

They include level of qualifications, learning outcomes and credit hours.

6

Learning Outcomes Assessment

Transparent, measurable evaluation criteria shall be used to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved.

PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS BASED ON TYPE OF QUALIFICATIONS

Doctoral Degree and Equivalent ••••••••••••••••• Level 8

Academic, Research or Vocational Doctoral Degree qualifications

1   **2**   **3**   **4**
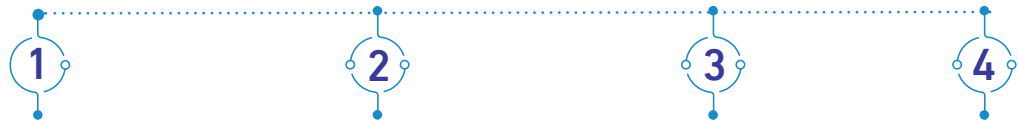
Placement Requirements

1. Passing at least (30) credit hours (units) to study the courses along with a thesis, or passing (12) credit hours (units) at least with a thesis and some courses, according to the learner's scientific background and the requirements for minor specialty.

2. The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is six (6) semesters at least.

3. Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the eighth level.

4. Obtaining a Master's Degree qualification is a requirement to enroll in the program.

Master's Degree and Equivalent .... Level 7

1.Academic, Applied or Vocational Master's Degree qualification

1 Placement Requirement — Passing at least (24) credit hours (units) to study with courses and a dissertation, or passing (30) credit hours (units) at least to study courses, and among them (3) units of a research project, according to the learner's scientific background and the requirements of minor specialty.

2 The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least four (4) semesters.

3 Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the seventh level.

4 Obtaining a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the Master's Degree program.

2. Bachelor's Degree qualification is six (6) years or more, which is a program that requires specialized study equivalent to the level of complexity in a Master's Degree according to the following:

1 Placement Requirement — Passing at least (180) credit hours (units) in higher education.

2 The duration of the study to obtain the qualification takes six (6) years or more, with a full-time system or equivalent in higher education.

3 The program covers a corresponding amount of content in terms of depth and breadth in the area of specialization of the requirements for a Master's Degree.

4 Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the seventh level.

5 Obtaining a secondary education certificate or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.

Bachelor's Degree and Equivalent ·············· • Level 8

1.Academic, applied or vocational Bachelor's Degree qualification

Placement Requirementsv

1 — Passing at least (120) credit hours (units).

2 — The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least three (3) academic years.

3 — Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the sixth level.

4 — Obtaining a secondary education certificate or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.
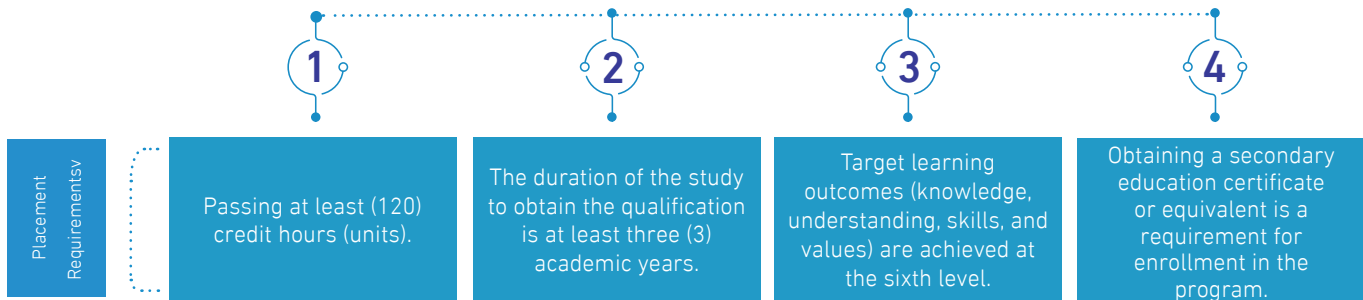
2.Academic, applied, or vocational advanced diploma qualification:

Placement Requirementsv

1 — Passing at least (72) credit hours (units).

2 — The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is six (6) semesters at least.

3 — Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the fifth level.
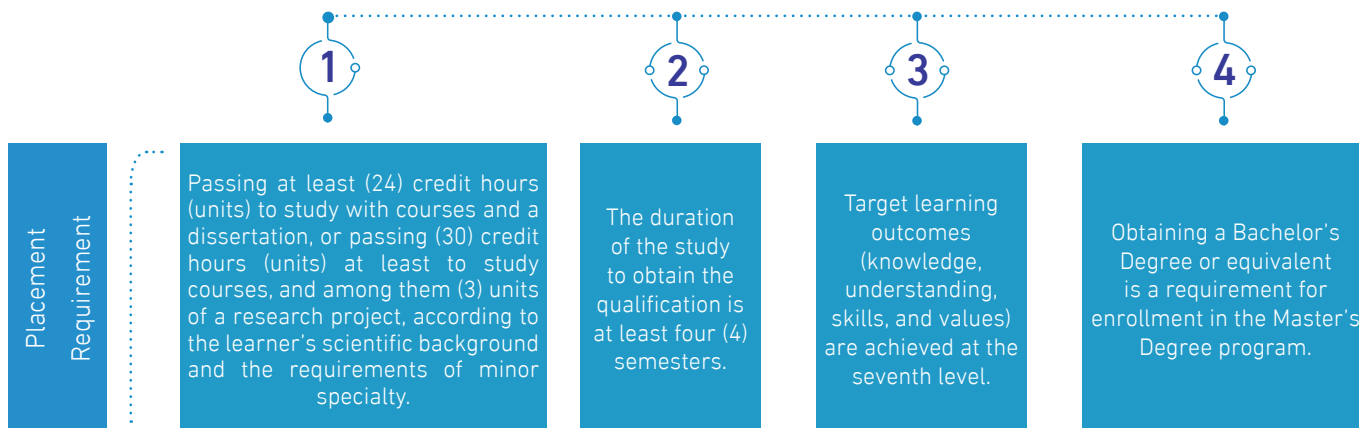
4 — Obtaining a secondary education certificate or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.
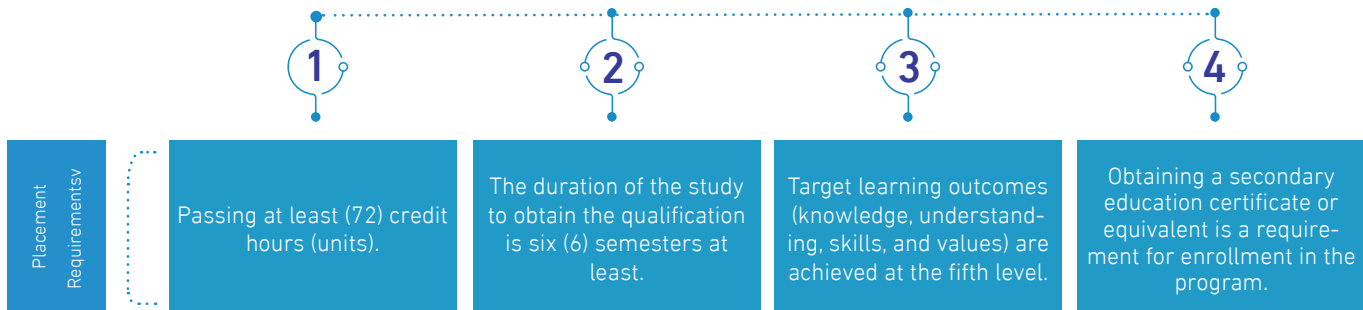
3.An additional qualification after a Bachelor's Degree program or a second university degree

Placement Requirementsv

of a specialized or vocational pathway, and in certain cases may require the completion of additional theoretical or applied studies to further pursue Master's Degree provided that the learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) targeted at the sixth level are achieved.
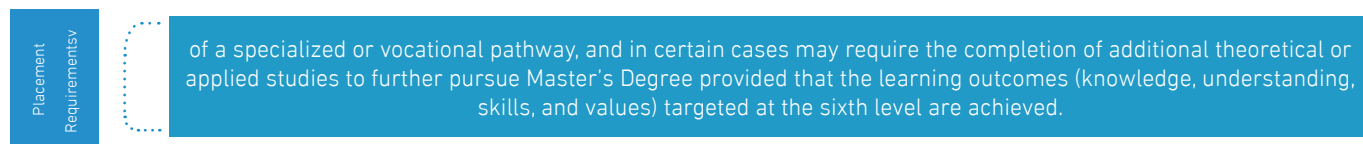
Graduate Diploma and Equivalent .... ● Level 5

1.Qualification of an Advanced Academic, Applied or Vocational Diploma

Placement Requirement

1 Passing at least (72) credit hours (units).

2 The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is six (6) semesters at least.

3 Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the fifth level.

4 Obtaining a secondary education certificate or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.
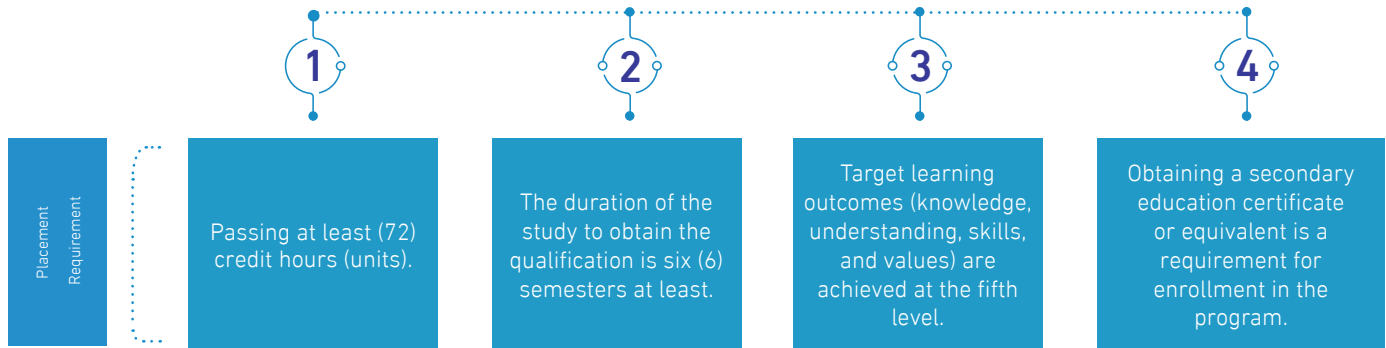
2.Qualification of Academic, Applied, or Vocational Graduate Diploma

Placement Requirement

1 Passing at least (60) credit hours (units) after the secondary education.

2 The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is four (4) semesters at least.

3 Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the fifth level.

4 Obtaining a secondary education certificate or its equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.

Associate Diploma and Equivalent ....● Level 4

Qualification of Associate Academic, aApplied, or Vocational Diploma

1

2

3

4
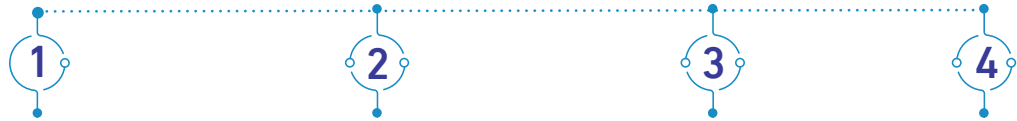
Placement Requirementsv

Passing a minimum of (24) credit hours (units).

The duration of the study for obtaining the qualification takes one year or two (2) semesters at least.

Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the fourth level.

-Obtaining a secondary education certificate or equivalent is a requirement for enrollment in the program.

Secondary Education and Equivalent ·······················● Level 3

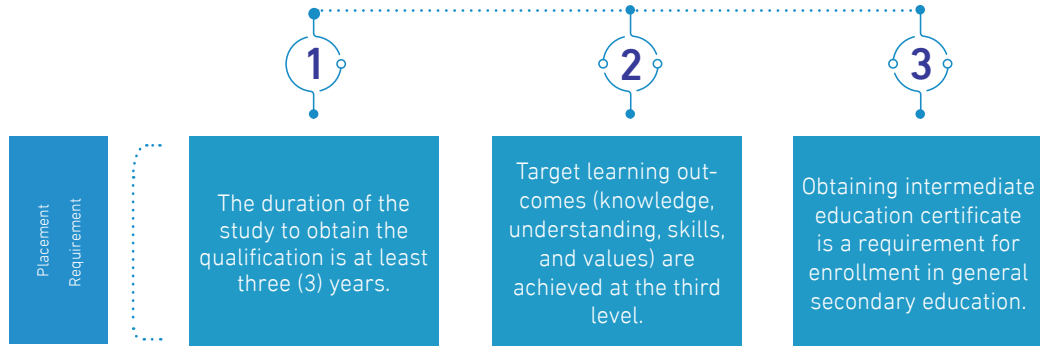### 1.Secondary School Qualification in Public Education

1

2

3

Placement Requirement

The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least three (3) years.

Target learning out-comes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the third level.

Obtaining intermediate education certificate is a requirement for enrollment in general secondary education.

2.Secondary Education Qualification in Vocational / Industrial Education

1

2

3

Placement Requirement

The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least three (3) years.

Target learning out-comes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the third level.

Obtaining a general or vocational Inter-mediate education certificate is a require-ment for entry into vocational / industrial secondary education.
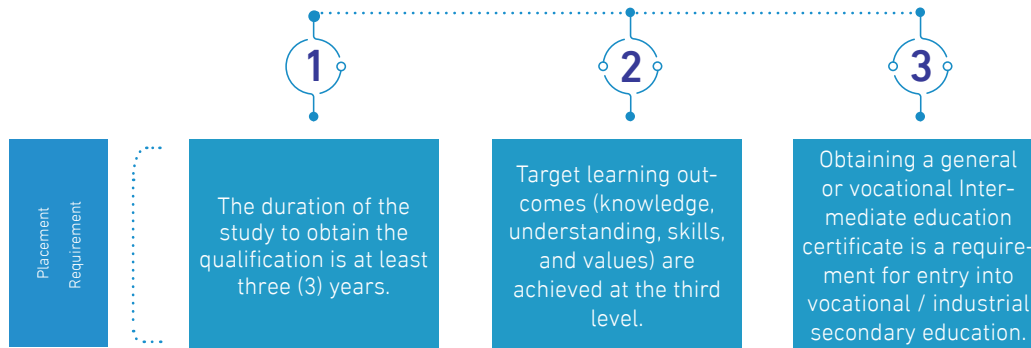
Intermediate Education ⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯• Level 2

1.Intermediate certificate qualification in Public education

1

Placement Requirement

The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least three (3) years.

2

Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the second level.

3

Obtaining a primary education certificate is a requirement for entry to Intermediate education.

2.Intermediate Certificate Qualification in Vocational / Industrial Education:

1

Placement Requirement

The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least three (3) years.

2

Target learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the second level.

3

Obtaining a primary education certificate is a requirement for entry to intermediate education.
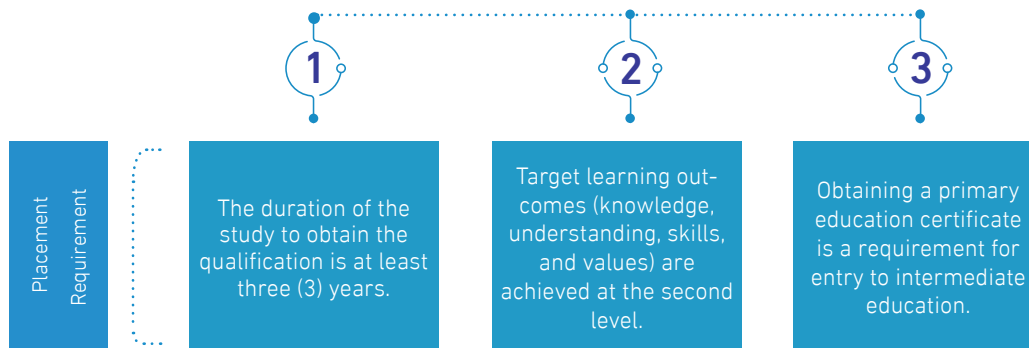
Primary Education ·············· ● Level 1

1.Primary Certificate Qualifications in Public education

1

2

3

Placement Rtequiremen

The duration of the study to obtain the qualification is at least six (6) years.

Targeted learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, skills, and values) are achieved at the first level.

The official age is not less than six (6) years old, as a requirement for enrollment in primary education.
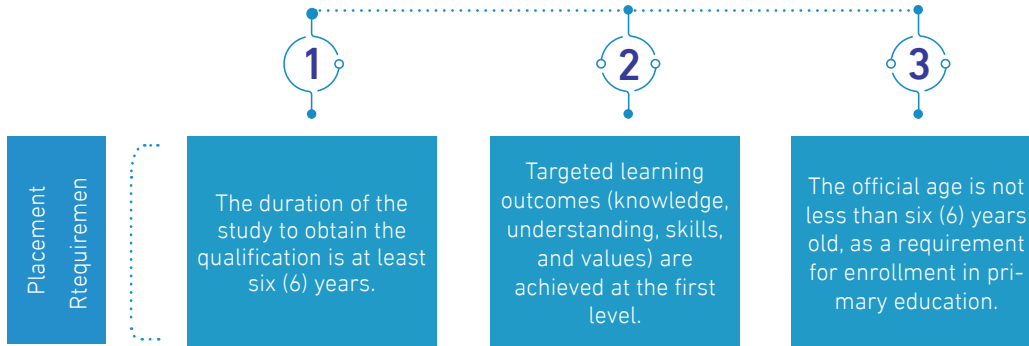
Early Childhood ·············· ● Entry

This level is considered an entry point, and includes the following

1

2

3

Placement Rtequiremen

All pre-completion certificate programs.

Kindergarten programs.

Early childhood development programs.
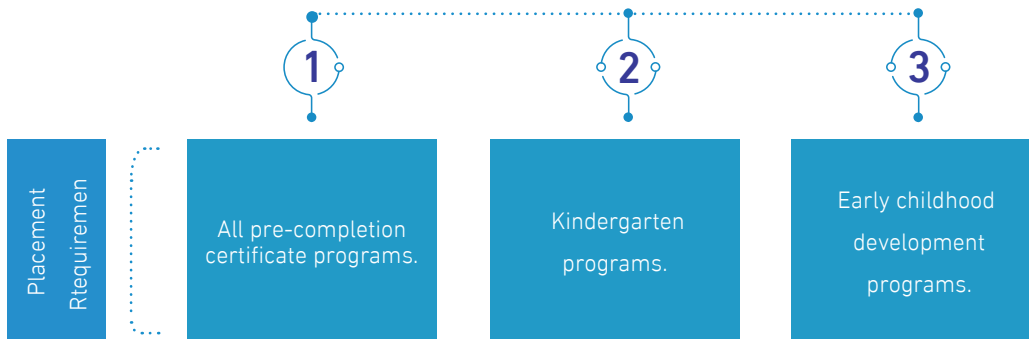
ALIGNMENT OF LEVELS OF THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION (ISCED)

NQF

ISCED Classification

Qualification	Levels	Qualification	Levels	Qualification Type	ISCED Code
Doctoral Degree and Equivalent	8	Doctoral Degree and Equivalent	8	Academic	844
Master's Degree and Equivalent	7	Master's Degree and Equivalent	7	Master's Degree	747
				Bachelor's Degree (6) years	746
Bachelor's Degree and Equivalent	6	Bachelor's Degree and Equivalent	6	Advanced Diploma (1) year	667
				Academic Bachelor's Degree (5) years	646
				Vocational Bachelor:s Degree (5) years	656
				Bachelor's Degree (4-3) years	645
Graduate Diploma and Equivalent	5	Short-Term Higher Education	5	Vocational Diploma	544
				Vocational Diploma	554

NQF

ISCED Classification

Qualification	Levels	Qualification	Levels	Qualification Type	ISCED Code
Associate Diploma and Equivalent	4	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education	4	General Associate Diploma	444
				Vocational Associate Diploma	454
Secondary Education	3	Second Stage of Secondary Education	3	General Secondary Education	344
				Vocational Secondary Education	354
Intermediate Education	2	Second Stage of Secondary Education	2	General Intermediate Education	244
				Vocational Intermediate Education	254
Primary Education	1	Primary Education	1	Primary Education	100
Early Childhood	Entry	Pre-Primary Education	02	Pre-Primary Education	020
		Early Childhood Education	01	Early Childhood Education	010