



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

Guidelines for approval of New Zealand qualifications at levels 1-6 listing on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework

Version 2.2
April 2020

NZQA
125 The Terrace
PO Box 160
Wellington

Table of contents

Table of contents	3
Introduction	4
Section 1: Approval of qualifications – principles and concepts.....	5
The New Zealand Qualifications Framework.....	5
Principles underpinning New Zealand qualifications listed on the NZQF	5
Evaluative approach	6
Section 2: Meeting the Rules and requirements for a New Zealand qualification to be approved and listed on the NZQF.....	8
ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR THE QUALIFICATION	8
Engaging with stakeholders	9
Applications for approval to develop a qualification.....	11
Applications for approval to list a qualification	11
Meeting the listing requirements	12
QUALIFICATION TITLE	12
QUALIFICATION TYPE, LEVEL, CREDITS AND NZSCED	14
QUALIFICATION DEVELOPER	15
STRATEGIC PURPOSE STATEMENT	15
OUTCOME STATEMENT	16
AWARD OF THE QUALIFICATION	18
PERIOD OF REVIEW.....	19
SPECIFICATION – CONDITIONS ON THE QUALIFICATION.....	20
Mandatory conditions	20
Optional conditions	21
Section 3: NZQF Structure - Levels and qualification types	22
Section 4: Glossary.....	23

Introduction

This document sets out the Rules, the requirements for listing qualifications, and describes how a decision will be reached to approve an application for a New Zealand qualification to be listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). It is intended to be used by both qualification developers and NZQA analysts. These guidelines apply to all New Zealand qualifications at levels 1-6 and may also include a New Zealand Diploma at level 7. Information on the quality assurance of qualifications at levels 7–10 and those to be quality assured using the Mātauranga Māori evaluative quality assurance criteria is available on the NZQA website.

The document should be read in conjunction with The New Zealand Qualifications Framework available on the NZQA website.

The document is divided into the following 4 sections.

Section 1: Approval of qualifications – principles and concepts

- The New Zealand Qualifications Framework
- Principles and concepts underpinning qualifications at levels 1-6 on the NZQF
- Evaluative approach

Section 2: Meeting the Rules and requirements for a New Zealand qualification to be approved and listed on the NZQF

- Establishing the need for a qualification
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Applications for approval to develop a qualification
- Applications for approval to list a qualification
- Meeting the listing requirements
 - Qualification title
 - Qualification type, level, credits and New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) code
 - Qualification developer
 - Strategic Purpose Statement
 - Outcome Statement
 - Award of the qualification
 - Period of review
 - Specification – Conditions on the qualification

Section 3: NZQF Structure - Levels and qualification types

Section 4: Glossary

Section I: Approval of qualifications – principles and concepts

The New Zealand Qualifications Framework

The New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) is designed to optimise the recognition of educational achievement and its contribution to New Zealand’s economic, social and cultural success.

Specifically, the NZQF:

- conveys the skills, knowledge and attributes a graduate has gained through completing a qualification
- requires the development of integrated and coherent qualifications that meet industry and community workforce needs
- enables and supports the provision of high-quality education pathways
- enhances confidence in the quality and international comparability of New Zealand qualifications
- contributes to Māori success in education by recognising and advancing Mātauranga Māori
- represents value for money, are sustainable and robust.

Principles underpinning New Zealand qualifications listed on the NZQF

New Zealand qualifications are based on need, outcomes, flexibility and collaboration. This approach is intended to provide a simple structure for qualifications and programmes.

Qualifications are designed to identify the underpinning skills, knowledge and attributes graduates need to perform a range of roles across a broad context.

The following principles underpin the design of qualifications.

Needs based

The usefulness, relevance and value of the qualification is based on its relationship to the workforce and skill needs of learners, employers, industry and communities. Evidence is required to establish and demonstrate these workforce and skill needs.

The qualification explicitly acknowledges the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and/or other identified communities, where appropriate.

Focused on outcomes

Clear specification of outcomes makes the purpose of the qualification transparent, enables comparisons with other qualifications (both nationally and internationally) and increases portability of the qualification internationally.

Clear outcomes make explicit what graduates can “do, be and know” on completion of the qualification. Clear outcomes also indicate pathways to further education, employment and/or a contribution to their community.

Evaluative quality assurance emphasises the achievement of outcomes relevant to the needs and aspirations of significant stakeholders, particularly learners. NZQA uses an evaluative approach in the quality assurance of qualifications and programmes.

Flexibility

Qualifications can be achieved in different settings including the workplace and provider based education. New Zealand qualifications do not distinguish between “provider” and “industry” qualifications.

Having programmes of study and industry training that lead to a qualification allow learners to achieve it in ways most suited to their educational, work or cultural needs and aspirations. This may include credentialing learning obtained formally or informally towards the qualification.

Trust and accountability

Qualifications are developed collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders in an environment of mutual trust and accountability. The relationships between these parties, like those between government agencies and tertiary education organisations are based on good communication and collaboration. Parties can rely on the integrity of the processes used and the information provided.

Evaluative approach

Approving a qualification for listing on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework is a two stage process, each of which requires a formal decision. The decision to approve a qualification for development or listing on the NZQF confirms that the qualification(s) meets the defined criteria for both quality and sufficiency, as specified in these guidelines.

An evaluative approach to quality assurance will be used by NZQA to assess applications at both approval to develop and approval to list. The evaluative methodology enables conclusions about quality, value and importance to be reached on a transparent and robust basis. The approach requires the evidence on which judgements are made as well as explicit logic of its interpretation.

Approval to develop

This stage identifies the distinct and genuine need in New Zealand for each qualification – normally at national level and/or in terms of specific sector, industry or community needs. The case to justify the qualification should be clear, convincing and supported by robust evidence.

The connection between the identified needs and the design of the qualification must be logical, simple and flexible and reflected in the qualification title, type, level and overall credits. Qualification design must be built on what a person must “do, be and know” that will be useful throughout their career in an industry, sector or community.

Approval to develop is an initial assessment of the qualification and is determined by answering the **evaluation question**:

How well do the qualification’s strategic purpose and outcome statement match the identified needs of employers, industry and/or communities (i.e. relevant stakeholders)?

Approval to list

This stage is about the adequacy and readiness of the qualification and its documentation for formal listing on the NZQF i.e. whether it matches the identified needs and is of publishable standard reflecting the underlying principles of the NZQF.

Approval to list is the final assessment of the qualification and is determined by answering the evaluation question:

How well does the qualification meet the overall requirements for listing on the NZQF?

Answering the questions and rating the answers

The answer to each evaluation question is informed by the nature, quality and integrity of the evidence the qualification developer provides to demonstrate the design of the qualification(s) meets the underlying principles and the technical criteria in this document.

The rubric below is used for both evaluation questions and sets out the expected levels of performance in relation to each. The quality of the answer to the evaluation question is rated by NZQA according to the rubric.

Performance criteria rubric for rating the overall qualification (or suite of qualifications)

	Performance criteria
Sufficient evidence Application approved	All of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good evidence that the qualification effectively addresses the relevant principles and criteria • good evidence that the qualification addresses the relevant needs of stakeholders • no significant gaps or weaknesses in the application or evidence
Insufficient evidence Application denied	Any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature, quality and/or integrity of the evidence does not sufficiently address the relevant principles and criteria • the nature, quality and/or integrity of the evidence insufficiently addresses the relevant needs of stakeholders • the application and/or evidence has some significant gaps or weaknesses

Reporting the results of the application

A concise explanation of the key factors and reasons for the final decision will be incorporated into a brief written report and communicated to the qualification developer.

Where the application is declined the report will also include a summary of the areas which must be addressed if the developer decides to re-submit through the listing process again.

Section 2: Meeting the Rules and requirements for a New Zealand qualification to be approved and listed on the NZQF

In order for a New Zealand qualification to be approved by NZQA and listed on the NZQF, it must first meet the relevant NZQF Listing and Operational Rules 2021 and the requirements in NZQA's The New Zealand Qualifications Framework document.

The purpose of this section is to provide qualification developers with information and guidance about how to meet the requirements for a qualification at levels 1-6 and a New Zealand Diploma at level 7 to be approved for listing on the NZQF.

There are two distinct application and approval stages for qualifications at levels 1 - 6 and their subsequent listing on the NZQF involves:

- approval to develop a qualification
- approval to list a qualification.

Establishing the need for the qualification

Establishing the workforce need is the first step in developing a new qualification. This identifies the skill sets required and roles undertaken in the relevant industry or community. It will provide clear and robust evidence that a qualification will be useful, relevant and of value to learners, employers, industry and communities. The identified workforce and skill needs will be reflected in the strategic purpose statement and the outcome statement of the qualification. Qualifications are built on what a person must “do, be and know” to be useful throughout their career in an industry, sector or community.

Relevant and available information from a wide range of sources, including industry or community stakeholders establishes the need for the qualification. It is a focused, comprehensive investigation and analysis to quantify the supply and demand, identify current skill gaps, and any potential strategic benefits. The analysis is used to identify the qualifications needed to prepare people with the appropriate skills, knowledge and attributes for the sector or community. The analysis should take into account social and cultural consideration of both Māori and Pasifika people if appropriate.

Engaging with stakeholders

The involvement and engagement of a wide range of relevant stakeholders is necessary to ensure qualifications are based on identified valid workforce needs and will be fit for purpose. Stakeholders must be appropriate, credible, representative, and recognised by their industry or community as able to speak with authority on behalf of the sector they represent.

A comprehensive stakeholder profile ensures all relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to participate.

The requirements and guidance for establishing and reporting the need for the qualification and establishing a stakeholder profile follow.

ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR THE QUALIFICATION

Requirements to be met in the application (required at approval to develop)

The application must meet Rule 10.3(f) and include evidence of a comprehensive needs analysis that identifies and confirms the distinct need in New Zealand for the qualification.

The report summarises the results of the needs analysis which includes a rationale for the findings.

Guidance

The needs analysis should answer the question:

How do you know and what evidence do you have in support of the proposed qualifications that these are the right qualifications for your industry/community?

The summary report should include a brief profile or overview of the industry or community which addresses:

- composition of the industry, sector or community
- workforce requirements including the size and demographics of the workforce, growth, turnover, emigration/immigration patterns
- current and future skill sets required including anticipated changes in work practices e.g. in technology
- characteristics of the learners, including any priority groups who do not currently access learning or with low participation and barriers to access
- current qualifications including the range, usage and feedback on graduates of the current qualifications
- the rationale of the distinct and genuine need for each qualification – normally at national level and/or in terms of specific sector, industry or community needs.

Evidence to inform the needs analysis may come from a wide range of sources and must be referenced in the summary report. Examples include:

- sector specific reports e.g. BERL, Infometrics
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and Statistics New Zealand e.g. Occupation Outlook reports
- qualification usage data (obtained on request to NZQA)
- industry/community organisations workforce data
- information included in Investment Plans
- national and international benchmarking where known.

Engaging with stakeholders

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 10.3(c) and include:

- a stakeholder profile for the qualification
- **approval to develop a qualification** - a list of the stakeholders from the profile that had significant involvement in the pre development stage, and an explanation of the nature, degree and reason for their involvement
- **approval for the qualification and to list** - a list of the stakeholders from the profile that had significant involvement in the development of the qualification, and an explanation of the nature, degree and reason for their involvement
- completed attestations (NZQF 2 or 4) as evidence of identified stakeholder involvement and support.

Guidance

Stakeholder profile

A stakeholder profile is required for each new qualification(s). Individuals and/or organisations with an interest or “stake” in the outcome of a qualification are considered to be stakeholders.

The profile lists the names of each of the stakeholders. Each stakeholder’s inclusion in the profile must be supported by an explanation of the extent to which they are appropriate, credible and representative.

The stakeholder profile must be established by the qualification developers prior to any pre-development work being undertaken, and maintained throughout the development, listing and ongoing review cycle of the qualification.

Stakeholder involvement and support

Stakeholder involvement and support prior to and during the development of a qualification is critical to confirm the need for the qualification and ensures it is useful, relevant and valuable to learners, industry and other communities.

Stakeholders must be involved in all or some of the following activities at:

- **approval to develop a qualification** - confirming the need for the qualification and providing input into the strategic purpose and outcome statements
- **approval for the qualification to be listed on the NZQF** - informing and supporting the development of the qualification, ensuring the structure and specification align with the intended outcomes.

The nature and degree of involvement of a specific stakeholder will vary across the stages of qualification development but should always be appropriate for the qualification and the purpose for which the stakeholder was selected.

The level, nature and reason for their involvement must be clearly described in applications. The evidence of identified stakeholder involvement and support is also required, through:

- completion of individual Attestation forms by stakeholders (including mandatory stakeholders) (NZQF 2 and 4)
- a record of the consultation undertaken e.g. surveys, workshops
- a summary of how stakeholder feedback was used to inform the qualification development.

It is important that those stakeholders identified and invited to participate in the approval to develop and/or qualification development activities provide effective and meaningful input and reflect a national perspective. The following parameters are a guide to assist identification.

Stakeholders should be:

- Appropriate, credible and representative of the relevant vocational, educational and societal communities, based on the:
 - qualification's Outcome Statement including the type of outcome(s) for the qualification, i.e. educational, vocational and/or societal
 - strategic purpose(s) of the qualification
 - coverage and responsibility of transitional industry training organisations (transitional ITOs) and other standard setting bodies (SSBs)
 - relevant legislative or regulatory requirements.
- Recognised by their industry / community(ies) as having the relevant experience, knowledge and views to speak on their behalf.

Qualification developers should have processes in place to ensure the credibility of organisations or individuals they involve and determine whether they have recognised experience and knowledge in the qualification area. This could include industry profiles, criteria for involvement, Terms of Reference, etc.

In all cases, stakeholder identification must include mandatory stakeholders. Mandatory stakeholders include the transitional ITO with gazetted coverage, or other SSBs, regulatory bodies, and the education providers who may or are currently delivering a programme leading to the qualification.

Identifying stakeholders

Examples of individuals or organisations that may have an interest or 'stake' in the outcome of a qualification include:

- Employers
- registration bodies, e.g. Nursing Council, Electrical Workers Registration Board
- industry and professional associations and/or societies, specialist groups e.g. IT specialists

- tertiary education organisation i.e. institutes of technology and polytechnics, private training establishments, wānanga, universities, government training establishments
- national peak bodies
- local government
- community and cultural groups, e.g. church groups, sports clubs, ethnic organisations
- Rūnanga and Iwi organisations
- Whanau
- non-government organisations, not-for-profit organisations and the voluntary sector
- international qualification developers
- technical experts, e.g. manufacturers or suppliers (for technical expertise and future skill needs).

Withholding of support

Should a mandatory stakeholder(s) choose not to support the need for, or content of, the new qualification, they will need to provide a clear justification for their position. The application will also need to include an explanation of the reasons why the qualification developer is continuing without that support.

Where the qualification developer can show exceptional circumstances, NZQA may waive the requirement for stakeholders to confirm the need at a national level for the qualification and endorse the qualification outcomes.

Applications for approval to develop a qualification

Applications for approval to develop a qualification must meet Rule 10 and include the following information and evidence:

- a summary and rationale of the evidence to establish the need for each qualification
- the stakeholder profile for the qualification
- completed qualification template containing
 - name of the qualification developer (and any joint developers)
 - qualification title, type, level and credit value
 - NZSCED code
 - a statement of strategic purpose
 - a qualification outcome statement (comprising graduate profile, and education and employment pathways)
- stakeholders must attest to their involvement in identifying the needs and confirm the suitability of the proposed qualification (NZQF2).

The process and templates for submitting applications to NZQA can be found on the NZQA website.

Applications for approval to list a qualification

The second stage occurs once the qualification has been developed and involves applying to NZQA for approval to list the qualification. Once approved, the qualification is listed on the NZQF.

It is expected there will be changes to the qualifications during the development process. However, should the changes made to type, level, strategic purpose statement or graduate profile result in a change to the overall purpose or intent of the original qualification, NZQA may consider it to be equivalent to a new qualification. In this case, NZQA will evaluate the qualification application as a request for Approval to Develop.

Applications for approval to list a qualification must include the following information and evidence, some of which was included at the approval to develop stage:

- name of the qualification developer (and any joint developers)
- qualification title, type, level and credit value

- NZSCED code
- a statement of strategic purpose
- a qualification outcome statement (comprising graduate profile and education and employment pathways)
- details on the award of the qualification
- period for review
- a specification which contains mandatory and optional conditions for the qualification and programmes leading to the award of the qualification including the evidence requirements for assuring consistency of graduate outcomes
- the Stakeholder Profile for the qualification, a description of stakeholder involvement in developing the qualification and attestations providing evidence of support (NZQF4)
- identification of, and explanation for, any changes to the qualification's type, level, strategic purpose statement and/or graduate profile subsequent to Approval to Develop.

The process and templates for submitting applications for listing to NZQA are available on the NZQA web site.

Meeting the listing requirements

The following section considers each of the requirements for listing a New Zealand qualification on the NZQF in relation to both stages of the process. The following are outlined:

- qualification title
- qualification type, level, credits, and NZSCED code
- qualification developer
- statement of strategic purpose
- outcome statement
- award of the qualification
- period of review
- specification.

A standard format is used which presents the relevant Rules and requirements to be met and provides guidance on the information and/or evidence that must be included in the application to enable the decision for approval to be made.

Other relevant resources are available and include:

- The New Zealand Qualifications Framework
- New Zealand Standard Classification of Education.

QUALIFICATION TITLE

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must include a qualification title that meets rules 4.1(a) and 5.2 (a) to (d) and provides a concise, accurate and informative indication of the purpose of the qualification.

Qualifications listed in te reo Māori must meet Rule 6.

If the title includes the name of a person, organisation, or product under 5.2(d), then there needs to be a clear explanation for the inclusion.

Guidance

The qualification title should explain simply, concisely and accurately the purpose of the qualification to learners, family, whānau, employers and others. The title should indicate the overall intent of the qualification. New Zealand qualifications are intended to simplify the qualifications system, hence titles should clearly and simply state what the qualification is about.

A qualification title at levels 1-6 must begin with the term “New Zealand”, followed by a qualification type, a designator and if required, a qualifier. The level of the qualification is included in brackets.

Designators should identify the main disciplinary emphasis of the qualification and:

- have wide national or international acceptability, or
- be necessary for national or international recognition of that qualification, or
- be a requirement of a professional body formally involved in the approval of the qualification, and
- relate to the relevant New Zealand Standard Classification of Education classification. Example: *New Zealand Certificate in Computing (Level 4)*

Qualifiers may be added to the title of the qualification if this improves general understanding of the qualification and reflects the level of the qualification. Qualifiers must be placed after the qualification designator (or qualification type in some cases) in brackets. The following four types of qualifiers can be used:

Qualifiers	Description	Example(s)
<i>Discipline</i>	May be added to indicate that the qualification has a tighter focus on a sub-field within the discipline.	New Zealand Diploma in Design (Computer Graphics) (Level 6)
<i>Strands</i>	May be added to recognise more than one speciality within a qualification. Strands should be of equal credit value. A qualification with strands may not be awarded without a strand.	New Zealand Certificate in Signmaking (Level 4) (with strands in Computer Graphics, Hand Lettering, and Electric Signmaking)
<i>Optional strands</i>	One or more optional strands may be added where the qualification meets the needs of the majority of learners but additional outcomes are required for a defined subset of learners.	New Zealand Certificate in Laundry Processing (Level 2) with an optional strand in Washroom Procedures
<i>Context</i>	May be added to indicate that the qualification outcomes can be met in a range of situations or contexts. The context can be indicated by a suitable qualifier.	New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 3)

Strands would normally only be needed where there are additional graduate profile outcomes that cannot be incorporated into the overall graduate profile that recognise key role-specific specialities.

Optional strands will only be approved if it is clear why they are not needed by all learners and why it is necessary for them to be credentialed. They need to reflect additional learning outcomes and not a narrow focus on skills or use of a specific technology.

Titles in te reo Māori

Example of title for a listed qualification in te reo Māori. Please note that the te reo Māori format does not exactly match the standard classification format.

Te reo Māori		Momo Tohu Mātauranga	Whakarite	Wāhanga	Kaupae
	Stem	Type	Designator	Qualifier	NZQF level

English title	<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Certificate</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Māori Health</i>	<i>Level 4</i>
Ingoa Māori	e.g. 1	<i>Te Wai Puna o Te Ora</i>			
Ingoa Māori	e.g. 2	<i>Te Tiwhikete Hauora Māori</i>			<i>Kaupae tuawhā</i>

QUALIFICATION TYPE, LEVEL, CREDITS AND NZSCED

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 4.1 (b), (e) and (f):

- qualification type, level and credits appropriate for the qualification’s strategic purpose and outcomes
- the six digit New Zealand Standard Classification of Education code that represents the qualification’s primary focus.

If the application is the result of a qualification review, then it must indicate the version number.

Guidance

Specific guidance on determining the most appropriate type, level and credit value for a qualification is provided in The New Zealand Qualifications Framework. The document sets out qualification types for the NZQF, level descriptors for the 10 levels and further explains what is included in defining credit values calculated on notional learning.

Level

The qualification must be assigned one of the levels on the NZQF. The level assigned must provide a best match between the level descriptors and the outcomes of the qualification.

In cases where a qualification includes strands, each strand must be at the same level as the qualification.

The qualification outcomes reflect the level of the qualification. However, the programme leading to the qualification is expected to contain learning at a range of levels culminating in the achievement of the graduate profile at the designated level.

Credits

The qualification must be assigned a credit value that reflects the notional learning time it is expected to take the learner to meet all of the outcomes of the qualification. One credit represents a notional 10 hours of learning time. Notional learning includes all directed, self-directed and assessment time.

In cases where a qualification includes strands, each strand should normally have the same credit value.

Indicative credit values are assigned to each outcome in the graduate profile of the qualification. The total of these values must equal the credit value for the qualification. This is to guide programme developers on the weighting to be applied to each part of their programme.

New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED)

The primary focus of the qualification will determine the six digit NZSCED classification.

Example

<i>080904</i>	<i>Management and Communications</i>	<i>Office Studies</i>	<i>Text</i>
Code	Broad	Detailed	Narrow

QUALIFICATION DEVELOPER

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 4.1(g) and include the qualification developer's name and provider code, along with the name(s) and provider code(s) for any joint developer(s).

The responsibilities of qualification developers are included in Rule 13.

Guidance

Organisations wishing to list New Zealand qualifications on the NZQF must be capable of meeting all the responsibilities of a qualification developer.

Where there is a group of organisations collaborating in the development of a single qualification, the group needs to either:

- nominate one of the organisations' body corporate to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the qualification developer, or
- establish a body corporate to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the qualification developer. Where the body is not currently recognised as a tertiary education organisation they will need to obtain a provider code in order to list the qualifications. Information on obtaining a Ministry of Education provider number is available on the NZQA website –*Submitting an application for approval to develop a qualification*.

Provider code is the four digit number assigned to the organisation by the Ministry of Education. It is also known as "MOE Number" or "EDUMIS Number".

Qualification developers are responsible for:

- determining the core evidence requirements to assure national consistency of graduate outcomes achieved by graduates
- ensuring the qualification is reviewed within each review period specified for the qualification
- actively participating and cooperating in NZQA initiated wider reviews of suites of qualifications if requested
- clarifying the evidence requirements for assuring national consistency when requested by programme owners and other stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PURPOSE STATEMENT

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 4.1(c) and include at:

Approval to develop

- a needs analysis with credible, valid and adequate evidence to confirm the identified workforce need the qualification will fill on the NZQF
- a stakeholder profile and credible evidence of stakeholder support
- an explanation and justification for the proposed new qualification where substantial similarities to current qualifications on the NZQF have been identified
- a strategic purpose statement for each qualification.

Approval to list

- any changes to the strategic purpose statement from approval to develop need to be identified and explained on the application form.

Guidance

A strategic purpose statement identifies why the qualification should be listed on the NZQF. It clearly states the qualification's use and relevance to learners, industry and the communities.

It is structured as three statements that clearly identify the:

- target group of learners
- industry and/or community that will benefit from the qualification
- the standard at which the graduate will operate or a definition of the scope of practice. This would refer to any industry or professional standards, licensing or professional registration requirements where relevant.

Example: *New Zealand Certificate in Infrastructure Works Excavation and Reinstatement (Level 3)*

The purpose of this qualification is to provide the infrastructure works industry with people who excavate and reinstate trenches and dig outs for installing and maintaining utility services. This work often occurs in the road corridor. Graduates will be capable of operating at a technical level with limited supervision.

The qualification is developed from the identified need and must demonstrate that it is substantially different from other qualifications listed on the NZQF. The statement should also acknowledge the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and other communities, where these are reflected in the needs.

Similarities to other qualifications on the NZQF

Prior to seeking approval to develop a qualification, a check of the NZQF must be undertaken to identify any existing qualifications that are substantially similar to the proposed new qualification.

Qualifications will be considered as substantially similar if they have similar or a core of common graduate outcomes statements, employment pathways and/or strategic purpose.

A reference to (not a copy of) each qualification that is determined to be substantially similar, must be attached to the application seeking approval to develop a qualification, along with a clear explanation and justification for the new qualification.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 4.1(d) and include an outcome statement at

Approval to develop

The outcome statement will be interim but needs to clearly reflect the needs identified and the level of the qualification.

Approval to list

The final outcome statement will include a complete graduate profile with indicative credit values for each outcome along with finalised education and employment pathways.

Any changes made to the outcome statement from approval to develop need to be identified and explained.

Guidance

The qualification outcome statement uses plain English to present a complete and easily understood picture for learners, whānau, employers and other educational organisations of what the graduate is expected to do, be and know, as a result of the learning.

It describes the range of functions and/or scope of practice, the graduate of the qualification is able to perform. It explains the education and employment pathways, or contribution to the community, resulting from achievement of the qualification.

It comprises three components:

- graduate profile
- education pathways

- employment pathways

Graduate profile

A graduate profile:

- comprehensively describes what a person awarded the qualification must be able to collectively do, be and know
- considers the full range of capabilities and competencies the graduates will need. The following model is useful for this:

Capabilities

- personal e.g. take responsibility, remain calm under pressure
- interpersonal e.g. work with senior staff effectively, contribute to the team
- cognitive e.g. set and justify priorities, solve problems

Competencies

- role-specific e.g. technical skills
- generic e.g. organise work and manage time, literacy and numeracy

- is written so that each outcome statement in the graduate profile uses descriptors that are at the level of the qualification (e.g. the outcomes of a level 4 certificate must align with the definition and characteristics of a graduate of a level 4 certificate).

NOTE: The individual learning required to meet those outcomes will commonly comprise intermediate level learning outcomes building towards the higher level graduate outcomes. The intermediate learning outcomes will not be included in the graduate profile but will be included in the programme leading to the qualification.

- starts with the stem: *The graduate (of this qualification) will be able to:*
- outcome statement must be written in the form of:
 - **active verb** which illustrates the use of the outcome e.g. analyse, apply, plan, cost, communicate
 - **subject** which describes what the graduate will be doing
 - **context** reflects the conditions under which the graduate will perform the outcome

Examples

Establish and maintain professional relationships with landlords and tenants

Communicate professionally with clients, local bodies and other relevant professionals

- outcome statement must be able to be assessed directly or indirectly through evidence gathered
- outcome statements each contribute to meeting the needs identified in the qualification strategic purpose statement. Where the qualification includes strands, specific outcomes for each strand must be clearly identified within the graduate profile.

In the final profile (at approval to list) each outcome statement will be weighted with an indicative credit value that must add to the qualification credit value. Indicative credit values reflect the balance of capabilities and competencies in the graduate profile and give guidance to programme developers.

Where the qualification can be achieved in a variety of contexts (recognised by a qualifier in the title) then the set of graduate outcomes needs to apply to all the contexts.

Example – *New Zealand Certificate in Residential Property Management (Level 4)*

The graduate will be able to:

- *Professionally manage a residential property rent roll*

- *Market residential properties for tenancing*
- *Record and report to landlords on the status of the tenancy*
- *Establish and maintain professional relationships with landlords and tenants*
- *Resolve tenancy conflicts using third parties where appropriate*
- *Use legal, operational, and theoretical knowledge of the property and residential property rental contexts as a property manager.*

Education pathway

The education pathway outlines the further learning a graduate of the qualification can undertake. For example, a level 3 certificate can be the first step on a pathway that leads to a level 6 diploma.

There are some general qualifications where the educational pathway may only be broadly defined because it will depend on the learners' own preferences and appropriate achievement. However, a minimum expectation is that any one level of qualification should prepare the graduate to undertake study at the next NZQF level.

Example – New Zealand Diploma in Surveying (Level 6)

This diploma can lead to a Bachelor of Surveying and builds on the New Zealand Certificate in Surveying (Level 4).

Example – New Zealand Diploma in Avalanche Studies (Level 6)

This diploma builds on the New Zealand Certificate in Avalanche Safety Management and Snowsport Instructing (Level 3) as well as the New Zealand Certificate in Ski Patrol (Level 4).

The diploma has no further direct educational pathways in New Zealand in relation to avalanche studies. However further study can be undertaken in snow sports (guiding and ski area operations), research, rescue and avalanche safety.

Employment pathway

The employment pathway identifies the areas in which a graduate may be qualified to work, or the contribution they may make to their community.

Example – New Zealand Certificate in Applied Electronics Technology (Level 3)

Holders of this certificate may be qualified to work as apprentices and trainee technicians, or in similar entry-level technical roles in all sectors of the electrical, electronics, telecommunications and aircraft avionics industries.

Example – New Zealand Certificate in Hauora (Māori Health) (Level 4)

Holders of this certificate will have the skills and knowledge required to assist people by providing them with Hauora services delivered by health providers, Māori health providers, mainstream health services, institutions, marae, community centres and local clinics.

For general or more generic qualifications it may not be possible to suggest a logical employment pathway because this will depend on the learners' own preferences. If this is the case, it must be noted in the application.

AWARD OF THE QUALIFICATION

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rule 15 and specify the:

- organisations or bodies that may award the qualification (from the above listing requirement)
- minimum requirements for inclusion on the formal document certifying the award.

Guidance

Awarding the qualification

The qualification application must specify the bodies that will be able to award the qualification. These include:

- owners of approved programmes leading to the qualification
- transitional ITOs that arrange training leading to the qualification in the industry for which it is recognised
- education providers accredited to deliver a programme leading to the qualification.

The qualification is awarded by the education organisation where the learner achieved the programme of study or industry training leading to the qualification.

Issuing the qualification/certification

The certificate is normally issued by the awarding body including:

- owners of approved programmes leading to the qualification
- transitional ITOs that arrange training leading to the qualification in the industry for which it is recognised
- education providers accredited to deliver a programme leading to the qualification

Where results have been reported to NZQA, then the awarding body may request NZQA issue the certificate. A fee is charged for this service.

The minimum requirements for the formal certification document are available on the NZQA website and set out below:

- qualification title
- NZQF reference number
- date of issue and/or award
- the bodies whose name or logo can appear on the formal certification document.

Example – *Qualification Developer*

Education providers accredited to deliver a programme leading to the qualification

Record keeping

Education organisations awarding the qualification must keep records of learner progress and programme completion, date the qualification was awarded and certificate issued.

A learner can only be awarded an individual qualification once. If additional learning (e.g. strands) relating to the qualification is undertaken it will be recorded on the learner's academic record or record of achievement. The qualification may be re-issued to include achievement of additional learning.

PERIOD OF REVIEW

Requirements to be met in the application

The application for approval to list must specify the period for review of the qualification, in accordance with Rule 4.1(i).

Guidance

All qualifications on the NZQF must be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain useful and relevant and continue to meet the needs of the learners, industry and stakeholders for which they were initially developed.

A review provides an opportunity for the qualification developer and relevant stakeholders to reassess the need for the qualification, to determine whether it is still fit-for-purpose.

The review must be completed within a period of no longer than five years after listing the qualification on the NZQF or the previous review. Factors to be considered in determining the review period include the rate of change in the industry and the size of the qualification.

NZQA will use the review period to determine the date for review once the qualification is approved and publish this date on the NZQF.

SPECIFICATION – CONDITIONS ON THE QUALIFICATION

Requirements to be met in the application

The application must meet Rules 5.2(e), 5.3, 5.4 and include an appropriate and agreed specification that identifies any mandatory and optional conditions on the qualification

Guidance

The specification is intended to provide guidance to educators and trainers in their interpretation of the qualification and development of programmes of study or industry training. This guidance should support good education and training practice and assessment.

Conditions may be mandatory or optional.

Mandatory conditions

Evidence requirements for assuring consistency of outcomes

Assuring national consistency of graduate outcomes is the process by which the qualification developer and programme providers together provide assurance that the graduates of each programme leading to a specific New Zealand qualification have achieved the graduate profile to a comparable standard. Refer to the *Guidelines for assuring national consistency of graduate outcomes for qualifications listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework*.

This is important to maintain the credibility of New Zealand qualifications and give confidence to learners, industry, employers and the community.

Stakeholders need to agree the core evidence that would satisfy stakeholders a graduate had achieved the graduate profile. The qualification application includes a description of this evidence which is likely to focus on the most important graduate profile outcomes.

Examples of sources of evidence may include:

- graduate portfolio
- common assessment tasks at the programme level e.g. major project work
- next user feedback – consider mechanisms to include input from relevant next users of the graduates such as industry, employers and registration bodies
- sampling of assessments against graduate profile outcomes.

The sample of evidence should be gathered and used by programme owners as part of the everyday conduct of its business in ensuring the quality of its educational performance that are built into its overall self-assessment activities.

Assuring national consistency will be co-ordinated by NZQA.

Minimum standard of achievement and standards for grade endorsements

The minimum standard required for award of the qualification will be the achievement of all of the outcomes in the graduate profile, including the outcomes for specific strands (as appropriate).

The standard may also include other requirements such as meeting regulatory body certification or specifying the maximum time for completion of the qualification.

Any grades that can be awarded to learners on completion of the qualification must be clearly differentiated and specified. It is common practice for only one grade to be available for the award of each qualification.

Other requirements for the qualification

There may be some other specific requirements for the qualification such as regulatory body or legislative requirements that need to be included in the published qualification. e.g. criteria for obtaining the license.

Optional conditions

General conditions – for programmes leading to the qualification

There should be sufficient information in the Specification to enable programme developers to demonstrate a clear match between the qualification outcomes and the components of their programme of study or industry training.

Entry requirements may include such things as recommended literacy and numeracy levels for learners entering study or training towards the qualification.

Information and a justification where particular outcomes need to be achieved or assessed in a specific order or context. For example:

- in some industries, health and safety outcomes must be achieved before learners go into workplaces or onto worksites
- in Mātauranga Māori qualifications, some outcomes could be interwoven throughout the learning and assessment

Specific conditions relating to the some or all of the graduate profile outcomes may be specified.

If there are mandatory regulatory body, industry or assessment standards identified that contribute to meeting specific graduate profile outcomes then these must be referenced and justified.

Achievement of an individual graduate profile outcome will normally be demonstrated over a series of progressive and incremental learning events and assessment. It is not expected that one assessment standard will normally lead to the achievement of specific qualification outcomes in isolation.

Section 3: NZQF Structure - Levels and qualification types

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION TYPES
10	Doctoral Degree
9	Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates, Bachelor Honours Degree
7	Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Diplomas and Certificates
6	Diplomas
5	
4	Certificates
3	
2	
1	

Section 4: Glossary

Term	Description
Achievement standard	A coherent set of learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria, together with technical and management information that supports delivery and assessment; achievement standards specify three different standards of performance and the method of assessment, which may include national external assessment.
Assessment standard	The collective term for unit standards and achievement standards listed on the NZQA Directory of Assessment Standards.
Transitional industry training organisation (transitional ITO)	A former industry training organisation having responsibility for setting standards and arranging the delivery of industry training for a specific industry or area of industry identified in a Tertiary Education Commission gazette notice.
Mandatory stakeholders	All or any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> transitional industry training organisations with gazetted coverage, other standard setting bodies, and/or regulatory bodies education providers who are currently (or may potentially be) delivering programmes leading to the award of the qualification. Where there is not a standard setting body, stakeholders must include relevant community, industry, employer or professional groups.
New Zealand certificate or diploma	A qualification that meets the requirements for listing on the NZQF at levels 1-6.
Programme (approved)	An approved programme is a coherent arrangement of learning or training that is based on clear and consistent aims, content, outcomes and assessment practices, which leads to a qualification listed on the NZQF.
Qualification	Formal certification for a given purpose of the achievement of specified learning outcomes to a given standard.
Qualification strand	A specialisation within a qualification that represents a major component of the qualification and is at the level of the qualification. Strands are documented through strand-specific outcomes in the graduate profile.
Quality assurance body	NZQA or New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (also known as Universities New Zealand).
Stakeholders	Individuals, groups, or organisations with an interest (or 'stake') in the outcome of a qualification.
Tertiary education provider	All or any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a tertiary education institution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a registered establishment (i.e. private training establishment that has been granted registration by NZQA) • a government training establishment • any other person or body that provides, or proposes to provide, tertiary education and that is funded through non-departmental output classes from Vote Education (e.g. adult and community education providers).
Tertiary education organisation	<p>Any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a tertiary education provider (as above) • a transitional ITO.
Unit standard	A coherent set of learning outcomes and associated performance criteria, together with technical and management information that supports delivery and assessment. All unit standards are assigned a level and a credit value.
Workforce Development Council (WDC)	A workforce development council for one or more specified industries.