

New Zealand Business qualifications

Qualifications support material

Please note: This support material is for the version of the qualifications BEFORE the 2019-20 review. It will be amended to reference the reviewed version of the qualifications when these are formally approved and published.

Enquiries and suggestions are invited to business.qualifications@nzqa.govt.nz.

New Zealand Business qualifications

Qualifications support material

This qualifications support material (qsm) was developed to support the implementation and operation of the New Zealand Business qualifications, in co-operation with stakeholders who suggested content and offered feedback on drafts. There was broad support for the development of this qsm, with several respondents citing the qualifications' broad flexibility as a major contributing reason; as one put it: "the broader the qualification outcome statements, the more guidance is likely to be needed to help to achieve some level of consistency".

This qsm is intended to be a living document and suggestions and comment are [invited](#).

The qualifications:

Level	Streams				
	Accounting	Administration and Technology	Leadership and Management	Project Management	Small Business
3		2452 - NZC in Business (Administration and Technology)	2453 - NZC in Business (Introduction to Team Leadership)		2454 - NZC in Business (Introduction to Small Business)
	2455 - NZC in Business (Accounting Support Services)	2461 - NZC in Business (Administration and Technology)	2456 - NZC in Business (First Line Management)	2462 - NZC in Project Management	2457 - NZC in Business (Small Business)
5	2459 - New Zealand Diploma in Business (with strands in Accounting, Administration and Technology, Human Resource Management, Leadership and Management, Marketing and Sales, and Project Management)				
6	2460 - New Zealand Diploma in Business (with strands in Accounting, Administration and Technology, Human Resource Management, Leadership and Management, Māori Business and Management, Marketing and Sales, and Real Estate)				

It should be noted that these qualifications are quite different in many ways from those qualifications they replace(d). They require changes in teaching and assessment practices that have been described as "a paradigm shift".

Unit standards have been developed to support many of these qualifications and strands: refer to the unit standards support material document (usm) at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/business-qualifications/>.

The qualifications

Ref	Code	Title
2452	BAT3	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Administration and Technology) (Level 3)
2453	ITL3	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Introduction to Team Leadership) (Level 3)
2454	SB3	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Introduction to Small Business) (Level 3)
2455	ASS4	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Accounting Support Services) (Level 4)
2456	FLM4	New Zealand Certificate in Business (First Line Management) (Level 4)
2457	SB4	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Small Business) (Level 4)
2461	BAT4	New Zealand Certificate in Business (Administration and Technology) (Level 4)
2462	PM4	New Zealand Certificate in Project Management (Level 4)
2459	NZDB5	New Zealand Diploma in Business (with strands in Accounting, Administration and Technology, Human Resource Management, Leadership and Management, Marketing and Sales, and Project Management) (Level 5)
2460	NZDB6	New Zealand Diploma in Business (with strands in Accounting, Administration and Technology, Human Resource Management, Leadership and Management, Māori Business and Management, Marketing and Sales, and Real Estate) (Level 6)

These qualifications can be accessed at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/business-qualifications/review-of-business-qualifications/>.

In the feedback from stakeholders, there was little disagreement with the suggested goals and audience for the qsm:

- QSM goals**
- to get the qualifications into the mainstream, part of 'business as usual' (transitional goal)
 - to support the quality implementation of the qualifications.

- Intended audience**
- candidates / learners
 - prospective employers of graduates
 - programme developers
 - programme deliverers / providers
 - workplace assessors
 - qualifications developer
 - NZQA QAD.

Content

There was implicit agreement that the content of the qsm should reflect the key principles that underpinned the development of the qualifications:

1. the Governance Group's **goal**: "cohesive New Zealand business qualifications which are strategically relevant to New Zealand people and communities and their aspirations"
2. based on a robust **needs analysis** which identified the competence required in business today and tomorrow
3. **flexibility** in design to allow relevant delivery in a range of contexts that reflects the diversity of business entities in NZ today and tomorrow
4. based in a **real or realistic** business context(s), with real or realistic requirements (eg commercial realities) of the context(s)
5. relevant personal and interpersonal **('soft') skills** are explicit throughout but must be learned/taught and assessed alongside more technical skills.

The qsm addresses these issues as they are expressed in the qualifications documents. In addition, more specialised discussions were suggested under these headings:

6. [development of programmes](#) (including a focus on strands)
7. [assessment](#)
8. requirements for [consistency management](#)
9. [information on specific/individual qualifications](#)
10. how to offer [feedback](#) about the qualifications and this qsm.

Content in more detail

NB – in these sections reference will be made and links provided to generic material on the NZQA website. Only material specific to the qualifications will be included in the qsm itself.

1. Goal

This goal was one of the first decisions of the Governance Group; it received widespread support from stakeholders and has never altered: “cohesive New Zealand business qualifications which are strategically relevant to New Zealand people and communities and their aspirations”.

The aspirational nature of the qualifications sometimes conflicts with what people are currently actually doing, ie some people in some real contexts may not normally address outcomes specified in the qualification. The requirement for communication with external stakeholders was one suggestion as a barrier for some people to achieve a qualification.

The aspirational nature of the qualifications means they reflect not what people are doing now, but what they should be able to do, based on the needs analysis. People in a real context, therefore, who don't (often) communicate with external stakeholders will need to somehow be given the opportunity to show they can do so when/if required. They may need to step into a realistic simulated context, for example.

2. Needs analysis

The needs analysis is available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/business-qualifications/review-of-business-qualifications/>. It is the justification for each qualification and its strategic purpose, and for the performance expectations of its target audience.

When the qualifications are reviewed, the needs analysis will be updated where necessary as the foundation of the reviewed qualifications.

3. Flexibility

The qualifications support material needs to be mindful of the deliberate flexibility of the qualifications themselves: they are explicitly designed to be relevant to a very wide range of contexts, from large organisations to small community groups, from commercial businesses to the volunteer sector, from ongoing activities to one-off events, ... They are also designed to cater for on- job and classroom assessment contexts.

Several providers agreed that the qsm should not give concrete examples for topics, resources, teaching/learning ideas, assessment, etc, for fear of prejudicing the flexibility of the qualifications and their adaptability for different contexts. As one respondent put it: “by making suggestions we are in fact directing developers to a way of thinking and/or implying that that is the correct approach. I would rather it be left open for developers to develop their own approaches and perhaps leave [the quality assurance process] to question the approach if required”. Another supported being cautious “not to provide overly concrete examples lest they be seen as a recipe”.

Another respondent made the same point and then added: "a possibly more useful focus [might be] to reflect on what is critically important in terms of assessment and consistency, and to focus qsm on the learnings arising from the consistency experiences. ... the qsm now might best focus on the key criticals for quality, sufficiency, and validity of assessment evidence".

It is therefore proposed that this qsm not give specific examples of teaching or assessment practice, but rather that it should reinforce the flexible nature of the qualifications to allow programme development and delivery to respond as freely as possible to the needs of the learners/candidates and their context. This could relate to programme development, various modes of delivery/teaching, assessment, ...

One respondent suggests; "discussion regarding allocation of credits to content (i.e. if there is any flexibility)". The Governance Group deliberately allocated credits to sets of outcomes rather than to individual outcomes, so that programmes can more flexibly reflect the needs of their learners/candidates and the context. This allocation of credits (refer next section) must be set out in the programme and justified.

4. **Real / realistic**

The Governance Group was clear that these qualifications are emphatically not solely academic or theory-based qualifications, but are firmly rooted in the practical requirements of NZ business and businesses. Any simulation, case-study, or other non-real context must therefore be realistic, ie it must have the qualities of a believable context closely comparable to real contexts. This is especially important as 'entity requirements' are a key criterion for assessment of performance.

The qualifications therefore require

Programme design and delivery, and all assessment, will be conducted in and for the context of a real or realistic business entity, and in light of the requirements of that context.

Programmes leading to award of this qualification must identify the context, and must justify the allocation of credits to graduate profile outcomes within the programme, in light of the requirements of the context.

A business entity can be an organisation, or a commercial or other enterprise, not necessarily for profit, and can be a discretely managed business unit within a larger organization.

It should be noted that not only the business entity (the context for the programme) has to be real or realistic, but so do the requirements that flow from that real/realistic context. Any outcome therefore must be assessed in a real/realistic conditions, relevant to the context. It would not be acceptable, for example, to ignore budgetary constraints or health and safety requirements when leading a team in a real or realistic business context.

Similarly, concepts such as 'cultural' will be interpreted in terms of their meaning in the context of each business entity, which may well have different understandings of 'cultural' in their own real/realistic context.

The qualifications were developed to maximise flexibility to the needs of the wide variety of contexts for which the qualifications are intended to be relevant. This focus on the real/realistic nature of the entity and the resulting real/realistic requirements is fundamental to the qualifications.

5. **Soft skills**

The qualifications require

Outcomes in the following sections of the graduate profile will be embedded throughout programme design and delivery, and assessment: People skills, Cognitive skills, Affective skills.

Outcomes in these sections of the qualifications are commonly called 'soft' skills, and need to be addressed in the context of relevant technical outcomes, to reflect the reality of the business entity that is the context of the programme. This applies to programme development and to learning/teaching and assessment.

Credits for these 'soft' outcomes therefore, need to be allocated in the programme to those technical outcomes which will provide the context for the assessment of the soft skills. While the soft skills do need to be assessed in context, they do not have to be embedded everywhere – only where relevant, potentially including in the strand for a programme leading to a diploma.

Although soft skills can be learned and practised separately, they also need to be embedded in the programme to ensure they are assessed in context, as intended by the qualifications.

6. **Development of programmes**

The key factor in developing a programme for these qualifications is the needs of the learners/candidates and the context. Comments are made elsewhere in this qsm about programme development in relation to specific issues.

Any programme can be contextualised in order to be appropriate to the people and context. For example, there is not a qualification specifically for small business at level 5, as the diploma can be offered in that context – as can for example, the NZ Certificate in Business (First Line Management) (Level 4). Equally, the qualifications can be offered in the context of a marae, a neighbourhood volunteer organisation, the manufacturing division of a larger factory, ... It has to be real or realistic.

The context must also reflect the level of the qualification. Developers must ensure that the programme agrees with the relevant level descriptors at the end of document *The New Zealand Qualifications Framework* available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Studying-in-NZ/New-Zealand-Qualification-Framework/requirements-nzqf.pdf>.

In the qualifications, credits are allocated to groups of graduate outcomes rather than to individual outcomes. This is deliberate, to allow scope for the flexibility in response to candidate needs and context. A programme will need to describe how this notional weighting of credits will be allocated within the programme, including how the credits for the soft skills will be allocated (refer above).

Developers need to be mindful of the purpose of the qualification, and reflect it in the programme. For example, the expectation that people can operate in a "bi- and multi-cultural" environment is an expectation in the qualifications' purpose statements, and so will guide the development of the programme and any simulated/realistic contexts.

It needs to be remembered that these are Business qualifications, developed on the basis of robust needs analysis for the needs of Business, businesses, and business people in NZ today and tomorrow. These qualifications are therefore not primarily about law or economics, for example (although diploma strands in these areas may be possible in time): programmes may nevertheless take opportunities to include a specialist focus from time to time, perhaps as discrete modules, as relevant to the people and context.

A programme for a diploma will need to demonstrate to what extent and how the chosen strand will be integrated with the compulsory core. If the chosen strand(s) will not be integrated with the compulsory core, this must be specified.

Where a programme will lead to the award of two qualifications at different levels (eg a two-year programme leading to the award of both diplomas), the programme must describe how possibly different entry requirements will be satisfied, notably the English-language requirement for overseas students.

7. **Assessment**

The qualifications do not prescribe any particular form of assessment. Programmes need to identify an assessment regime that will suit the learners/candidates, the context, and the material and programme. Assessment in a programme can use one method only, or a mix of several different approaches.

Unit standards can be used. Refer to [unit standard support material \(usm\) document](#).

Whatever assessment method(s) is used, it must ensure that candidates have achieved “all the graduate outcomes in the graduate profile” (refer the *Minimum standard of achievement* ... in the qualification specifications), leading to the award of the New Zealand qualification. This award has national status.

Any recognition of superior performance is at the discretion of the institution delivering the programme and does not necessarily have national status. It does not affect the award of the New Zealand qualification and must be expressed in terms that do not demean the qualification or its award.

In any assessment regime, close attention needs to be paid to credit values (especially where the assessment includes soft skills) and levels (refer above).

8. **Consistency management**

Generic information about consistency management, including the schedule and a contact for further information, is available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/consistency-grad-outcomes/>.

The *evidence requirements for assuring consistency*, as specified on the Business qualifications are: All tertiary education organisations (TEOs) either arranging training or delivering programmes that lead to the award of the qualification are required to participate with the qualification developer in a scheduled consistency process, in accordance with published national guidelines.

This will involve reviewing evidence associated with graduates' achievement of outcomes, establishing a periodic cycle for a review focus for the external consistency review, and agreeing acceptable standards and/or benchmarks for qualification outcome achievement, and areas for improvement.

Standard evidence for programme providers may include:

- assessment information leading to the achievement of the graduate outcomes
- a portfolio of student work relating to the qualification and the annual review focus requirements
- graduate and/or stakeholder/end-user feedback on outcome achievement
- TEO moderation outcomes which may include moderation/benchmarking across common programmes relevant External Evaluation and Review (EER) data.

This section will be updated with information specific to the Business qualifications, as it becomes available.

9. Information on specific/individual qualifications

Accounting stream

If the business entity that is the context for 2455, *Prepare tax returns for a business entity*, is a not-for-profit entity there will be no requirement to prepare an income tax return for the entity – but PAYE, GST, and relevant other returns will still be required. The central competence of preparing a tax return will therefore be assessed in every case.

Administration and Technology stream

No additional information.

Leadership and Management stream

The level 4 FLM qualification does not require supervisory experience before entry to the programme.

Project Management stream

No additional information.

Small Business stream

NZCB (Introduction to Small Business) (Level 3) focuses on people thinking about or intending to start a small business. NZCB (Small Business) (Level 4) is about the management of small businesses that are already in operation. People will either need to apply content to an existing business(es) or to a realistic / simulated small business scenario(s).

While there is no specific Small Business qualification at level 5, NZDB5 can be offered through a programme that has been developed and offered deliberately in/for a Small Business context.

NZ Diplomas in Business (NZDB5 and NZDB6)

A programme for a diploma will need to demonstrate to what extent and how the chosen strand will be integrated with the compulsory core. If the chosen strand(s) will not be integrated with the compulsory core, this must be specified.

A real estate strand has been added at level 6.

Human Resource Management and **Marketing and Sales** strands have been added to each Diploma, and supporting unit standards will be developed in 2018.

Other strands are likely to be added from time to time.

10. Feedback

How to offer feedback about the qualifications and/or the qualifications support material: Feedback is welcome at any time and can be sent to business.qualifications@nzqa.govt.nz. Feedback on the qualifications themselves will be evaluated when the qualifications are next reviewed.

Suggestions for this qsm will be considered for the next updated version.