

Australian
Qualifications Framework

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AQF Council
Strategic Plan
July 2008 – June 2011

Level 4, 11 Waymouth Street
Adelaide SA 5001

GPO Box 320
Adelaide SA 5001
Australia

Tel: +61 8 8226 2775

Email: aqfc@saugov.sa.gov.au
www.aqf.edu.au

Australian Qualifications Framework Council

A Committee of the Ministerial Council on
Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs



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Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) underpins Australia's national system of qualifications in post-compulsory education and training. It was introduced on 1 January 1995 replacing earlier frameworks.

It is a fundamental component of the quality assurance arrangements for the quality of Australian qualifications.

The AQF comprises 15 qualifications from the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, skill-based qualifications in the vocational education and training (VET) sector, through to doctoral degrees in the higher education sector. The AQF defines each qualification based on general characteristics of education and training at each qualification level and recognises the distinctive educational responsibilities of each sector (schools, vocational education and training and higher education).

The AQF defines the responsibilities for assessment, issuance and certification, as well as defining the requirements for how qualifications are documented. This contributes to consistency of outcomes and comparability of qualifications, as well as protection of qualification titles. The AQF provides guidance on recognition of prior learning (RPL) and cross-sectoral linkages (credit transfer and articulation).

The AQF complements accreditation standards for qualifications and registration standards for education and training providers. Registration and accreditation authorities use the AQF for making decisions about accreditation of qualifications. Education and training providers are required to use the AQF to guide assessment and issuance of certification.

In summary, the AQF provides nationally consistent recognition of outcomes achieved at each qualification level, facilitates pathways for people to move between educational sectors and between work and study, and promotes international recognition of Australian qualifications.

AQF Council

The AQF is governed by a Council which was established on 1 May 2008 replacing the AQF Advisory Board. The AQF Council is a committee of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

The Council is comprised of experts from the higher education, vocational education and training and schools sectors, employers, unions and governments. The Chair is independent of the sectors and the Council includes a New Zealand observer.

The Council meets approximately four times a year usually in Adelaide. Decisions of the Council and its publications are available on its website www.aqf.edu.au.

AQF Council Objective

The object of the AQF Council is to provide strategic and authoritative advice to MCEETYA, and the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) as appropriate, on the AQF to ensure it is nationally and internationally robust and supports flexible cross-sectoral linkages and pathways.

AQF Council Vision

The Council's vision is to ensure Australia has a nationally and internationally recognised framework of qualifications that meets the current and future needs of learners and industry. It aims to achieve this through:

- ensuring a contemporary and relevant AQF that supports the nation's strategic interests for a highly skilled workforce and well qualified citizens through learners' attainment of nationally consistent and internationally benchmarked qualifications
- promoting Australia's reputation for high quality education and training outcomes through promoting the AQF as the fundamental underpinning quality assurance mechanism for Australia's education and training system
- ensuring the AQF remains a leading international Qualifications Framework to support Australia's international education business.

AQF Council Stakeholders

The Council values its stakeholders and seeks to actively engage with and support them in their use and implementation of the AQF.

The Council's Strategic plan is complemented by an annual *Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Strategy*.

AQF Council Strategic Plan July 2008 - June 2011

In its Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011, the Council has set itself strategic goals to achieve the mandate given to it by MCEETYA to strengthen the AQF, to support AQF users and to promote the AQF to stakeholders.

This is reflected in its Strategic Plan with the following three high level strategic goals:

- **Strategic Goal 1** - Strengthen the AQF to ensure contemporary national relevance and international reputation of Australian qualifications
- **Strategic Goal 2** - Maintain the quality and integrity of the AQF
- **Strategic Goal 3** - Promote the importance of the AQF in maintaining Australia's reputation for quality education and training.

The Strategic Plan is supplemented by annual Business Plans that set timelines for the achievement of its strategic goals. The Council reviews its Strategic Plan annually.