

Newsletter

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Strengthened AQF approved

The AQF Council provided its advice on strengthening the AQF to the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) at its meeting on 19 November 2010.

MCTEE accepted the AQF Council's advice and approved the strengthened AQF.

The approval was subject to some amendments and further advice.

MCTEE approved the strengthened descriptor for the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education qualification type and approved the AQF Council's alternative recommendation for it to be included in the AQF without being located at a level.

MCTEE approved the descriptor for the Certificate III subject to further strengthening of the learning outcome in relation to supervising staff.

MCTEE agreed to allow a limited number of additional titles, in addition to 'Masters of (field of study)', for level 9 qualifications and asked the AQF Council for its advice on accommodating this in the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy*. MCTEE also asked the AQF Council to review the strengthened descriptors and specifications for the Doctoral Degree to ensure the integrity of Australia's highest level qualification type. The AQF Council will provide MCTEE with advice at its next meeting on an amendment to the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy* to recognise other level 9 qualification titles and on any further strengthening of the requirements for the Doctoral Degree.

Given MCTEE's agreement to implement the strengthened AQF, the AQF Council is now finalising the implementation and transition arrangements for MCTEE's approval in March 2011. It is anticipated that implementation of the strengthened AQF will commence from 1 July 2011.

MCTEE accepted the AQF Council's recommendation that implementation of the strengthened AQF for the self-accrediting higher education institutions is aligned with the implementation of the TEQSA and the standards framework for higher education. These institutions may voluntarily transition to the strengthened AQF prior to this. MCTEE also accepted the AQF Council's advice that self-accrediting higher education institutions are reminded of their current obligation to comply with AQF qualification titles and descriptors.

The implementation arrangements under development will include advice to MCTEE on the governance of the strengthened AQF. In the interim, MCTEE has recommended the addition of a member to the AQF Council with expertise in higher education. Further advice on AQF Council membership and its terms of reference will be provided to MCTEE at its next meeting.

The AQF Council's advice to MCTEE on strengthening the AQF and the final version of the AQF provided to MCTEE on 19 November are now available on the AQF website at <http://www.aqf.edu.au>. The final approved version, incorporating the changes approved by MCTEE, will be published following MCTEE's March 2011 meeting.

Australian Qualifications *Framework*

The MCTEE communiqué can be found at

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/TopStory/Pages/CommuniqueMCTEE20Nov2009.aspx>

The statement from Senator Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations and Chair of MCTEE, *Stronger national framework for education qualifications*, can be found at

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Evans/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_101119_180110.aspx

The AQF Council's consultation papers, research reports and stakeholder responses are available on the AQF website on the Projects page. Any enquiries should be sent to aqfc@sa.gov.au

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