



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

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real careers



FACT SHEET

AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australia. It incorporates qualifications from each education sector – schools, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education – into a single comprehensive framework.

QUICK FACTS

- The AQF was introduced in 1995
- The AQF supports lifelong learning by providing flexible qualification linkages and student pathways through Australia's three education sectors
- AQF qualifications are regulated, quality assured and nationally recognised
- 57% of VET students enrol in AQF Level 3 qualifications or higher
- Less than 1% of VET students enrol in AQF Level 8 qualifications
- The AQF is currently under review

LEVELS AND TYPES

The AQF has ten 'levels' which indicate complexity. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity, while AQF 10 has the highest complexity. Each level has one or more qualification 'types', which are used to describe each category of qualification. There are 14 qualification types in the AQF, ranging from the senior secondary certificate of education to a *Doctoral Degree*.

The AQF's 10 levels and 14 qualification types are represented as follows:



THE AQF AND VET

Seven of the ten AQF levels apply to the Australian VET system, and these are listed below with their corresponding qualification types and volumes of learning:

AQF Level	Qualification Type	Volume of Learning
1	Certificate I	0.5 – 1 year
2	Certificate II	0.5 – 1 year
3	Certificate III	1 – 2 years
4	Certificate IV	0.5 – 2 years
5	Diploma	1 – 2 years
6	Advanced Diploma	1.5 – 2 years
8	Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma	0.5 – 1 year 1 – 2 years

VOLUME OF LEARNING

Volume of learning includes all teaching, learning and assessment activities that a typical student must undertake to achieve all of the competencies packaged in a qualification. It is a notional duration and subject to variance in some circumstances. For example, some Certificate III qualifications require up to four years to achieve all of the competencies when undertaken as a trade apprenticeship.

POPULAR AQF QUALIFICATIONS

In 2016, the five most popular AQF qualifications in Australia's VET system were as follows:

- Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care
- Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- Certificate II in Hospitality
- Certificate I in Construction.

DEVELOPING AQF QUALIFICATIONS

An AQF qualification in Australia's VET system is a formal certification, issued by a registered training organisation (RTO), which recognises that a person has achieved competencies relevant to an identified individual, professional, industry or community need. Qualifications are developed for the VET system by combining units of competency into meaningful groups aligned to (and consistent with) the AQF. They are available through training packages and accredited courses.

ISSUING AQF QUALIFICATIONS

Only registered training organisations (RTOs) are authorised to issue AQF qualifications in Australia's VET sector. AQF qualifications must include the AQF logo (see below) or the following words: *This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework.*



If a student successfully completes one or more (but not all) units from an AQF qualification or accredited course, an RTO can issue them with a statement of attainment in recognition of their partial completion of the qualification or course.

AQF GOVERNANCE

The AQF is managed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, in consultation with all states and territories. The Department monitors and maintains the Framework, supports its users and promotes its role in Australia's education system.

KEY RESOURCES

Download a copy of the *Australian Qualifications Framework* (Second Edition, 2013) from the AQF website at <https://www.aqf.edu.au/>.

KEY WEBSITES

- Australian Qualifications Framework
<https://www.aqf.edu.au/>
- My Skills
<https://www.myskills.gov.au/>
- Training.gov.au
<https://training.gov.au/>

RELATED TOPICS

- Registered Training Organisations
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FAQS

AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

WHAT IS THE AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (AQF)?

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australia. It incorporates qualifications from each education sector – schools, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education – into a single comprehensive framework.

WHY IS THE AQF SO IMPORTANT?

The AQF supports lifelong learning by providing flexible qualification linkages and student pathways through Australia's three education sectors. It also ensures that all qualifications issued in these education sectors are regulated, quality assured and nationally recognised.

WHAT IS AN AQF QUALIFICATION?

An AQF qualification is a qualification recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). When endorsed as part of a training package or accredited within a course, AQF qualifications are created by packaging units of competency into meaningful groups aligned to a relevant AQF level and qualification type.

WHAT AQF QUALIFICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE AUSTRALIAN VET SYSTEM?

There are 14 qualification 'types' in the AQF, and eight of these are available through the Australian VET system:

- Certificate I
- Certificate II
- Certificate III
- Certificate IV
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma

Qualifications in Australia's VET system are available through nationally endorsed training packages and accredited courses.

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HOW DO I KNOW IF A QUALIFICATION IS AN AQF QUALIFICATION?

TAQF qualifications are identified by inclusion of the AQF logo (see below), or the words:

This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework.



WHO ISSUES AQF QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AUSTRALIAN VET SYSTEM?

Only registered training organisations (RTOs) are authorised to issue AQF qualifications and statements of attainment in the Australian VET system.

WHAT IS A STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT?

Statements of attainment are issued to students who successfully complete one or more (but not all) units from an AQF qualification or accredited course. Statements of attainment are also issued to students who successfully complete industry-recognised skill sets.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE AQF?

The AQF is managed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, in consultation with all states and territories.

Qualifications in Australia's VET system are available through nationally endorsed training packages and accredited courses.