

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), which was promulgated in October 2007 (Government Gazette No 30353 of 5 October 2007), provided for the establishment of a single qualifications framework for higher education to facilitate the development of a single national coordinated higher education system. The revised HEQSF was promulgated in August 2013 as approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training (Notice 1040 of 2012; Government Gazette No. 36003 of 14 December 2012) in terms of the National Qualifications Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 Of 2008) and as contemplated in the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997).

The implementation of the HEQF since 1 January 2009 required that all new programmes submitted to the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) for accreditation had to be compliant with the HEQF and the HEQSF as revised. The revised HEQSF, in line with the previous framework (HEQF), provides the basis for integrating all higher education qualifications into the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). It provides a basis for standards development and quality assurance.

The HEQSF recognises a range of qualification types such as a certificate, a diploma or a degree that are pegged to specific NQF levels. The NQF level and its level descriptors form the outer and most generic layer in terms of the knowledge and skills that learners are required to acquire, integrate and demonstrate (applied competence) at each level of cognitive complexity on the HEQSF.

In 2008 the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act No 67 replaced the South African Qualifications Authority Act No 58 of 1995. The NQF Act brought changes in particular the levels of the NQF. There are now 10 levels on the NQF. NQF levels of all qualifications changed from the 8-level framework to the 10-level framework in line with this legislation as depicted on the table below:

Old NQF level	New NQF level	Recognised qualifications
8	10	Doctoral Degree
8	9	Master's Degree
7	8	Bachelor Honours Degree Postgraduate Diploma
7	8	Bachelor's Degree (480 credits) (4 years)
6	7	Bachelor's Degree (360 credits) (3 years)
n/a	7	Advanced Diploma



Old NQF level	New NQF level	Recognised qualifications
6	6	Diploma (previously National Diploma) (240 credits and 360 credits)
6	6	Advanced Certificate
5	5	Higher Certificate

Qualifications which are not aligned with or not recognised in the HEQSF remain at the old NQF level. The following qualifications are particularly affected:

NQF level	Unaligned or unrecognised qualifications
8	Master's of Technology
7	Bachelor of Technology

Unisa undertook to implement the new legislation in line with the regulatory frameworks on its PQM through a re-curriculation process. All the old qualifications have either been phased out or are in the process of teach out and new aligned qualifications have been introduced.

New and Changed Qualifications conform to the requirements of the HEQSF and have New NQF levels. Old qualifications are not HEQF aligned and have lower Old NQF levels and will be retained as such until they have been completely phased out.

Qualifications indicating the old NQF levels will continue to receive the same recognition as qualifications awarded in terms of the new NQF levels and the HEQSF alignment. Learning outcomes should be recognized and pegged in line with new NQF levels.

Yours sincerely

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