

18 September 2023

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your request of 21 August 2023, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), for the following information:

“All briefings, memos and other key documents relating to the signing and implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between NZQA and Bahrain’s Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) that was signed in Bahrain on 1 March 2017 (as referenced here: <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/NZQAs-2017-international-updates.pdf>)”

and

“The text of the above Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed by NZQA with Bahrain’s Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), in Bahrain, on 1 March 2017”

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982.

As requested, we have compiled the MoC, all briefings, memos and other key documents related to the signing of the MoC in 2017. No activities have taken place between the two parties since then, due to various factors, including the pandemic. As such, we have no implementation documents to include.

Some information has been withheld under section 6 of the Act as the making available of that information would likely - prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand (see section 6(a)), and/or prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government (see section 6(b)(i)).

A full list of the documents being released can be found below.

Appendix	Title	Pages	Decision
1	MoC between BQA and NZQA	1-15	Released in full
2	NZQAs 2017 international updates	16-17	Released in full
3	Memo to IAC Engagement with Bahrain	18-23	Released in part. Information withheld under s 6(a): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 18, paragraph 6 - Page 19, paragraph 13 - Page 20, paragraph 25 - Page 23, paragraph 4 Information withheld under s 6(b)(i):

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 19, paragraph 15 - Page 21, paragraph 29 - Page 23, paragraphs 1-7
4	Memo to SMT Engagement with Bahrain	24-30	<p>Released in part.</p> <p>Information withheld under s 6(a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 25, paragraph 8 - Page 25, paragraph 11 - Page 26, paragraph 14 - Page 26, paragraph 21 - Page 30, paragraph 4 <p>Information withheld under s 6(b)(i)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 25, paragraph 12 - Page 26, paragraph 19 - Page 26, paragraph 23 - Page 30, paragraphs 1-7
5	Memo to Grant Klinkum	31-36	Released in full
6	Memo to Karen Poutasi on approval of the MoC	37-38	Released in full
7	Briefing for Grant Klinkum on MoC signing with Bahrain	39	Released in full
8	Signed invitation for BQA to visit NZQA	40	Released in full
9	Background on Bahrain's education system and BQA	41-43	Released in full
10	Bahrain visit draft three-day programme	44	Released in full
11	File note signed by CE	45	Released in full

Please note that we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed before publication.

If you require further assistance or believe we have misinterpreted your request, please contact Elizabeth Templeton in the Office of the Chief Executive, email elizabeth.templeton@nzqa.govt.nz or telephone (04) 463 3339.

You have the right to seek an investigation or review by the Ombudsman of this decision under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982. Details of how to make a complaint can be found at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz. You can also telephone 0800 802 502 or write to the Ombudsman at PO Box 10152, Wellington, 6143.

Nāku nā



Dr Grant Klinkum
Pouwhakahaere/Chief Executive



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

Memorandum of Cooperation between

**Education & Training Quality Authority
(BQA)
Kingdom of Bahrain**

And

**New Zealand Qualifications Authority
(NZQA)**

This **Memorandum of Cooperation** is entered into on 01 March 2017

BETWEEN:

The Education & Training Quality Authority (hereinafter referred to as the "BQA"), which was established in accordance with Royal Decree No. (32) of 2008; and was subsequently re-organized in accordance with Royal Decree No. (83) of 2012, whose offices are located at Doha Plaza, Building 2334 Road 2830 Block 428 Seef District, Kingdom of Bahrain

AND

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (hereinafter referred to as "NZQA"), which is empowered by section 256A of the Education Act (1989), whose offices are located at 125 The Terrace, Wellington, New Zealand, 6140.

Each an **Authority** and, together, the **Authorities**.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS

- (1) The BQA has set, implemented and launched the National Qualifications Framework (the "NQF") in the Kingdom of Bahrain and seeks to develop and expand the role and function of the NQF.
- (2) NZQA is the custodian of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework ("NZQF"), and seeks to develop relationships between the NZQF and other qualifications frameworks internationally.
- (3) The Authorities intend to establish, promote, develop and strengthen cooperation in issues related to national qualification frameworks, professional development, and advancement of international understanding between both Authorities to their mutual benefit.
- (4) The BQA recognises that NZQA has over 25 years of experience as a specialist qualifications authority and wishes to access NZQA's expertise and experience under this Memorandum of Cooperation ("MoC"). The BQA recognises that NZQA's provision of technical and specialised services to support capability building and professional development will be set out in one or more separate services agreements.

NOW IT IS HEREBY UNDERSTOOD BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES AS FOLLOWS

(1)

EXCHANGE OF NON-CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Authorities will exchange non-confidential documents and operational information (e.g. manuals, templates and national and international educational information), as well as any other credible information of benefit to the other Authority in order to provide support and learn from either Authority.
- 1.2 Each Authority will observe the copyright laws and regulations of the other Authority, and any transfer of information will not imply a transfer of any intellectual property rights of the other Authority.

(2)

EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The professional development activities of each Authority's employees will be carried out, as and when necessary, and as decided by both Authorities, as follows:
 - 2.1.1 By participation of employees as observers across the range of activities of the other Authority, related to the relevant qualifications framework;
 - 2.1.2 By participation of employees in training activities, which will provide employees with information, and knowledge of the latest systems, processes and other related matters.

(3)

COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

- 3.1 The areas of cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the Authorities , as and when necessary, may be as follows:

- 3.1.1 Advice and consultation from the experts at NZQA with regards to the development of a model for the Recognition of Prior Learning, a model which the BQA seeks to incorporate into the NQF.
- 3.1.2 Exchange of good practices between the Authorities, in respect of all aspects of qualifications framework structures, designs and management.
- 3.1.3 Comparison of the NQF to the NZQF to understand each other's systems and work together to consider timescales for referencing to support international recognition for qualifications on both frameworks.
- 3.1.4 Implementing any other projects and activities deemed to be mutually beneficial and decided upon by both Authorities.

(4)

COST

- 4.1 Each Authority will bear its own legal costs in respect of the negotiation and signature of this MoC, unless otherwise mutually decided, in writing, between the Authorities.
- 4.2 Each Authority will be responsible for its own costs incurred during the fulfilment of any aspects of this MoC, unless otherwise mutually decided, in writing, between the Authorities.

(5)

NON- EXCLUSIVITY

- 5.1 Nothing in this MoC will preclude either of the Authorities from entering into relationships with any other entities, which are similar to the relationship between the Authorities.

(6)

TERMINATION

6.1 This MoC will terminate on the earlier of the following events:

6.1.1 One of the Authorities providing, in writing, a three (3) month notice to the other Authority, informing the other Authority of their intent to terminate the MoC; or

6.1.2 The expiration of a period of three (3) years from the date of this MoC, unless extended through the mutual consent of the Authorities.

(7)

AMENDMENTS TO THE MoC

The arrangements as outlined in this MoC may be amended, at any time, by the approval, in writing, of both Authorities.

(8)

**OFFICERS-IN-CHARGE OF IMPLEMENTING THIS
MoC**

8.1 The Chief Executive of the BQA, and the Chief Executive of NZQA (the "Officers"), will be responsible for the implementation of the terms of this MoC.

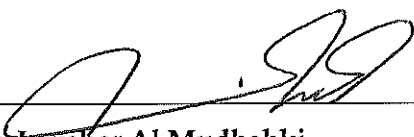
8.2 The Officers may appoint relevant employees of both Authorities to perform aspects of cooperation between the Authorities. The appointments will have effect once the other Authority has been informed of the appointment.

This MoC is made in English & Arabic, and in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the English text and the Arabic translation, the English version will prevail.

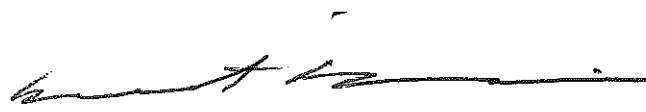
IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Authorities hereby have caused this MoC to be executed by their duly authorized representatives first day of March 2017.

For and on behalf of:
Education & Training Quality Authority

For and on behalf of:
New Zealand Qualifications Authority



Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhahki
Chief Executive



Dr Grant Klinkum
Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

مذكرة تعاون

بين

هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب

(BQA)

مملكة البحرين

و

هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية

(NZQA)

حُررت مذكرة التعاون هذه في تاريخ اليوم 1 مارس 2017

بين كل من:

هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب (BQA)، ويُشار إليها فيما بعد بـ "الهيئة"؛ والتي تأسست بموجب المرسوم الملكي رقم (32) لسنة 2008، وتمت إعادة تنظيمها لاحقاً بموجب المرسوم الملكي رقم (83) لسنة 2012، ويقع مقرها في الواحة بلازا بناية 2334، طريق 2830، مجمع 428، ضاحية السيف، مملكة البحرين.

و

هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية (NZQA) (ويُشار إليها فيما بعد بـ "هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية"، وهي الهيئة المفوضة بموجب المادة 256 (أ) من قانون التعليم لسنة 1989، ويقع مقرها في 125 ذا تيراس، ولنجتون، نيوزيلندا، 6140.

ويُشار إلى كل طرف بـ "الهيئة"، وإليهما جميعاً فيما بعد بـ "الهيئتين".

حيث إن:

- (1) هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب قامت بوضع، وتنفيذ، وتدشين الإطار الوطني للمؤهلات (NQF) في مملكة البحرين، وتتشد تطوير، وتوسعة دور ومهام الإطار الوطني للمؤهلات.
- (2) تعدُّ هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية هي الهيئة المسؤولة عن إطار المؤهلات في نيوزيلندا (NZQF)، وتتشد تطوير العلاقات بين NZQA مع أطر المؤهلات الأخرى على الصعيد الدولي.
- (3) تعترم الهيئتان وضع، تعزيز، تطوير، وتقوية التعاون في الأمور المتعلقة بالأطر الوطنية للمؤهلات، والتطور المهني، والتقدم في التفاهم الدولي بين الهيئتين لما يصب في مصلحتهما.
- (4) تدرك هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب أن لدى هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية ما يزيد عن 25 سنة من الخبرة بصفتها هيئة المؤهلات المتخصصة، وترغب في الحصول على خبرتها ودرابنتها بموجب مذكرة التعاون هذه ("MOC"). كما تدرك هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب أن توفير هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية للخدمات المهنية والمتخصصة لدعم بناء القدرات، والتطور المهني سيتم النص عليه في اتفاقية خدمات منفصلة أو أكثر.

وبناءً عليه فقد تم الاتفاق بين الهيئتين على ما يلي:

(1)

تبادل المعلومات غير السرية

1-1 تقوم الهيئتان بتبادل المستندات، والمعلومات التشغيلية غير السرية (مثل الكتيبات الإرشادية، وقوالب العروض والمعلومات التعليمية الوطنية والدولية فيما بينهما)؛ وأية معلومات أخرى موثوقة لتحقيق المصلحة المشتركة للطرفين؛ لتمكينهما من تقديم الدعم والتعلم لبعضهما البعض.

2-1 تلتزم كل هيئة بقوانين وأنظمة حقوق الطبع والنشر للهيئة الأخرى، ولن يعد نقل أية معلومات بمثابة نقلاً ضمنياً لأي من حقوق الملكية الفكرية للطرف الآخر.

(2)

التطور المهني للموظفين

1-2 تنفذ أنشطة التطور المهني لموظفي كل من الهيئتين، إن أمكن، وعند اللزوم، وحسب ما يقرره الطرفان من خلال ما يلي:

1-1-2 عن طريق مشاركة الموظفين كمراقبين في مجموعة من أنشطة الهيئة الأخرى المتعلقة بإطار المؤهلات؛

2-1-2 عن طريق مشاركة الموظفين في الأنشطة التدريبية التي ستزود الموظفين بالمعلومات والمعارف الخاصة بأحدث الأنظمة، والعمليات، والأمور ذات العلاقة الأخرى.

(3)

التعاون وتبادل المعلومات

1-3 تكون مجالات التعاون وتبادل المعلومات بين الهيئتين، إن أمكن، وعند اللزوم، من خلال ما يلي:

1-1-3 تقديم المشورة من خبراء هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية بشأن تطوير نموذج للاعتراف بخبرة التعلم المسبق؛ وهو نموذج تطمح الهيئة إلى تضمينه في الإطار الوطني للمؤهلات.

2-1-3 تبادل الممارسات الجيدة بين الهيئتين فيما يتعلق بجميع مجالات هياكل، وتصميم وإدارة أطر المؤهلات.

3-1-3 مقارنة الإطار الوطني للمؤهلات بإطار هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية (NZQF)، لفهم أنظمة كل هيئة، والعمل معًا للأخذ بالاعتبار الخيارات المتاحة والفترة الزمنية لمحاذاة الإطار الوطني للمؤهلات بإطار المؤهلات في نيوزيلندا (NZQF)، لتحقيق الاعتراف الدولي بالمؤهلات في كلا الإطارين.

4-1-3 تنفيذ أية مشروعات وأنشطة أخرى تصب في مصلحة الطرفين حسب ما تقرره الهيئتان.

(4)

التكاليف

1-4 سوف تتحمل كل هيئة التكاليف القانونية الخاصة بها فيما يتعلق بالتفاوض والتوقيع على مذكرة التعاون، ما لم يتم الاتفاق على خلاف ذلك بالرضا والقبول المتبادلين بين الطرفين كتابياً.

2-4 سوف تكون كل هيئة مسئولة عن التكاليف التي تنفقها في سبيل تنفيذ كافة مجالات مذكرة التعاون، ما لم يتم الاتفاق على خلاف ذلك بالرضا والقبول المتبادلين بين الطرفين كتابياً.

(5)

الحقوق غير الحصرية

1-5 لن يمنع أي شيء ورد في مذكرة التعاون هذه أي طرف من الطرفين من إقامة علاقات مع أية مؤسسات أخرى مماثلة لتلك العلاقة بين الطرفين.

(6)

إنهاء مذكرة التعاون

1-6 سيتم إنهاء مذكرة التعاون هذه قبل مدتها في الحالات التالية:

1-1-6 1-6-1 تقدم أي هيئة من الهيئتين إشعاراً كتابياً مدته ثلاثة أشهر إلى الهيئة الأخرى تبلغها فيه برغبة الهيئة الأخرى في إنهاء مذكرة التعاون هذه؛ أو

2-1-6 6-1-2 انتهاء مدة ثلاث سنوات من تاريخ التوقيع على مذكرة التعاون هذه، ما لم يتم تمديدتها من خلال الحصول على الموافقة المشتركة للهيئتين.

(7)

التعديلات على مذكرة التعاون

يجوز إجراء تعديل على الترتيبات المنصوص عليها في مذكرة التعاون هذه في أي وقت بموجب الحصول على الموافقة الكتابية لكلتا الهيئتين.

(8)

المسؤولون عن تنفيذ هذه المذكرة

1-8 يكون كل من الرئيس التنفيذي لهيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب والرئيس التنفيذي لهيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية ("المسؤولون") مسؤولين عن تنفيذ شروط مذكرة التعاون هذه.

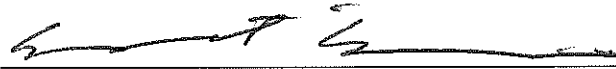
2-8 كما يجوز تعيين الموظفين ذوي العلاقة لكلتا الهيئتين لتنفيذ مجالات التعاون بين الهيئتين. ويسري هذا التعيين بمجرد إبلاغ الهيئة الأخرى به.

حُررت مذكرة التعاون هذه باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية؛ وفي حال أي تعارض أو خلاف بين النص الإنجليزي والترجمة العربية، يسري النص الإنجليزي.

إثباتاً لما تقدّم، فقد وقع الممثلان المخولان عن الطرفين على مذكرة التعاون هذه في تاريخ الأول من مارس لسنة 2017.

باسم ونياية عن:

هيئة المؤهلات النيوزيلندية

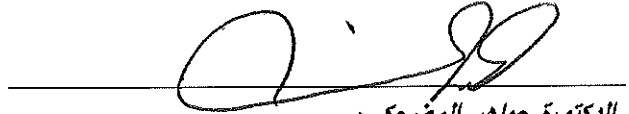


الدكتور جرانت كلينك

الرئيس التنفيذي لضمان الجودة

باسم ونياية عن:

هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب (BQA)



الدكتورة جواهر المضحكي

الرئيس التنفيذي

NZQA's 2017 international updates

NZQA

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
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China

NZQA manages the process for New Zealand education providers to be listed on China's Jiaoyu Shewai Jianguan Xinwang (JSJ) Study Abroad website. This site lists international education providers that the Chinese Ministry of Education considers to be of high quality. Currently New Zealand's eight universities, 15 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics, and 19 Private Training Establishments are listed on the website. All providers on the site must meet and maintain a list of criteria, and two more criteria will be introduced this year.

NZQA will conduct the next annual review in September and October 2017 to ensure that providers currently listed on the site continue to satisfy the criteria, and to identify any other providers that could be recommended to be listed.

 www.nzqa.govt.nz/china



Thailand

Education officials in Thailand have proposed changes which will allow students with NCEA to apply directly to Thai universities in 2017.

The changes mean that students would no longer be required to obtain a Matthayom 6 (M6) equivalency certificate.

 www.nzqa.govt.nz/thailand



Europe

New Zealand and the European Union (EU) have completed a joint project to make it easier for New Zealand and EU qualification holders to move between countries. A key outcome of the joint project was to match the levels of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and the European Framework.

 www.nzqa.govt.nz/eu



For more information visit URLs provided under each section



Republic of Korea

A Joint Recognition Statement was signed in 2017 by Education officials from the Republic of Korea and New Zealand that will pave the way for students to further their studies in either country.

The joint statement is a step towards our students being able to have qualifications more easily recognised abroad and will provide access to further study that has traditionally been difficult to access.

 www.nzqa.govt.nz/korean-nz-statement



Hong Kong

New Zealand is working with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to reference the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF).

 www.nzqa.govt.nz/hong-kong



Bahrain

NZQA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with Bahrain's Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), in Bahrain, on 1 March 2017. The MoC focuses on exchanges of information related to the implementation of qualifications frameworks. It also refers to undertaking a comparison of both countries' national qualifications frameworks.



South Africa

NZQA and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on 30 June 2017. The MoC acknowledges the desire of NZQA and SAQA to undertake a comparison of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and South Africa's National Qualifications Framework, to facilitate the recognition of qualifications between the two countries.



For further information, please email
internationalunit@nzqa.govt.nz.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 28 January 2016

TO: International Advisory Committee (IAC)

FROM: Karen Chalmers, Director, International & Policy, Strategic & Corporate Services

SUBJECT: **Decision on a request for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bahrain**

Purpose

1. This paper seeks a decision from the IAC on whether NZQA should sign an arrangement with the Kingdom of Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the IAC:
 - a. **consider** the opportunities and risks involved in signing an arrangement with QQA
 - b. **agree** that NZQA should begin negotiation on an arrangement with QQA.

Situation

3. QQA contacted NZQA on 14 December 2015 about signing an MoU. The MoU would provide a framework for a range of activities to occur including the exchange of good practice and information, staff development, internships from both parties, consultancy and future referencing of New Zealand and Bahrain's national qualifications frameworks (see Appendix A for details about QQA's proposed MoU).
4. QQA have indicated that their Chief Executive, Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki, would be available to sign the MoU in New Zealand in May 2016.

Opportunities

5. New Zealand has a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which is concluded but not in force. The NZ Inc GCC strategy is also focused on developing New Zealand's engagement in the region. Working and establishing a positive relationship with QQA is an opportunity for NZQA to contribute to these efforts and strengthen relationships in the Middle East.
6. There is an opportunity to rebuild the education relationship with, and New Zealand's education reputation in, Bahrain through successful collaboration between education agencies. [REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(a)

7. Through working with QQA, NZQA would be better able to assist to position education exporters in the Bahrain market.
8. Entering into an agreement with QQA will further NZQA's reputation within the Middle East region and could lay the foundation for further work to foster recognition of New Zealand qualifications in that region.
9. Engaging with Bahrain alongside the well-regarded qualifications agencies of Scotland, Ireland and Malaysia, would enhance NZQA's international reputation.
10. An arrangement with QQA could lead to a future project on qualifications recognition, which would contribute to NZQA's Future State goal related to the global reach of the NZQF (formerly, recognition arrangements with 50 countries by 2020).
11. An arrangement could lead to consultancy activities and may also help initiate commercialisation opportunities for NZQA. Consultancy activities in the MoU that QQA has with Scotland include, but are not limited to, the recognition of prior, informal and non-formal learning.

Risks

12. As Bahrain is a small country (1.2 million residents, of which half are Bahraini), projects and their impact are likely to be smaller in scale than other GCC countries.
13. Given the limited expansion opportunities, the resource dedicated to the project would need to be proportionate to the anticipated benefits of the work. This could be done by [REDACTED] contracting for the services at a cost to QQA. withheld under s 6(a)
14. NZQA's recent engagement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), means NZQA would need to ensure that an agreement with Bahrain follows the precedent set. NZQA should be careful that any work provided at a cost to one party is not provided for free to the other, and vice-versa.
15. [REDACTED] withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Background

National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training, Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA)

16. QQA is a government organisation, established in 2008 to conduct examinations and quality assurance reviews for schools, vocational institutes and higher education institutes. The National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF) was added to QQA's responsibilities in 2012.
17. The General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (GDQ) operates within QQA. Its core responsibility is to administrate and maintain the BQF. This includes receiving and reviewing requests and assessing learning outcomes for placing national qualifications on the BQF, according to specified validation standards.

National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF)

18. QQA began the design and establishment of the BQF in 2010. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) and National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) both provided endorsement of the BQF Design Phase through signed Memoranda of Understanding. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) also provided technical assistance in the development of the BQF.
19. The BQF is a young framework, which QQA launched in October 2014. However, Bahrain has been working hard in the implementation phase to develop and populate the BQF and improve quality assurance processes.

Bahrain's qualifications recognition function

20. Bahrainis and residents can apply to Bahrain's Ministry of Education requesting accreditation and validation of qualifications issued by higher education institutions outside the Kingdom of Bahrain.
21. Under a new contract, signed in November 2015, SCQFP is helping QQA to identify an effective method for recognising and aligning international qualifications delivered in the country against the BQF.

Advice from Education New Zealand (ENZ)

22. ENZ supports the progression of an education agreement with Bahrain in the form of a direct institutional relationship between NZQA and QQA.
23. While Bahrain is currently a small recruitment market for New Zealand (enrolments peaked in 2010 at 89 students, and have been in steady decline since then), it offers positive export opportunities for New Zealand providers.
24. Bahrain, like Saudi Arabia and the UAE, appears to be focussing on improving its qualifications framework and quality assurance processes, and ENZ considers there is opportunity for New Zealand providers of export products and services in this area. An ITP is visiting Bahrain in early February 2016 at the request of Bahraini officials for discussions on the establishment of an industrial training facility.
25. ENZ's focus in the Middle East is primarily on the GCC countries. [REDACTED] given the small population and low starting base, ENZ considers there could be lucrative export opportunities that draw upon projects currently underway in Saudi Arabia and UAE, for NZQA and other education providers and firms. Bahrain is also strategically supported by the GCC.
withheld under s 6(a)
26. ENZ would support negotiation on the education arrangement to align with NZQA's standard arrangement, and exploring the scope for commercial opportunities.
27. ENZ also has staff who would be able to support this work in Bahrain via the New Zealand Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, if necessary.

Advice from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)

28. NZQA is currently seeking advice from MFAT.

QQA's other international activities

29. Ireland, Scotland and Malaysia have been involved in activities with QQA. NZQA has been in contact with its counterparts in these countries, [REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

30. Details of these countries' engagement is provided in Appendix B.

Appendix A

An example of the Memorandum of Understanding sent by QQA:

1. Exchange of non-confidential policy documents, operational information and any other credible information of benefit to the other Party, in order to provide support and learn from either Party.
2. Professional development activities of each Party's employees as agreed by both Parties, as follows:
 - by secondment of employees for a period of time in the offices of the other Party for the purpose of training;
 - by participation of employees as observers across the range of activities of the other Party, related to the relevant qualifications framework;
 - by participation of employees in training activities which will provide employees with information and knowledge of the latest systems, processes and other related matters.
3. Other areas of cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the Parties, as and when necessary, will be as follows:
 - advice, consultation and exchange of good practice in respect of all aspects of qualifications framework structures, designs and management;
 - comparison and referencing of the frameworks to achieve international recognition for qualifications on both frameworks;
 - implementing any other projects and activities deemed to be mutually beneficial and agreed upon by both Parties.

Appendix B

Below are details of the international activities Ireland, Scotland and Malaysia have engaged in with QQA.

Ireland

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Scotland

[REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(b)(i) and s 6(a)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Malaysia

[REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 9 February 2016

TO: Strategic Management Team (SMT)

FROM: Rose Jamieson, Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic and Corporate Services (Dolly Seow-Ganesan, Acting Director, International and Policy)

SUBJECT: **Decision on Bahrain's request for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NZQA**

Intent

1. This paper seeks SMT approval for NZQA to commence discussions with the Kingdom of Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) on a cooperation arrangement.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that SMT:
 - a) **note** that QQA contacted NZQA on 14 December 2015 expressing their interest in signing an MoU with NZQA
 - b) **agree** for NZQA to commence discussions with QQA on a cooperation arrangement
 - c) **note** that NZQA will ensure the arrangement:
 - i. is termed a cooperation arrangement, rather than an MoU (as proposed by QQA)
 - ii. contains a clause that enables NZQA to explore commercial opportunities
 - d) **note** that NZQA's International Advisory Committee (IAC), Education New Zealand (ENZ) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) have been consulted and support this approach.

Situation

3. QQA contacted NZQA on 14 December 2015 about signing an MoU, similar to those they have recently signed with our counterpart agencies in Ireland, Scotland and Malaysia (see Appendix A for background information on QQA and Bahrain's national qualifications framework). The MoU would provide a framework for a range of activities to occur including the exchange of good practice and information, staff development, internships from both parties, consultancy and future referencing of New Zealand and Bahrain's national qualifications frameworks (see Appendix B for details about QQA's proposed MoU).
4. QQA have indicated that their Chief Executive, Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki, would be available to sign the MoU in New Zealand in May 2016.

Advice from ENZ

5. ENZ supports the progression of an education arrangement with Bahrain in the form of a direct institutional relationship between NZQA and QQA.
6. While Bahrain is currently a small student recruitment market for New Zealand (enrolments peaked in 2010 at 89 students, and have been in steady decline since then), it offers positive export opportunities for New Zealand education providers.
7. Bahrain, like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), appears to be focussing on improving its qualifications framework and quality assurance processes, and ENZ considers there is opportunity for New Zealand providers of education products and services in this area. Unitec Institute of Technology is visiting Bahrain in early February 2016 at the request of Bahraini officials for discussions on the establishment of an industrial training facility (this information is commercial-in-confidence).
8. ENZ's focus in the Middle East is primarily on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. [REDACTED] given the small population and low starting base, ENZ considers there could be lucrative export opportunities that draw upon projects currently underway in Saudi Arabia and UAE, for NZQA and other education providers and firms. Bahrain is also strategically supported by the GCC. withheld under s 6(a)
9. ENZ would support negotiation on the education arrangement to align with NZQA's standard arrangement, and exploring the scope for commercial opportunities.
10. ENZ also has a Regional Director located in New Zealand Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, who would be able to support this work in Bahrain, if necessary.

Advice from MFAT

11. MFAT supports NZQA signing a cooperation arrangement with QQA [REDACTED]

withheld under s 6(a)

QQA's international engagement

12. Ireland, Scotland and Malaysia have been involved in activities with QQA. NZQA has been in contact with its counterparts in these countries, [REDACTED] Details of these countries' engagement is provided in Appendix C.

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Impact

13. New Zealand has a free trade agreement with the GCC, which is concluded but not in force. The NZ Inc GCC strategy is also focused on developing New Zealand's engagement in the region. Working and establishing a positive relationship with QQA is an opportunity for NZQA to contribute to these efforts and strengthen relationships in the Middle East.

14. There is an opportunity to rebuild the education relationship with, and New Zealand's education reputation in, Bahrain through successful collaboration between education agencies. [REDACTED] withheld under s 6(a)
15. Through working with QQA, NZQA would be better able to assist to position education exporters in the Bahrain market.
16. Entering into an arrangement with QQA will further NZQA's reputation within the Middle East region and could lay the foundation for further work to foster recognition of New Zealand qualifications in that region.
17. Engaging with Bahrain alongside the well-regarded qualifications agencies of Scotland, Ireland and Malaysia, would enhance NZQA's international reputation.
18. An arrangement with QQA could lead to a project on qualifications recognition, which would contribute to NZQA's Future State goal related to the global reach of the NZQF (formerly, recognition arrangements with at least 50 countries by 2020).
19. It could also lead to commercial opportunities for NZQA. [REDACTED] withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Risks

20. As Bahrain is a small country (1.2 million residents, of which half are Bahraini), projects and their impact are likely to be smaller in scale than other GCC countries.
21. Given the limited expansion opportunities, the resource dedicated to the project would need to be proportionate to the anticipated benefits of the work. This could be done by [REDACTED] charging QQA a fee for services. withheld under s 6(a)
22. NZQA's recent engagement with the UAE, means NZQA would need to ensure that an arrangement with Bahrain follows the precedent set. NZQA should be careful that any paid work provided to one party is not provided for free to the other, and vice-versa.
23. As Scotland, Ireland and Malaysia have responded positively [REDACTED] withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Actions

24. Should SMT agree for NZQA to commence discussions with QQA on a cooperation arrangement, the International team will:
- request QQA's proposed contents for the cooperation arrangement
 - consult the Ministry of Education, NZQA Legal and MFAT
 - ensure "cooperation arrangement" is used, rather than MoU (as proposed by QQA)
 - ensure the cooperation arrangement contains a clause that enables NZQA to explore commercial opportunities.

Appendix A

Background information

National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training, Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA)

25. QQA is a government organisation, established in 2008 to conduct examinations and quality assurance reviews for schools, vocational institutes and higher education institutes. The National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF) was added to QQA's responsibilities in 2012.
26. The General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (GDQ) operates within QQA. Its core responsibility is to administer and maintain the BQF. This includes receiving and reviewing requests and assessing learning outcomes for placing national qualifications on the BQF, according to specified validation standards.

National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF)

27. QQA began the design and establishment of the BQF in 2010. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) and National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) both provided endorsement of the BQF Design Phase through signed Memoranda of Understanding. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) also provided technical assistance in the development of the BQF.
28. The BQF is a young framework, which QQA launched in October 2014. However, Bahrain has been working hard in the implementation phase to develop and populate the BQF and improve quality assurance processes.

Bahrain's qualifications recognition function

29. Bahrainis and residents can apply to Bahrain's Ministry of Education requesting accreditation and validation of qualifications issued by higher education institutions outside the Kingdom of Bahrain.
30. Under a new contract, signed in November 2015, SCQFP is helping QQA to identify an effective method for recognising and aligning international qualifications delivered in the country against the BQF.

Appendix B

Text from a generic Memorandum of Understanding sent by QQA:

1. Exchange of non-confidential policy documents, operational information and any other credible information of benefit to the other Party, in order to provide support and learn from either Party.
2. Professional development activities of each Party's employees as agreed by both Parties, as follows:
 - by secondment of employees for a period of time in the offices of the other Party for the purpose of training;
 - by participation of employees as observers across the range of activities of the other Party, related to the relevant qualifications framework;
 - by participation of employees in training activities which will provide employees with information and knowledge of the latest systems, processes and other related matters.
3. Other areas of cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the Parties, as and when necessary, will be as follows:
 - advice, consultation and exchange of good practice in respect of all aspects of qualifications framework structures, designs and management;
 - comparison and referencing of the frameworks to achieve international recognition for qualifications on both frameworks;
 - implementing any other projects and activities deemed to be mutually beneficial and agreed upon by both Parties.

Appendix C

Below are details of the international activities Ireland, Scotland and Malaysia have engaged in with QQA.

Ireland

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Scotland

[Redacted]

withheld under s 6(b)(i) and s 6(a)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

Malaysia

[Redacted]

withheld under s 6(b)(i)

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 20 May 2016

TO: Grant Klinkum, Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance Division

FROM: Karen Chalmers, Director, International and Policy

SUBJECT: **Meeting with representatives of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training in the Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA), 25 May 2016**

Meeting details

You are scheduled to meet Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki, Chief Executive of QQA, and Dr Tariq Al-Sindi, General Director of the National Qualifications Framework at QQA, on:

Wednesday 25 May 2016
1:00 PM-2:00 PM
InterContinental Fiji (hotel lobby)

Below are the opportunities for this meeting and, in the appendices, further background information.

- Appendix A: Biographies for Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki and Dr Tariq Al Sindi
- Appendix B: Background information about QQA
- Appendix C: Background to the cooperation arrangement
- Appendix D: Draft cooperation arrangement

Opportunities

Your meeting with Drs Jawaher and Tariq is an opportunity to discuss:

- the draft cooperation arrangement (at a high level as this is still being negotiated by NZQA and QQA), including possible activities under the cooperation arrangement
- QQA's interest in developing a separate commercial services agreement.

Draft cooperation arrangement

NZQA has been in contact with QQA via Esmat Jaffar, Director, General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework, QQA, since December 2015 when QQA contacted NZQA about signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

A draft MoU was sent to NZQA in February 2016. Its contents signalled QQA's interest in working with NZQA on the development and implementation of qualifications frameworks, the development of a model for the recognition of prior learning and a future comparison of the Bahrain Qualifications Framework and the NZQF.

Both parties have exchanged comments on the draft cooperation arrangement. Following the comments QQA sent to NZQA on 19 May 2016, two details still need to be agreed: the title, and the use of "party/ies".

We recommend you avoid engaging in discussion on these points, as they are legal matters. Further details are provided for you in Appendix C, as background.

Points for discussion

QQA have included the following clause in the cooperation arrangement about the recognition of prior learning:

Advice and consultation from the experts at NZQA with regards to the development of a model for the Recognition of Prior Learning, a model which the QQA seeks to incorporate into the NQF.

It would be useful to develop a better understanding of what QQA are looking for in this area, and how NZQA's work on the recognition of prior learning may assist them.

It would be useful to find out what other activities QQA would most like to pursue under this arrangement so NZQA can decide whether to deliver on a commercial or bilateral basis.

Signing the cooperation arrangement

NZQA and QQA have discussed a visit by representatives of QQA to formally sign the cooperation arrangement, once finalised. The specific details can be organised at a later date via email.

It would be useful to find out what other activities QQA would be interested in engaging in during such a visit.

Possible commercial services agreement

NZQA added a commercial clause to the draft cooperation arrangement, which was accepted by QQA. It states that:

The QQA recognises that NZQA's provision of technical and specialised services to support capability building and professional development will be set out in a separate services agreement.

It would be useful to test QQA's appetite for entering a commercial services agreement and, if they are interested, any details about the nature of such an agreement.

Appendix A:

Biographies for Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki and Dr Tariq Al Sindi



Dr. Jawaher Al-
Mudhahki

Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki has been the Chief Executive of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA-Bahrain) since 2008.

She began her career at the University of Bahrain in January 1988, where she held several positions, including Vice-President for Administration and Financial Affairs and as an advisor to the president.

She is active in a number of regional and international Boards, including the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA), the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), and the Arab Council for Universities' Quality Assurance and Accreditation.

She is a member in the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, the Higher Council for Training, a panel member in the committee of the "Women Empowerment Award" and a commissioner in the Commission of Prisoners and Detainees Rights.



Dr. Tariq Al-Sindi

Dr Tariq Al-Sindi presently serves as the General Director of the National Qualifications Framework at the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education and Training in the Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA).

He is currently the Secretary General of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), Secretary General of the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA), and board member of the Society of Academics.

Along with his 27-years-of-experience in teaching, research, and academic administration, Dr Tariq has also taken part in numerous institutional and program accreditation review teams in Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, he organised and facilitated various seminars and workshops in the area of quality assurance in different Arab countries and supervised students at the Master's and PhD level.

Appendix B

Background information about QQA

National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training, Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA)

QQA is a government organisation, established in 2008 to conduct examinations and quality assurance reviews for schools, vocational institutes and higher education institutes. The National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF) was added to QQA's responsibilities in 2012.

The General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (GDQ) operates within QQA. Its core responsibility is to administer and maintain the BQF. This includes receiving and reviewing requests and assessing learning outcomes for placing national qualifications on the BQF, according to specified validation standards.

National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF)

QQA began the design and establishment of the BQF in 2010. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) and National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQA) both provided endorsement of the BQF Design Phase through signed Memoranda of Understanding. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) also provided technical assistance in the development of the BQF.

The BQF is a young framework, which QQA launched in October 2014. However, Bahrain has been working hard in the implementation phase to develop and populate the BQF and improve quality assurance processes.

Bahrain's qualifications recognition function

Bahrainis and residents can apply to Bahrain's Ministry of Education requesting accreditation and validation of qualifications issued by higher education institutions outside the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Under a new contract, signed in November 2015, SCQFP is helping QQA to identify an effective method for recognising and aligning international qualifications delivered in the country against the BQF.

Appendix C

Background to the cooperation arrangement

QQA sent a draft MoU to NZQA in February 2016. Both parties have since provided feedback on the document, which is still in the process of being finalised.

In general, the cooperation arrangement would provide a framework for a range of activities to occur including the exchange of good practice and information, staff development, internships from both parties, consultancy and future referencing of New Zealand and Bahrain's national qualifications frameworks.

Feedback from each party

NZQA sent feedback on the draft MoU to QQA in early April 2016. The changes included:

- replacing *MoU* with *Cooperation Arrangement*, *Party/ies* with *Participant/s*, and *Article* with *Paragraph* (this follows Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) policy)
- adding two paragraphs (one under *Preamble* and the other under *Costs*) that signalled our intent to provide services in a commercial context.

QQA replied to these changes on 18 May 2016. The feedback included:

- changing the title of the document to *Cooperation Protocol*. MFAT policy prevents the use of protocol; MFAT legal have suggested using *Memorandum of Arrangement* instead
- changing *Participant/s* back to *Party/ies*
- removing the paragraph under *Costs*, noting that the substance is sufficiently covered by the paragraph added under *Preamble*. NZQA also accepts this.

Following the comments from QQA, the details in the cooperation arrangement that still need to be agreed are: the title, and the use of "party/ies". The underlying concern about the use of these terms, from NZQA's perspective, is to ensure the document does not create strictly binding legal obligations, and is in accordance with MFAT's policies for New Zealand's international relationship documents.

Title

- QQA originally proposed using the term *Memorandum of Understanding*. This is the term they use for arrangements signed with organisations outside of Bahrain. MFAT policy prevents us from using this term, due to the legal obligations it can create.
- NZQA first suggested using *Memorandum of Cooperation*. However, QQA only uses this term for domestic arrangements.
- NZQA most recently proposed using *Cooperation Arrangement*. QQA responded that their legal advice recommends they use *Cooperation Protocol*. MFAT policy prevents us from using *Protocol*. MFAT has suggested using *Memorandum of Arrangement*. We have yet to suggest this option to QQA.

Party/ies

- MFAT advised NZQA to use *participants* instead of *parties* (QQA's preference) to avoid creating strictly binding legal obligations. QQA reiterated its preference for parties in their recent comments.

Appendix D

Draft cooperation arrangement

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 10 June 2016

TO: Karen Poutasi, Chief Executive

FROM: Russell Wood, Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic and Corporate Services
(Karen Chalmers, Director, International and Policy)

SUBJECT: **Memorandum of Cooperation with Bahrain**

Intent

1. This paper seeks your approval of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between NZQA and the Kingdom of Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that you:
 - a) **approve** the MoC between NZQA and QQA (**attached**)
 - b) **note** that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been consulted
 - c) **note** that once both parties have concluded their respective approval processes, NZQA will invite the Chief Executive of QQA to sign the MoC in Wellington.

Situation

3. NZQA and QQA agreed to the text of the MoC on 7 June 2016, and both parties are now seeking final approval of the MoC.
4. The MoC provides a framework for a range of activities to occur including the exchange of good practice and information, staff development, consultancy and future referencing of New Zealand and Bahrain's national qualifications frameworks. The MoC also states that "QQA recognises that NZQA's provision of technical and specialised services to support capability building and professional development will be set out in a separate services agreement."
5. This MoC will provide NZQA with an opportunity to explore commercial opportunities and a qualifications recognition arrangement with Bahrain. The latter, if possible, would contribute to the Future State goal of recognition arrangements with 50 countries by 2020.

Action

6. Once the MoC has been approved, the International team will draft a letter on your behalf inviting QQA's Chief Executive to sign the MoC at NZQA. This visit will provide an opportunity to discuss a subsequent services agreement.

MoC signing with Bahrain, March 2017

Details

You are scheduled to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on behalf of NZQA with Bahrain's Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), at **10.00am on Wednesday 1 March 2017** (this coincides with the morning coffee break during the INQAAHE conference).

Key BQA officials

- Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki, Chief Executive
- Dr Tariq Al-Sindi, General Director of the National Qualifications Framework (whom you met in Fiji, May 2016)
- Mrs Esmat Jaffar, Acting Director, General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (who is our main contact)

Talking points

You have a letter signed by Karen Poutasi inviting BQA to visit NZQA (copy attached for your information), to give to Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki at the signing ceremony.

A visit by BQA presents an opportunity to initiate discussions on a project to compare the NZQF and Bahrain's NQF, and to identify any possible commercial activities that they may be interested in pursuing.

You may wish to refer to some of the details of the invitation such as a 2-3 day visit at a suitable time, and that they should advise us of their preferences for the programme (this may give us an indication of potential commercial opportunities).

You could note that NZQA is happy to include sessions on any aspect of our qualifications framework and quality assurance system such as the recognition of prior learning (they signalled their interest in RPL in the MoC). We could also have sessions on qualifications recognition services, NCEA assessment, our international work, and an NQF comparative exercise.

We would also be happy to also arrange a visit to a university and/or an ITP, as well as a session with Universities New Zealand (to discuss quality assurance in the university sector).

If it seems appropriate, you could revisit your discussion with Dr Tariq Al-Sindi in Fiji about possible commercial activities.

We have attached a draft programme for the visit to have in your back pocket, in case they would like more information.

Attached documents

- Copy of the MoC – note Bahrain has replaced Karen Poutasi's name with yours in signature block
- Copy of the invitation from Karen Poutasi to Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki to visit NZQA
- Background information on Bahrain's education system and BQA, including bios of Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki and Dr Tariq Al-Sindi
- Draft three-day programme for BQA visit to NZQA



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

25 February 2017

Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki
Chief Executive
Education and Training Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain
Manama
Doha Plaza
Building 2334 Road 2830 Block 428
Seef District, Kingdom of Bahrain

Dear Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki

Invitation to visit the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

We are pleased to have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Education and Training Quality Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain. Thank you for hosting the signing ceremony, and for initiating the process for a Memorandum of Cooperation. I am confident that this occasion will mark the beginning of a positive and fruitful relationship between our two organisations, and open the door to multiple opportunities of mutual benefit.

I would like to formally invite you and your colleagues to visit NZQA at a time suitable to you. A visit of two or three days would provide an opportunity to exchange information about the roles, priorities, and histories of our organisations, and to discuss our cooperation over the short and medium term.

We would be grateful if you could advise of the members of the delegation, your preferred dates to visit and any particular areas of NZQA's work that you wish to cover. Following your response, the International Policy and Liaison Unit will work with your staff on the arrangements and programme for the visit.

I look forward to hearing from you, and meeting you and your colleagues in 2017.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K Poutasi', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Karen Poutasi (Dr)
Chief Executive

Background on Bahrain's education system and the *Education and Training Quality Authority*

Bahrain's education system

School

School education is structured into a 6+3+3 system of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. The secondary school leaving certificate is called the *Tawijhiya*, which UK NARIC views as comparable to GCSE, which would by extension make it likely comparable to NCEA Level 2.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the administration of public education, where it is the official authority for executing the State's educational policy. The Directorate of Private Education supervises the curricula for Arabic languages, Islamic education and social studies in private schools.

Higher Education

The higher education sector in Bahrain consists of two public universities (University of Bahrain and the Arabian Gulf University), 16 private universities and the College of Health Sciences and Bahrain Polytechnic (both publicly run).

Higher education institutes have autonomous status in Bahrain. The Ministry of Education, however, acts as the highest official authority over some universities such as the University of Bahrain and the Arabian Gulf University.

The Council of Higher Education was formed in 2005 to deal with various administrative and policy making aspects of universities including setting the general criteria for universities' admission.

Admission requirements

Students are required to have obtained a grade of 70 per cent in the *Tawijhiya* examinations to enter undergraduate studies. Those who obtain lower score can take further courses at the university to improve their eligibility for admission.

Qualifications

Qualifications at undergraduate level are the Associate Degree (or Associate Diploma), which are two years in length, and Bachelor's Degrees, which are four-five years in duration, and modelled on the US university system.

Postgraduate Diplomas and Master's Degrees are available in many disciplines. Courses are between two-four years in length. The structure is based on the UK Master's Degree and 50 per cent of the course is based on course work and the other 50 per cent on a research thesis.

Doctoral studies are available in a limited range of disciplines, the majority of which relate to engineering. Courses are between three to five years in duration.

Background information on *Education and Training Quality Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain (BQA)*

BQA was established in 2008 to conduct examinations and quality assurance reviews for schools, vocational institutions and higher education institutions. The National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF) was added to BQA's responsibilities in 2012.

The General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (GDQ) operates within BQA. Its core responsibility is to administer and maintain the BQF. This includes receiving and reviewing requests

and assessing learning outcomes for placing national qualifications on the BQF, according to specified validation standards.

National Qualifications Framework of Bahrain (BQF)

BQA began work on the BQF in 2010. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) and National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) both provided endorsement of the BQF Design Phase through signed Memoranda of Understanding. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) also provided technical assistance in the development of the BQF.

The BQF is a young framework, which BQA launched in October 2014. However, Bahrain has been working hard in the implementation phase to develop and populate the BQF and improve quality assurance processes.

Bahrain's qualifications recognition function

Bahrainis and residents can apply to Bahrain's Ministry of Education requesting accreditation and validation of qualifications issued by higher education institutions outside the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Under a new contract, signed in November 2015, SCQFP is helping BQA to identify an effective method for recognising and aligning international qualifications delivered in the country against the BQF.



Biographies for Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki and Dr Tariq Al Sindi



Dr. Jawaher Al-Mudhahki

Dr Jawaher Al-Mudhahki has been the Chief Executive of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA-Bahrain) since 2008.

She began her career at the University of Bahrain in January 1988, where she held several positions, including Vice-President for Administration and Financial Affairs and as an advisor to the president.

She is active in a number of regional and international Boards, including the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA), the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), and the Arab Council for Universities' Quality Assurance and Accreditation.

She is a member in the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, the Higher Council for Training, a panel member in the committee of the "Women Empowerment Award" and a commissioner in the Commission of Prisoners and Detainees Rights.



Dr. Tariq Al-Sindi

Dr Tariq Al-Sindi presently serves as the General Director of the National Qualifications Framework at the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education and Training in the Kingdom of Bahrain (QQA).

He is currently the Secretary General of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), Secretary General of the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA), and board member of the Society of Academics.

Along with his 27-years-of-experience in teaching, research, and academic administration, Dr Tariq has also taken part in numerous institutional and program accreditation review teams in Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, he organised and facilitated various seminars and workshops in the area of quality assurance in different Arab countries and supervised students at the Master's and PhD level.

Draft programme for visit to NZQA in 2017:
Education and Training Quality Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain

Day 1

10.30am	Whakatau (welcome) and morning tea
11.20am	Presentation: Education and Training Quality Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm	NZQA: Overview – roles and functions
2.30pm	New Zealand Qualifications Framework, and Evaluative Quality Assurance Framework
3.30pm	Afternoon tea
3.45pm	Universities New Zealand – Academic Quality Agency Quality assurance of New Zealand’s universities
4.30pm	End of day reflection

Day 2

9.30am	Secondary school examinations
10.30am	Morning tea
10.45am	Qualifications Recognition Services
11.30am	International work programme
12.15pm	Lunch
1.00pm	Institute of Technology and Polytech visit (such as Whitireia, Porirua)
3.30pm	End of day reflection

Day 3

9.30am	University visit (Victoria or Massey)
11.30am	International Business Development
12.00pm	Lunch
1.00pm	Credit recognition and transfer, and the recognition of prior learning
1.45pm	Discussion on ‘Mapping of NZ and Bahrain’s NQFs’
2.30pm	Afternoon tea - End of programme reflection
3.00pm	Free time
6.00pm	Farewell dinner

File Note

Subject: Cooperation Arrangements signed outside of NZQA's statutory delegations

Date: 18 January 2018

The NZQA Board has delegated authority to the Chief Executive to sign documents committing to international arrangements under section 246(1)(h) & (i).

There are three current arrangements signed by others than the Chief Executive:

- Memorandum of Cooperation between with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the Philippine Commission on Higher Education – signed by the New Zealand Ambassador to the Philippines, David Strachan on 14 November 2017
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the South African Qualifications Authority – signed by Grant Klinkum, the Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance Division on 30 June 2017 in Paris.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) Kingdom of Bahrain and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) - signed by Grant Klinkum, the Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance Division on 1 March 2017 in Bahrain.

This has no effect on the validity of the arrangements for all intents and purposes as these signatories would have been considered by the other party to have authority to sign, so can be considered by NZQA to have had the ostensible authority to act on behalf of NZQA. However, as part of internal NZQA compliance under the Statuary Delegations Register only the Chief Executive has the delegated authority to sign the arrangements.

I note the above have been signed outside of NZQA's statutory delegations. However, I retrospectively approve the entry of NZQA into these arrangements.

If any of these arrangements is amended for any reason in the future, the Chief Executive will sign the new document.



Karen Poutasi

Chief Executive

A copy of this will be filed with each arrangement.