Reform of New Zealand qualifications (sub-degree vocational qualifications) and other credentials

The Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE) is creating a strong foundation for a vocational education system which is more responsive to the needs of learners and employers, with improved consistency of graduate outcomes and greater learner mobility.

NZQA engaged with key stakeholders from early 2020 and heard strong support for simplifying the qualifications system. Following formal consultation and submissions from over 400 stakeholders, decisions were made to adjust the qualification system to enable industry, employers and iwi to have greater influence through the newly established Workforce Development Councils (WDCs). To enact the decisions, the Minister of Education will introduce legislative proposals to amend the Education and Training Act 2020 later in 2021.

WDCs will be able to decide between using a single 'national curriculum' or endorsing programmes developed by providers.

Using a 'national curriculum' will lead to greater consistency of graduate skills, knowledge and attributes. Alternatively, a WDC may enable providers to develop unique programmes against a New Zealand qualification where industry sees the value in a diversity of graduate outcomes. In this situation, the WDC will endorse provider programmes prior to NZQA approval.

The building blocks of New Zealand qualifications will be newly developed skill standards. These will specify the learning outcomes and standard of performance required. Consistent use of skill standards will be important for both industry and learners who move between providers. Over time, skill standards will replace both unit standards and the wide range of courses, papers and modules developed by providers.

The new qualifications system will be introduced gradually as WDCs, Te Pūkenga, Regional Skills Leadership Groups and other actors increasingly fulfil their roles in the reformed vocational education system.

Other decisions to be enacted include allowing WDCs (as well as providers and others) to develop micro-credentials, replace training schemes with micro-credentials and formally include microcredentials n the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

With high level qualification arrangements clear, NZQA will work very closely with WDCs, education providers, iwi/Māori and other stakeholders over the detailed arrangements and rules related to new skill standards, qualification and programme approval processes and quality assurance arrangements in the new system.

Components of the proposed qualifications system include:

- Qualifications (and the associated skill standards) will continue to set out a clear pathway to the level of knowledge, skills and attributes that learners will have achieved upon graduation. A qualification includes information about what further education and employment opportunities the qualification could lead to.
- Skill standards will be developed by WDCs in collaboration with industry and training providers. Skill standards will form the building blocks of provider programmes or of any 'national curriculum'.
- Programmes will be developed by providers, endorsed by WDCs and approved by NZQA.
- 'National curriculum' (working title). Drawing on the skill standards for a New Zealand qualification, a 'national curriculum' will provide further context, structure and information to guide a provider's approach to teaching, and assessment. The WDC will facilitate a collaborative process so that a 'national curriculum' reflects the practical needs of industry and the critical perspectives of educators.
- Micro-credentials can be developed by WDCs or developed by education providers. Microcredentials will replace training schemes.
- Training schemes will no longer be available. NZQA will work with providers to grandparent training schemes out of the system over time.
- Training packages will be removed from the legislation.

Coverage: The use of skill standards and other arrangements for vocational education qualifications will apply to all sub-sectors. As per the existing legislation however, wananga may choose whether to use skill standards, except where they are offering work integrated learning. Wānanga may wish to be guided by WDC skill standards for campus-based programmes but would maintain āhuatanga Māori and tikanga Māori in their approach.

Industry

Specify industry training needs to WDCs

Specify labour market and skill supply needs to RSLGS

Collaborate on development of qualifications, standards and credentials

WDCs

Develop and set qualifications and skill standards, and develop micro-credentials Determine whether a New Zealand qualification
Endorse programmes developed by may have programmes or use a 'national curriculum'

providers if there is not a 'national curriculum'

Moderate assessment of standards and, where necessary, develop, set, maintain and moderate capstone assessments

- WDCs (and others) develop qualifications in collaboration with industry and providers
- NZQA approves and lists the qualification on the NZQF

- WDCs develop skill standards in collaboration with industry and providers
- NZQA approves and lists skill standards on the DAS

- Micro-credentials may be developed by providers or WDCs, and are approved by NZQA
- Providers may include skill standards in micro-credentials they develop. NZQA expects WDC-developed microcredentials to be comprised of skill standards

- WDCs determine whether a qualification will use a 'national curriculum'
- · 'National curriculum' development facilitated by WDCs in collaboration with providers (and, where appropriate with industry)

- Developed by providers where a WDC enables multiple programmes to be developed against a New Zealand qualification
- Endorsed by WDCs
- NZQA approves programmes

Educational Providers

Collaborate with WDCs over the development of qualifications, skill standards, and, where appropriate, micro-credentials

Develop and deliver provider programmes against New Zealand qualifications or develop teaching, learning and assessment to meet the 'national curriculum'

Deliver micro-credentials

Learners

Learners will receive more support while they are training, and Learners can move more easily between regions, providers and Learners will be able to continue training more easily if their will graduate with skills, knowledge and attributes sought by employers

modes of delivery

employment situation changes

Definitions

Develop

Refers to the process through which a qualification, programme or credential is created, including consultation.

Endorse

A statement by a WDC that a programme is aligned to a New Zealand qualification graduate profile and the associated skill standards and is therefore ready to be assessed by NZQA for programme approval.

Qualification Approval

Refers to the processes through which an application to develop the qualification, and the application to list the qualification are approved.

Refers to when NZQA adds a qualification, standard or credential to the DAS or the NZQF.

Programme Approval

Refers to the process that confirms a programme leading to a qualification listed on the NZQF is aligned with the qualification outcomes and is based on clear and consistent aims, content, and assessment practices, as per the criteria for programme approval.

Programme Accreditation

Is the status awarded under section 441 of the Education and Training Act 2020 when an education provider has shown that it is capable of delivering an approved programme leading to a qualification on the NZQF.







