

About the AQF

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporated the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. The AQF was first introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia encompassing higher education, vocational education and training and schools.

AQF levels

AQF levels and the AQF levels criteria are an indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF level 10 has the highest complexity.

The AQF level summaries are statements of the typical achievement of graduates who have been awarded a qualification at a certain level in the AQF.

Qualification type refers to the broad discipline-free nomenclature used in the AQF to describe each category of AQF qualification, for example, Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, Certificate III, Bachelor Degree.

Each AQF qualification type includes the requirements for AQF qualifications such as:

- the levels criteria
- the qualification type descriptor
- information about the responsibilities of qualification developers, accrediting authorities and issuing organisations.

The key reasons why we have AQF qualifications are to ensure national recognition and consistency as well as common understanding across Australia of what defines each qualification.

AQF level 6 (Advanced Diploma) criteria

Summary

Graduates at this level will have broad knowledge and skills for paraprofessional/highly skilled work and/or further learning.

Knowledge

Graduates at this level will have broad theoretical and technical knowledge of a specific area or a broad field of work and learning.

Skills

Graduates at this level will have a broad range of cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:

- analyse information to complete a range of activities
- interpret and transmit solutions to unpredictable and sometimes complex problems
- transmit information and skills to others

Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, judgement and defined responsibility:

- in contexts that are subject to change
- within broad parameters to provide specialist advice and functions

AQF level 7 (Bachelor Degree) criteria

Summary

Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning.

Knowledge

Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent theoretical and technical knowledge with depth in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.

Skills

Graduates at this level will have well-developed cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:

- analyse and evaluate information to complete a range of activities
- analyse, generate and transmit solutions to unpredictable and sometimes complex problems
- transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others

Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement and responsibility:

- in contexts that require self-directed work and learning
- within broad parameters to provide specialist advice and functions

AQF level 8 (Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma) criteria

Summary

Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning.

Knowledge

Graduates at this level will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.

Skills

Graduates at this level will have advanced cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:

- analyse critically, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities
- analyse, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems
- transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others

Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner.

AQF level 9 (Masters Degree) criteria

Summary

Graduates at this level will have specialised knowledge and skills for research, and/or professional practice and/or further learning.

Knowledge

Graduates at this level will have advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.

Skills

Graduates at this level will have expert, specialised cognitive and technical skills in a body of knowledge or practice to independently:

- analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories

- research and apply established theories to a body of knowledge or practice
 - interpret and transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, expert judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner.

AQF level 10 (Doctoral Degree) criteria

Summary

Graduates at this level will have systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice.

Knowledge

Graduates at this level will have systemic and critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge at the frontier of a discipline or area of professional practice.

Skills

Graduates at this level will have expert, specialised cognitive, technical and research skills in a discipline area to independently and systematically:

- engage in critical reflection, synthesis and evaluation
- develop, adapt and implement research methodologies to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice
- disseminate and promote new insights to peers and the community
- generate original knowledge and understanding to make a substantial contribution to a discipline or area of professional practice

Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner or scholar.

AQF Governance

The management of the AQF is delivered through the Australian Government Department of Education and Training in consultation with the states and territories. The Department of Education and Training monitors and maintains the AQF, supports its users and promotes the AQF and its role in Australia's education system. Expert consultative bodies are convened as required to advise Ministers on any AQF policy matters which arise.

These arrangements are the result of a decision of Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers in 2014 to disband the AQF Council and implement improved governance arrangements for the AQF. The AQF Council was originally established to deliver a review of the AQF, which culminated in the strengthened AQF.

Further information on AQF Levels - <https://www.aqf.edu.au/aqf-levels>

AQF FAQ's - <https://www.aqf.edu.au/faqs>