



**POLICY**

**ACCREDITATION OF FQF  
QUALIFICATIONS LEVELS 1 - 10**

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<b>Relevant legislation</b>	Higher Education Act 2008 Higher Education (Qualifications) Regulations 2010 Fiji National University (Amendment) Act 2010 (Act No. 58 of 2010) Higher Education (Qualifications) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 Revised Edition of the Laws (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2016 Higher Education (Amendment) Act 2017
<b>Related FHEC documents: procedures/guidelines, etc.</b>	2-1-Procedures: Accreditation of National Qualifications FQF 1- 6 2-2-Procedures: Accreditation of Provider Qualifications FQF 1 - 10 2-3-Procedures: Accreditation of University qualifications FQF 1- 10 2-2-ToR: Fiji Qualifications Council Policy 2-4: Industry Skills Advisory Committees (ISACs)

	2-1-Guidelines: Development and review of National Qualifications 1-1-Criteria: Quality Standards for Fiji Higher Education
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## 1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide for the management of accreditation of qualifications to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF) and are compatible with the knowledge and skills that are necessary for sustainable economic and social development.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This policy applies to all accredited FQF qualifications awarded in Fiji, including those that are awarded from overseas institutions which have been quality assured and are internationally recognised.
- 2.2 This policy will ensure partnering with the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), accreditation of qualifications, industry through assessment, moderation and Industry Standards Advisory Committees (ISACs), licensing recognition with professional groups and other stakeholders to ensure Fiji has a world-class qualifications system as well as high quality and credibility.
- 2.3 There are two categories of Qualifications; National Qualifications (NQs) and Provider Qualifications.
- 2.4 The accreditation and recording of qualification(s) is a quality assurance process to ensure that the accredited qualification meets the requirements of the FQF and can be recorded on the National Register for Fiji Higher Education.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

Fiji Qualifications Framework	It is an instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for levels of
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	learning achieved. Such a framework is used as a tool for standardising qualifications as well as a tool for regulating the use of titles for qualifications and standards.
Higher Education Institution (HEI)	A Higher Education Institution in or operating in Fiji that provides award-conferring post-secondary education.
Industry Standards Advisory Committees (ISACs)	Industry stakeholders and relevant bodies that are registered by FHEC and are responsible for the development of unit standards and qualifications
National Qualifications (NQs)	National Qualifications are packages of nationally recognised graduate profile and unit standards, which reflect a meaningful milestone or an end point on a learning pathway. National Qualifications are developed by Industry Standards Advisory Committees (ISACs).
Provider Qualification	Provider qualifications have been developed by a registered organisation and accredited or recorded by the FHEC.
Qualification	A qualification is formally accredited and specifies the required number and range of credits and such other requirements at specific levels of the Fiji Qualifications Framework.
Standards	The registered statement of desired education and training outcomes and their associated assessment criteria. These standards are components of a qualification; also known as subjects, units, modules, courses, papers, competencies, or unit standards. They are the smallest part of a qualification that can be separately assessed and certified.
Unit Standard	The prescribed learning outcomes as determined by industry for a job task.

#### 4.0 POLICY

##### *Overarching principles*

- 4.1 The accreditation process provides assurance that the qualifications accredited against the FQF meet its specifications and meet the requirements of the Quality Standards for Accreditation of FQF Qualifications 1 – 10.
- 4.2 The process for the accreditation of qualifications shall be transparent, fair, effective and responsive to the changing higher education environment and to the changing needs of the nation as well as of institutions, staff and stakeholders.
- 4.3 The process of assessing qualifications for accreditation shall be conducted by FHEC evaluators and a recommendation made to the Fiji Qualifications Council (FQC). The internal FHEC evaluators shall comprise at least two staff members who were not involved in the development, or who assisted developers (including the ISACs). The

internal FHEC evaluators may include other experts or stakeholders in the review if required

- 4.4 The FQC decides to accredit or not to accredit the qualification.
- 4.5 The criteria for assessing accreditation submissions includes the evaluation against the specifications of:
  - The Fiji Qualifications Framework; and
  - The Quality Standards for Accreditation of FQF Qualifications 1 – 10.
- 4.6 Accreditation submissions that do not meet these requirements cannot be accredited and entered on the National Register for Fiji Higher Education.
- 4.7 The accreditation of any qualification will be up to five years or less if need be, after which it will be reviewed through a re-accreditation process. Re-accreditation submissions are subject to the processes and criteria existing at the time of the review to ensure continued relevance.
- 4.8 The FHEC through the FQC prescribes the guidelines and procedures for assessing applications for the registration of qualifications. It also determines the criteria for assessing qualifications from time to time and it shall issue certificates of accreditation to the registered Higher Education Institution.
- 4.9 The FHEC shall prescribe the criteria for the use of 'National' and 'Fiji' in the titles of Qualifications on the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF). The title of the qualification shall be approved by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.
- 4.10 Accredited qualifications will conform to the prescribed titling conventions. Refer to Appendix 1.
- 4.11 Qualifications that have been developed by a registered Higher Education Institution and accredited by the FHEC may include the title and the name of the organisation that developed and owns the qualification.
- 4.12 National Qualifications accredited by the FHEC will include the title 'National Qualification'.
- 4.13 The FQC is the custodian of the FQF and delegates to the FHEC Secretariat the development, implementation and maintenance of the criteria and processes for the accreditation of qualifications on the FQF.
- 4.14 The FHEC shall maintain a register of accredited qualifications.

### ***Review and reaccreditation***

- 4.15 As the accreditation period is set:
- If the provider or the ISACs wish to maintain the accredited qualification, a further application for accreditation must be made at least three months prior to the end of the set period. The application must address all criteria.
  - If the University wishes to maintain the accredited qualification, the recording process applies as noted in the relevant procedure.

### ***Professional or Licensing Accreditation***

- 4.16 Some qualifications prepare learners for a career as practitioners in a particular field. Where a qualification is a recognised or required component of professional registration, or a licensing body, the body will have specific requirements relating to qualification structure and content.
- 4.17 A submission to the FHEC related to professional or licensing careers (or similar) will require to have professional or licensing endorsement prior to submitting the accreditation application. In addition, for qualifications level 7 – 10 are required to have gained international accreditation from relevant quality assurance regulators or professional associations and/or international peer review is undertaken.
- 4.18 The FHEC will, where appropriate, invite a representative of the professional registration body to participate in the FHEC's evaluation processes and will take the views of this representative into account in reaching its decisions on accreditation. The FHEC may involve a number of other bodies in the evaluation process. Where the FHEC considers that a qualification is of interest to a particular stakeholder group outside the requirements of professional registration, or if particular expertise is required, the FHEC may seek advice from representatives of stakeholder group, or experts in carrying out its evaluation of an application.

### ***Accreditation of overseas qualification***

- 4.19 Where an overseas qualification is to be offered in Fiji, the Fijian HEI will be required to provide evidence of accreditation of the qualification by an overseas agency and details of the approval process undertaken by that agency. If the criteria applied to the proposal are sufficiently similar to those of the FHEC and the process applied was rigorous, the FHEC may be prepared to approve the proposal or to negotiate an amended accreditation process. The FHEC will consider the potential for legal, professional or cultural requirements and concerns to impact on the acceptability of the qualification for Fiji conditions.
- 4.20 If the qualification is to be managed in conjunction with a Fiji-based organisation, a memorandum of co-operation between the partner organisations will be required. A memorandum of co-operation must specify responsibility for the qualification.

- 4.21 Accreditation approval does not confer the right to either partner to deliver and assess this qualification in Fiji. Amendment to the scope of the HEI register is required.

***Special review***

- 4.22 The FHEC retains the right to undertake a special review of the accreditation of a qualification. The FHEC will undertake a special review if it becomes aware of serious or ongoing concerns about the quality, relevance and/or stability of the accredited qualification.

***Changes to FQF-accredited qualifications***

- 4.23 Providers or ISACs may identify the need to make modifications or enhancements to accredited FQF qualifications during the accreditation period. The need for changes can result from ongoing stakeholder feedback (e.g. student evaluation, teaching staff evaluation, advisory committee recommendations), formal internal qualification review, and external factors (e.g. changes to legislation or changes to unit standards by standard-setting bodies (e.g. Industry Standards Advisory Committees (ISACs)).
- 4.24 There are two categories of changes: Category 1 and Category 2.
- 4.24.1 Category 1 changes relate to minor changes to the components of a qualification. They have no impact on the overall qualification title, level, credit value, graduate profile or learning outcomes. These changes generally include small editorials or corrections.
- 4.24.2 Category 2 changes affect the structure of the qualification and generally relate to the title, level, credits, graduate profile or learning outcomes of the qualification. These changes may also include additions or deletions of components of qualifications.
- 4.25 Both changes may result in a change to the qualification details that appear on the FQF qualifications register.
- 4.26 Request to the FHEC for any change must be supported by documentation and should include details and evidence of:
- Full details of the changes;
  - Rationale for the changes;
  - Internal consultation and support for the changes;
  - External consultation and support for the changes;
  - Transition arrangements for existing learners (where necessary); and
  - Internal formal approval for the changes (academic board or equivalent).
- 4.27 Category 1 changes will result in a change of version of the accreditation document. Category 2 changes may require re-accreditation processes to be implemented.

### ***Accreditation processes***

- 4.28 Accreditation processes vary according to whether they are to be National Qualifications, or Provider Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions, and those specifically from universities established under their own Act.
- 4.29 The accreditation process for the National Qualifications is outlined in the Procedure for Accreditation of National Qualifications.
- 4.30 The accreditation process for accreditation of Higher Education Institutions is included in the Procedures for Accreditation of Provider Qualifications FQF Levels 1 - 10.
- 4.31 The accreditation process for recording on the FQF of university qualifications is outlined in the Procedures for Accreditation of University Qualifications FQF Levels 1 – 10.
- 4.32 In regard to applicants for registration, the processes for registration and for accreditation of a provider qualification can occur concurrently. However, the certificate of accreditation will not be issued until the applicant has met registration requirements.

### **5.0 APPROVAL BY THE CHAIRPERSON, FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**



**Dr Milika Sobey**  
Chairperson  
Fiji Higher Education Commission

Date 24/01/2019

## APPENDIX 1: TITLING CONVENTIONS

### 1.0 Qualification Titles

1.1 Qualification titles shall adhere to the following general conventions for FQF qualifications:

- Certificate in ...;
- Diploma in ...;
- Bachelor of ...;
- Masters of ...; or
- Post Graduate Diploma in ...

1.2 Qualification titles should provide a concise, accurate and informative indication of the aims and outcomes of qualifications. Qualifications will generally use the title of the qualification awarded as a result of successful completion of the qualification. Qualification titles should be consistent with the requirements of the FHEC policies and the following conventions for naming qualifications. Use of the terms 'National' and 'Fiji' is protected in qualification titles and requires approval of the FHEC.

1.3 A qualification title is made up of two or three parts: a qualification type, a designator and if required, a qualifier.

Qualification Type	Designator	Qualifier	Qualification Title
Certificate	Business		Certificate in Business
Certificate	Computing	Software	Certificate in Computing (Software)
Diploma	Theology	Applied	Diploma in Applied Theology

### 2.0 Designators

2.1 A designator should identify the main disciplinary emphasis of the qualification and:

- Have wide national or international acceptability;
- Be necessary for national or international recognition of that qualification; or
- Be a requirement of a professional body that has a formal role in the approval of the qualification. For example: Certificate in Horticulture; Diploma in Computing.

### 3.0 Qualifiers

3.1 Qualifiers may be added to the title of the qualification and qualification if this improves general understanding of the qualification. A rationale is required to justify the use of a qualifier. Qualifiers must be placed after the qualification title.

3.2 A discipline qualifier may be added to indicate that the qualification and qualification has a tighter focus on a sub-field within the discipline. A discipline qualifier may also be used to indicate a pathway within a qualification (e.g. a major). This qualifier will be written in brackets following the designator.

For example: Diploma in Design (Computer Graphics).



- 3.3 Some qualifications may offer learners the option of concentrating on a particular sub-field without formally identifying this in a qualifier.
- 3.4 A focus qualifier such as Applied may be added to indicate a particular focus of a qualification and/or qualification.

For example: Diploma in Applied Theology.

- 3.5 A level qualifier such as Level 1 must be added at the end of the accredited qualification title for all FQF Certificates and Diplomas to clearly designate the FQF Qualification Type.

For example: Diploma in Electronics (Level 5).

- 3.6 An awarding institute qualifier may be added to Certificate and Diploma titles before the title of the qualification.

For example: BULA Institute Certificate in Naturopathy (Level 2).