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The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

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History

- Copenhagen Bologna seminar, March 2003
- Berlin Bologna Conference 2003
- WG on qualifications framework 2004
- Copenhagen Bologna seminar II, January 2005
- Bergen Bologna Conference, May 2005



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Qualifications Framework: Berlin communiqué

- Member States to elaborate a Framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems.....
- Elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the EHEA
-Shorter higher education.....
- Perspective of LLL



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Basic

- Qualifications are national according to national legislation
- Qualifications are articulated/located in national qualifications frameworks
- The 40 national frameworks are linked together through an alignment to an overarching framework of the EHEA



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National Qualifications Frameworks

- all qualifications
- systematic description
- coherent relationship
- internationally understood



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Why National Qualifications Frameworks

- Make explicit the purpose and aim of qualifications
- Delineate point of integration and overlap
- Provide a context for review and development of existing qualifications
- Provide a context for the design of new qualifications



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Principle elements

- Learning outcomes
- Competences
- Levels
- Credits
- Workload
- Profile



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Advices

- The development and review process for producing good NQFs are most effective when they involve all relevant stakeholders
- A NQF should indentify a clear nationally agreed set of purposes
- NQF should explicitly link to academic standards and to quality assurance systems (institutional/national)



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Framework for EHEA

- The EHEA framework is an overarching framework; a meta-framework or a framework for frameworks
- Not all national qualifications will correspond to the completion of the major cycles in the overarching framework



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Why overarching framework ?

International transparency

International recognition of qualifications

International mobility of learners and
graduates



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How overarching frameworks

Cycles

Descriptors of qualifications and learning
outcomes

Credit ranges in ECTS



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Cycles

Three principle cycles:

First cycle (bachelor, licencié etc.)

Second cycle (master etc.)

Third cycle (Ph.D. etc.)

Additional

Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle)



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Descriptors of qualifications and learning outcomes

Dublin descriptors (generic)

- Knowledge and understanding
- applying knowledge and understanding
- making judgements
- communication skills
- learning skills

Not subject specific



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Credit ranges in ECTS

Short cycle: approx. 120 ECTS

First cycle: 180-240 ECTS

Second cycle: 90-120 ECTS

Third cycle : not specified



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Recommendations and proposals

- The EHEA framework should consist of three main cycles, with additional provision for a short cycle within or linked to the first cycle
- The Dublin descriptors are adopted as the cycle descriptors
- Guidelines for the range of ECTS associated with the completion of each cycle
- Responsibility for the maintenance and development of the framework rests with BFUG



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Alignment of NQF to the EHEA- framework

- No external control but trust building
- Minimum criteria for the verification that a NQF are compatible with the EHEA framework
- Procedures for self-certification of compatibility
- Role of Quality Assurance



Criteria for verification 1

- The NQF and the body/bodies responsible for its development are designated by the national ministry for HE
- There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications in the NF and the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework
- The NF and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS credits



Criteria for verification 2

- The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the NF is transparent
- The NQA for HE refer to the NQF and are consistent with the Berlin communiqué and any subsequent communiqués agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process
- DS
- The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the NF are clearly determined and published



Procedures for self-certification 1

- The competent national body/bodies shall self-certify the compatibility of the NF with the European framework
- The self-certification process shall include the stated agreements of the QA-bodies of the country in question recognised through the Bologna Process
- The self-certification process shall involve international experts



Procedures for self-certification 2

- The self-certification and the evidence supporting it shall be published and shall address separately each of the criteria set out
- ENIC/NARIC shall maintain a public listing of States that have completed the self-certification process
- DS
- All signatories will complete the self-certification process 2010



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NQF and transparency instruments

Purposes:

- Improve the national and international recognition of qualifications
- Advance transparency
- Improve the mobility of qualified citizens



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Diploma Supplement

- DS will be able to locate qualifications against precise national and European frameworks
- The national framework shall be referenced in all DS
- The completion of the self-certification process shall be noted on DS issued subsequently



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Lifelong learning perspective

- Focus on the individual learner
- Challenge the traditional boundaries between different education sectors
- Similar developments in Bologna and Copenhagen Processes
- Lisbon strategy
- European Commission plans for a comprehensive EQF



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EU-Commission Group proposal

- 8 levels
- Level descriptors
- Credits
- QA



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EU-Commission Group proposal

Levels and level descriptors

- 1-2 School leaving
- 3-4 Vocational education and training
- 5-8 Higher Education, mostly



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EU-Commission Group proposal

Credits

- ECTS in operation
- ECVET under construction