

Cabinet Resolution No. (106) of 2024 Concerning the Adoption of the National Qualifications Framework

The Cabinet:

- Having reviewed the Constitution,
- And Federal Law No. (1) of 1972 Concerning the Competencies of Ministries and Powers of Ministers, and its amendments,
- And Cabinet Resolution No. (22) of 2013 Concerning the Adoption of the National Qualifications System,
- And based on the proposal of the Minister of Education and the approval of the Cabinet,

Has decided:

Article (1)

The "National Qualifications Framework" attached to this Resolution is adopted as a national reference for all qualifications in general education (including early education), higher education, and technical, vocational, and artistic education and training in the State.

Article (2)

Executive Resolutions

1. The Ministry of Education shall circulate the National Qualifications Framework to federal and local authorities, general and higher education institutions, technical and vocational education and training institutions, and relevant bodies concerned with education and training systems in the State, to be acted upon.
2. The Ministry of Education shall issue the necessary resolutions and guides for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework.

Article (3)

Repeals

Cabinet Resolution No. (22) of 2013 Concerning the Adoption of the National Qualifications System is hereby repealed, as is any provision that contravenes or conflicts with the provisions of this Resolution.

Article (4)

Publication and Entry into Force

This Resolution shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall come into force thirty (30) days after the date of its publication.

Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Prime Minister

Issued by us:

On: 3/ Rabi' al-Awwal/ 1446 H

Corresponding to: 6/ September / 2024 G

The National Qualifications Framework

Adopted by Cabinet Resolution No. (106) of 2024

Article (1)

Introduction

The United Arab Emirates seeks to achieve leadership in various fields and was a pioneer in the region in establishing an integrated qualifications system under Cabinet Resolution No. (22) of 2013 concerning the adoption of the National Qualifications System. The National Qualifications Framework in the UAE (QFEmirates) is an updated version of the National Qualifications System, which aims to assess the learning outcomes of each individual, providing opportunities for all members of society to continue their learning, training, and career advancement. The National Qualifications Framework is a significant step in this direction, supporting

lifelong learning, and promoting innovation and academic and professional excellence, which contributes to achieving the UAE's vision and priorities, and providing a skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of the knowledge-based economy and global competitiveness.

This framework enhances the recognition of learning acquired in formal, non-formal, and informal environments and is a fundamental tool for classifying qualifications in a consistent, outcome-based manner, which enhances the reliability of the educational system and contributes to improving the quality of education and training in the State. The updated framework features eight levels, each reflecting knowledge, skills, values, and responsibilities. This framework is also characterized by its comprehensiveness, as it describes and classifies diverse sets of qualifications for early education, general education, higher education, and technical and vocational education and training.

The National Qualifications Framework is based on sequential levels of learning outcomes offered through three pathways: general education (including early education), higher education, and technical and vocational education and training. Each level of this framework specifies the combination of knowledge, skills, and competencies required to obtain a specific qualification, ensuring the alignment of learning outcomes with the work requirements of changing economic sectors. This framework provides comprehensive information regarding the structure of qualifications in the State and defines the foundations required for their advancement, enabling their alignment with international qualification frameworks.

The National Qualifications Framework serves as a guide and reference tool for the public and private sectors, as well as for the authorities responsible for the development, offering, and oversight of national qualifications and standards.

Article (2)

Definitions

For the purposes of implementing the articles of this Resolution, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings assigned to them below, unless the context otherwise requires:

**National
Qualifications
Framework:**

A national reference and comprehensive guide for structuring qualifications in the United Arab Emirates and aligning with international qualification frameworks, consisting of eight levels that progress according to the nature and complexity of knowledge, skills, values, and responsibilities.

Credit Hour:

The unit of measurement adopted in the National Qualifications Framework. Each credit hour in theoretical education is equivalent to 15 learning hours, while in applied education it is equivalent to 30 learning and training hours, and in clinical training, it is equivalent to 36 to 40 work hours per week.

Level Descriptors:

A set of descriptive statements of learning outcomes that define the "eight" levels of the National Qualifications Framework. These statements fall into three "domains": "Knowledge," "Skill," and "Responsibility."

**Principal
Qualification:**

A full academic or technical/vocational qualification placed at one of the levels of the National Qualifications Framework, which a learner obtains after achieving the required learning outcomes according to the descriptors of that level.

**Partial
Qualification:**

A partial technical/vocational qualification placed at one of the levels of the National Qualifications Framework, which a learner obtains after achieving the required learning outcomes according to the descriptors of that level. This qualification can be stand-alone or composed of parts of principal qualifications. It is used for various purposes such as meeting job requirements or developing skills.

**Short Learning
Modules:**

A term for a type of partial qualification, which is a set of specific learning outcomes obtained by a learner in higher education or technical and vocational education and training according to transparent and specific criteria, aimed at improving and building individuals' skills and competencies in line with labor market needs.

Health Professions Programs:	Academic educational programs to obtain qualifications in medicine, dentistry, and doctor of pharmacy.
Apprenticeship:	A regular, dual educational program that combines theoretical education at an accredited educational and training institution with practical training at an employer's location, allowing individuals to gain practical experience and theoretical knowledge of a specific profession, leading to a recognized qualification upon completion of the program.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):	An assessment process aimed at evaluating the knowledge and skills an individual has acquired through prior learning and experience. This requires submitting all supporting evidence to fulfill the required learning outcomes at one of the framework's levels for assessment purposes.
Alignment:	Procedures for determining the compatibility of the National Qualifications Framework levels with their corresponding levels in international frameworks and determining the compatibility of the level of a qualification issued from outside the State with its corresponding levels in the National Qualifications Framework.

Article (3)

Objectives

The National Qualifications Framework aims to achieve a set of objectives that contribute to:

1. Improving the efficiency and quality of education in the State.
2. Aligning learning outcomes with labor market needs.
3. Facilitating the transition of learners between educational pathways locally and internationally.
4. Developing flexible education systems.
5. Promoting lifelong learning.

6. Providing an official reference for the structure of all qualifications and programs in the State to ensure transparency and ease.
7. Aligning with international qualification frameworks.
8. Enhancing future skills.

Article(4)

Levels of the National Qualifications Framework

The National Qualifications Framework in the United Arab Emirates (QFEmirates) is designed to encompass different educational pathways: general education (including early education), higher education, and technical and vocational education and training. It is based on eight sequential levels, where each level represents the learning outcomes that a learner must successfully achieve to obtain a specific recognized qualification at that designated level. This serves as a means to achieve a harmonious and consistent classification of qualifications, as the higher the framework level, the greater the complexity and depth of knowledge, skills, values, and responsibilities.

Learning outcomes are used as a common language in designing qualification frameworks, which facilitates alignment with international frameworks. Early education has been included within the general education pathway in the National Qualifications Framework, recognizing the importance of this stage in developing learners' basic knowledge and skills. The types of qualifications used in the National Qualifications Framework have been identified as shown in Table No. (1) of this Resolution. More than one qualification may exist at the same level, providing diversity and flexibility to meet the education and training needs in the State.

Table No. (1): Levels of the National Qualifications Framework

Qualification Title by Level			
Level	General Education	Higher Education	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Qualification Title by Level

Level	General Education	Higher Education	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
			* Level 8 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 8 Professional Certificate
7	-	* Doctorate or equivalent * Master's or equivalent * Postgraduate Diploma or equivalent	* Level 7 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 7 Professional Certificate
6	-	* Bachelor's or equivalent	* Level 6 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 6 Professional Certificate
5	-	* Higher Diploma or equivalent	* Level 5 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 5 Advanced Vocational Diploma * Level 5 Professional Certificate
4	-	* Diploma or equivalent	* Level 4 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 4 Vocational Diploma * Level 4 Professional Certificate
3	* General Secondary School Certificate and its equivalent	-	* Level 3 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 3 Professional Certificate
2		-	* Level 2 Technical / Vocational Qualification

Qualification Title by Level

Level	General Education	Higher Education	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
	* Intermediate Education and its equivalent		
1	* Basic Education	-	* Level 1 Technical / Vocational Qualification
0	* Early Education	-	-

Article (5)

Description of the National Qualifications Framework Levels

1. Elements of Level Descriptors:

They are a set of descriptive statements of learning outcomes that define the "eight" levels of the National Qualifications Framework. These statements fall into three "domains": "Knowledge," "Skill," and "Responsibility." Each level represents an integrated unit and must be read across the three domains to distinguish between one level and another.

Level: (0)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates basic knowledge of concepts, terms, and numbers and successfully distinguishes them.

Skill: Comprehends information and activities assigned to them.

Responsibility: Demonstrates initial awareness of basic concepts and terms, in addition to learning the fundamentals of societal and professional values.

Level: (1)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates elementary knowledge in a specific field, and knowledge of simple facts, procedures, and ideas necessary to complete clearly defined tasks or address simple problems within a work domain or specific specialization. This includes basic knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic operations.

Skill: Applies basic practical skills to perform simple and routine tasks and procedures under supervision and within a specific context, which include cognitive, numerical, and basic communication skills.

Responsibility: Learns or works under supervision and with the participation of colleagues in a structured context that involves demonstrating simple awareness and understanding of tasks within a work or study context, and performing them professionally.

Level: (2)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates theoretical knowledge and knowledge of basic facts and procedures in a specific field of work or learning, in addition to sufficient language knowledge to read and formulate a short, coherent text, and knowledge of arithmetic to understand complete mathematical operations.

Skill: Applies basic cognitive skills and processes that enable them to select and use information, tools, and methods necessary to solve simple problems within a predictable context.

Responsibility: Demonstrates limited autonomy in making simple decisions and performing basic tasks professionally within a work or study context.

Level: (3)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates sufficient language knowledge to understand and produce an extended, coherent text, in addition to sufficient knowledge of arithmetic to understand and create mathematical representations, and/or has basic knowledge that they apply in a practical context in a specific field.

Skill: Applies cognitive skills, processes, and concepts to interpret information and act upon it, analyze and provide solutions to specific problems, and handle unexpected situations using known solutions.

Responsibility: Assumes responsibility for completing tasks in work or study and adapts behavior appropriately to circumstances to solve problems, cooperates with others, and demonstrates ethical behavior and responsible citizenship.

Level: (4)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates a broad range of theoretical knowledge and knowledge of facts, concepts, processes, procedures, and/or techniques necessary to collect, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas from a range of sources.

Skill: Applies a broad range of cognitive, technical, and conceptual skills, including creative methods, to interpret and respond to familiar and unfamiliar problems, and sufficient communication skills to present a clear and coherent presentation of information and ideas in writing or orally.

Responsibility: Demonstrates self-responsibility in unexpected circumstances, supervises the routine work of others, with some responsibility for evaluation and improvement, and shows evidence of lifelong learning, responsible citizenship, and respect for others.

Level: (5)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates comprehensive and specialized theoretical knowledge and knowledge of facts, in addition to a critical understanding of concepts for analyzing and constructing data and information.

Skill: Applies comprehensive, specialized, technical, and creative skills to solve abstract problems and analyze and construct information and ideas.

Responsibility: Exercises management and supervision in situations where unexpected change occurs, reviews and develops their own and others' performance in a work or study context, and participates in lifelong learning, leadership, management, entrepreneurship, cooperation, ethical behavior, responsible citizenship, and coexistence with others.

Level: (6)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates advanced theoretical knowledge (facts and procedures) and a broad knowledge of concepts, and also demonstrates a critical understanding of the principles, concepts, and methods of inquiry of a specific discipline to perform critical analysis and implement appropriate problem-solving techniques.

Skill: Applies advanced cognitive, procedural, and technical skills to perform evidence-based critical analysis, construct information, analyze concepts and information, solve specialized problems in predictable and new contexts, and/or contribute to enriching intellectual inquiry.

Responsibility: Manages complex technical or professional activities or projects, assumes responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable contexts, assumes responsibility for managing the professional development of individuals and groups, and participates in the process of lifelong learning, leadership and management, entrepreneurship, cooperation, ethical behavior, responsible citizenship, and coexistence with others.

Level: (7)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates a specialized, integrated, and broad theoretical, practical, and factual understanding of a range of knowledge, in addition to a critical awareness of qualitative and quantitative data collection, interpretation, and analysis methods, which aid in formulating and developing a flexible and effective strategy for dealing with concepts and theories and achieving goals.

Skill: Applies specialized cognitive and practical skills to integrate, analyze, construct, and evaluate complex information, plan and conduct independent research, and generate creative solutions to develop new knowledge and procedures and integrate knowledge from different fields.

Responsibility: Demonstrates creativity and initiative in new situations in work or study, demonstrates a high level of accountability and autonomy, assumes responsibility for self-learning, and demonstrates leadership, management, entrepreneurship, innovation, cooperation, ethical behavior, responsible citizenship, and coexistence with others.

Level: (8)

Knowledge: The learner demonstrates deep knowledge of research skills and a strategic understanding of concepts, theories, and their application in a specific field that helps in solving complex challenges in a flexible and innovative way to create new and proactive solutions.

Skill: Applies cognitive skills that demonstrate a high level of expertise, advanced specialized skills to build, evaluate, and plan strategic thinking and develop ideas at high levels of abstraction, cognitive skills, and intellectual autonomy for critical thinking, evaluating current knowledge, and adheres to systematic research methods to build new knowledge or to expand and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice.

Responsibility: Demonstrates clear ability, autonomy, scientific and professional integrity, and a continuous commitment to developing new or innovative ideas or methods to stay at the forefront in a work or study context, including research, leadership and lifelong learning, management, entrepreneurship, cooperation, ethical behavior, responsible citizenship, and coexistence with others.

2. Unit of Measurement:

The unit of measurement adopted in the National Qualifications Framework is the "Credit Hour." It is used to determine the amount of time and effort required to meet the requirements for obtaining a specific qualification according to the level specified in the National Qualifications Framework, and it reflects the amount of theoretical and applied learning required.

The Ministry of Education shall undertake the development and updating of the necessary policies, guides, and standards to determine the matrix of credit hours for each qualification according to its specified level in the National Qualifications Framework.

Article (6)

Types of Qualifications

The National Qualifications Framework in the United Arab Emirates (QFEmirates) includes a diverse range of qualifications developed according to labor market needs at each of its levels. They vary in content and size and cover multiple domains of knowledge, skills, values, and responsibilities. They are awarded to individuals who achieve a specific set of learning outcomes, which contributes to the integrated development of their skills and abilities in alignment with labor market requirements.

1. Principal Qualifications:

Principal qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework are defined in the higher education pathway from Level 4 to Level 8, providing various academic degrees. Principal qualifications for the technical and vocational education and training pathway are also defined from Level 1 to Level 8 as shown in Table No. (1) of this framework.

2. Partial Qualifications:

Partial qualifications are developed in the technical and vocational education and training pathway from Level 1 to Level 8. The Ministry of Education is responsible for establishing the guides and policies for obtaining these qualifications.

3. Short Learning Modules:

Short learning modules allow individuals to obtain a certificate awarded at different levels of the National Qualifications Framework in the higher education pathway and the technical and vocational education and training pathway. These modules aim to grant new skills to learners or to improve or build individuals' skills and competencies in line with the changing needs of the labor market. The Ministry of Education is responsible for activating them by developing and updating the necessary guides and policies and circulating them to the competent authorities.

Article (7)

Admission Requirements for Qualifications

Table No. (2): Admission Requirements for Principal Qualifications in the Higher Education Pathway:

Level	Principal Qualification	Admission Requirements for the Qualification
8	* Doctorate or equivalent	* Holding a qualification at Level 7, or at Level 6 with special conditions, in addition to independent academic research.
7	* Master's or equivalent	* To enroll in Master's programs, holding a qualification at Level 6 is required, in addition to academic research where applicable.
	* Postgraduate Diploma or equivalent	* To enroll in Postgraduate Diploma programs or equivalent, holding a qualification at Level 6 is required.
6	* Bachelor's or equivalent	* To enroll in health professions programs in medicine, dentistry, and doctor of pharmacy, holding a General Secondary School Certificate is required.
		* Holding a General Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent*
5	* Higher Diploma or equivalent	* Holding a General Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent**
4	* Diploma or equivalent	* Holding a General Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent

Terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Education apply in the case of transferring credit hours from Level 4 and 5 (*)

Terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Education apply in the case of transferring credit hours from Level 4 (**)

Table No. (3): Admission Requirements for Principal Qualifications in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Pathway:

Level	Principal Qualification	Admission Requirements for the Qualification
8	* Level 8 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 8 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 7 or its equivalent, or at Level 6 or its equivalent with special conditions, in addition to independent research or project where applicable.
7	* Level 7 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 7 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 6 or its equivalent.
6	* Level 6 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 6 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 3 or a General Secondary School Certificate or their equivalent*
5	* Level 5 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 5 Advanced Vocational Diploma * Level 5 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 3 or a General Secondary School Certificate or their equivalent**
4	* Level 4 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 4 Vocational Diploma * Level 4 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 3 or a General Secondary School Certificate or their equivalent***

Level	Principal Qualification	Admission Requirements for the Qualification
3	* Level 3 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 3 Professional Certificate	* Holding a qualification at Level 2 or its equivalent, or as determined by the competent authority.
2	* Level 2 Technical / Vocational Qualification * Level 1 Technical / Vocational Qualification	* Holding a qualification at Level 1 or its equivalent, or as determined by the competent authority.
1		* As determined by the competent authority.

(*) Terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Education apply in the case of transferring credit hours from Level 4 and 5.

(**) Terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Education apply in the case of transferring credit hours from Level 3 and 4.

(***) Terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Education apply in the case of transferring credit hours from Level 3.

Article (8)

Coding of Qualifications in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Pathway

Qualifications are coded according to a national coding system. This system is an important tool for enhancing governance, ensuring the quality of qualifications and national standards, and providing information about the qualification in terms of type, level, economic sector, specialization, and more.

Article (9)

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is a fundamental concept in the National Qualifications Framework in the United Arab Emirates (QFEmirates). The framework supports this principle by recognizing acquired learning, whether formal, non-formal, or informal, which motivates and encourages individuals to continuously develop their skills and knowledge and to continue learning to keep pace with the rapid changes in the labor market and promote innovation, which in turn contributes to achieving the knowledge-based economy and sustainable development. And to enhance and activate initiatives related to the principle of lifelong learning.

The Ministry of Education shall undertake the development and updating of the necessary policies, guides, and standards for the recognition of prior learning, transition between educational pathways, and other flexible educational systems.