



**Sultanate of Oman
Oman Authority for
Academic Accreditation and
Quality Assurance of Education**

**POLICY FOR THE GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

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Contact Person	Directorate General of National Qualifications Framework (DGNQF) Email: OQF@aaaqa.gov.om		
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**Sultanate of Oman
Oman Authority for
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**سلطنة عُمان
الهيئة العمانية للاعتماد
الأكاديمي وضمان جودة التعليم**

POLICY FOR THE GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the stakeholders comprehend the different roles and responsibilities associated with the Governance, Management and Implementation of the OQF.

The OAAAQA is responsible for the GMI of the OQF:

Governance of the OQF is defined as `the overall responsibility for the OQF, including setting the strategic direction and approving the overarching policies for the framework`.

Management of the OQF is defined as `ensuring all OQF activities are carried out effectively and efficiently following the OAAAQA Policies relating to the Oman Qualifications Framework`.

Implementation of the OQF is defined as `carrying out all OQF activities, including the processes for Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment; promoting and disseminating the OQF to stakeholders; supporting all Awarding Bodies offering qualifications in Oman, and maintaining the National Register of Qualifications`.

2. Scope

This policy specifies the principles for the GMI of the OQF and sets out the roles and responsibilities of the OAAAQA.

2.1 Users of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- The Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education

This policy may also be of interest to the following stakeholders:

- The Ministry of Education
- The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation
- The Ministry of Labour

- The Oman Medical Specialty Board
- Other Ministries and Government Bodies
- Awarding Bodies for Education and Training Qualifications
- Education and Training Providers
- Employers
- Professional Bodies
- Other Interested Parties¹

3. Policy Statement

The policy clarifies the different roles and responsibilities associated with the GMI to support the following general principles:

- The GMI is transparent, trust-building, effective and efficient
- OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF are fair and applied impartially
- Information relating to the OQF is accessible
- The OAAAQA acts with accountability, by serving all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities for the Governance, Management and Implementation of the OQF

The specific responsibilities of the OAAAQA for the GMI are given in Table 1:

Table 1: OAAAQA Responsibilities	
Governance	OAAAQA Board
Management	OAAAQA Executive Office
Implementation	Directorate General of the National Qualifications Framework

3.1.1 Directorate General of the National Qualifications Framework (DGNQF)

The DGNQF is responsible for:

- Developing OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF
- Managing OQF External Reviewers (OQFERs) appointment to, or removal from, the National Register of External Reviewers (National ER Register)
- Forming OQF Listing or Alignment Panels
- Supporting stakeholders to implement the OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF
- Developing, reviewing and updating the OQF and all related documentation

¹ E.g., learners and their families, people looking for employment, employees looking for a better job or a career progression, anybody who is interested in the economic and social development of Oman.

- Ensuring relevant documents relating to the OQF are available on the OAAAQA website
- Implementing the Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing, Re-Alignment and OQF Appeals processes in compliance with the OAAAQA Policies
- Ensuring the National Register of Qualifications (NRQ) is accurate and up-to-date
- Preparing a yearly (annual) report on the outcomes of the Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment processes
- Implementing the OAAAQA Board directions regarding the development and review of the OQF
- Forming and/or disbanding, as required, OQF Panels, OQF Appeals Committees and working groups
- Monitoring the implementation of the OQF
- Developing and implementing OQF communication strategies and plans
- Developing proposals for the OAAAQA fees relating to OQF activities

3.1.2 OAAAQA Executive Office

The OAAAQA CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring the implementation of the OQF is effective and efficient
- Reviewing OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF
- Approving OQF External Reviewers (OQFERs) appointment to, or removal from the National ER Register
- Considering Second Drafts of the Listing or Alignment Evaluation Report and Re-Listing and Re-Alignment Review Report for approval as the Final Reports
- Approving OQF Appeal Committee Members (or longlists)
- Reviewing OQF developments and updates
- Submitting OQF documentation requiring approval to the OAAAQA Board

3.1.3 OAAAQA Board

The OAAAQA Board is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction of the OQF
- Approving:
 - Further developments of the OQF
 - OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF
 - The yearly (annual) report on the OQF
 - Listing and Alignment outcomes, including the placement of qualifications on the NRQ

- Re-Listing and Re-Alignment outcomes, including the continued placement of qualifications on the NRQ or the removal of qualifications from the NRQ
- Fees for all OQF activities
- Issuing decisions that support the OQF management and implementation
- Receiving information and updates on OQF appeal applications

4. Procedure

The steps to be followed in the implementation of this policy are given in this section.

4.1 Directorate General of the National Qualifications Framework (DGNQF)

The Director General of the DGNQF:

- Carries out OAAAQA Board decisions on:
 - The implementation of the OQF
 - Directions on future developments
 - Reviews of the OQF
- Develops, reviews and updates the OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF and other OQF documentation, as required
- Considers feedback from stakeholders, developments in the education and training sectors (locally and internationally) and other relevant national agendas to update OQF documentation, as required
- Submits OQF documentation, requiring approval from the OAAAQA Board to the OAAAQA CEO for review and feedback
- Updates the OAAAQA CEO on matters that may affect the implementation of the OQF, including the potential impact of national and international developments
- Implements the processes for Listing and Alignment of qualifications following the OAAAQA Policies for:
 - Listing Qualifications on the OQF
 - The Alignment of Foreign and International Qualifications to the OQF
 - The Quality Assurance of the OQF
- Implements the processes for Re-Listing and Re-Alignment following the OAAAQA Policies for the:
 - Re-Listing and Re-Alignment of qualifications on the OQF
 - Quality Assurance of the OQF
- Reviews applications for potential OQFERs following the OAAAQA Policy on the Management of OQF External Reviewers and submits recommendations to the OAAAQA CEO for consideration of approval

- Manages the appointment of approved OQFERs to the National ER Register and ensures that all newly appointed OQFERs are trained in the OQF processes
- Supports and monitors the performance of OQFERs following the OAAAQA Policy on the Management of OQF External Reviewers and, if required, submits recommendation on the removal of OQFERs from the National ER Register to the OAAAQA CEO for consideration of approval
- Directs OQF Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment Panels and other stakeholders, as required, to use the OQF forms and templates developed by the DGNQF, to ensure consistency of the OQF processes
- Submits OQF documentation requiring approval from the OAAAQA CEO timeously
- Prepares all documentation on the outcomes for Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing or Re-Alignment for consideration of approval from the OAAAQA Board
- Maintains the NRQ, ensuring it is accurate and up-to-date by:
 - Placing newly Listed or Aligned qualifications on it
 - Withdrawing Listed or Aligned qualifications that are:
 - No longer offered by the Awarding Body
 - Not approved for Re-Listing or Re-Alignment as they no longer comply with the Listing or Alignment Criteria
- Provides support, guidance and capacity building training on the OQF for Awarding Bodies and other stakeholders, as required
- Establishes a robust institutional quality assurance system to implement the Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment processes
- Prepares an annual (yearly) report on the outcomes of all OQF evaluations and reviews² and the progress of the OQF implementation for the OAAAQA Board for approval and publication on the OAAAQA website
- Ensures relevant OQF documentation, including policies, procedures and forms, are accessible on the OAAAQA website
- Implements the OQF process for appeals against the outcome of Listing and Alignment evaluations and Re-Listing and Re-Alignment reviews, including amending the Final Reports based on the decisions of the OQF Appeal Committee, where applicable
- Manages future developments and reviews of the OQF as directed by the OAAAQA CEO and/or OAAAQA Board

² Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment.

- Monitors the implementation of the OQF
- Develops and implements communication strategies and plans for the national and international promotion of the OQF
- Develops proposals, as required, for fees for OQF activities for review by the OAAAQA CEO and consideration of approval by the OAAAQA Board

4.2 OAAAQA Executive Office

The OAAAQA CEO:

- Oversees the implementation of the OQF and provides support to the DGNQF, as required
- Reviews and provides feedback on OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF, proposals for fees and other relevant OQF documentation requiring approval from the OAAAQA Board
- Reviews and considers for approval Listing and Alignment Evaluation Reports and Re-Listing and Re-Alignment Review Reports
- Submits OQF documentation requiring approval to the OAAAQA Board timeously
- Receives updates from the DGNQF on matters such as the:
 - Potential impact of national and international developments in education and training on the OQF
 - Implementation of the OQF
 - Feedback on the OQF from Awarding Bodies and other stakeholders
 - Feedback on the performance of the OQFERs and OQF Review Directors (OQFRDs)

Where appropriate, provides recommendation to the DGNQF on the course of action that it should take on the above matters:

- Takes forward OAAAQA Board decisions on the management and implementation of the OQF
- Considers for approval, recommendations from the DGNQF on OQFERs' appointment to, or removal from the National ER Register

4.3 OAAAQA Board

The OAAAQA Board:

- Provides strategic direction for the OQF, taking into account national and international developments in education and training, feedback from Awarding Bodies and other stakeholders and recommendations from the OAAAQA Executive Office and the DGNQF
- Receives updates on all OQF developments requiring approval
- Considers for approval the recommended outcomes of Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment and, where appropriate, the placement or removal of qualifications on the NRQ

- Approves the (yearly) annual report on the OQF³
- Considers for approval, fees for:
 - Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment applications
 - Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment appeals
 - Capacity building workshops on the OQF Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment processes
- Provides support, as required, to the DGNQF and the OAAAQA CEO to meet the obligations for the management and implementation of the OQF⁴
- Directs on future developments of the OQF such as the development of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), referencing to other national, regional or international qualifications frameworks, research on the impact of the OQF and periodic reviews of the OQF

Members must declare any conflict of interest with an Awarding Body's submission for Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing or Re-Alignment.

5. Abbreviations

NRQ	National Register of Qualifications
OAAAQA	Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education
OQF	Oman Qualifications Framework
OQFER	Oman Qualifications Framework External Reviewers
OQFRD	Oman Qualifications Framework Review Directors
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning

6. Definitions

Accreditation	A formal, periodic, external quality assurance process, undertaken by a national or international body with a formal remit to undertake assessment of educational institutions and/or programmes, which determines whether or not a defined set of standards has been met. The assessment body is
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³ See OAAAQA Policy for Listing Qualifications on the OQF, section 4.7.

⁴ For example, providing direction to the DGNQF regarding challenging situations that may arise concerning the management and implementation of the OQF.

	external to- and independent from- the institution. Accredited status is conferred by this body for a defined period of time ⁵
Alignment [of a qualification to the OQF]	An evaluation of a Foreign or International qualification against the Alignment Criteria and the OQF Level Descriptors to determine the OQF Level that the qualification aligns to and, if applicable, the comparable OQF Credit Value of the entire qualification
Awarding Body	An organisation that issues education or training awards following formal assessment (for example, Academic Higher Education Institutions and their Affiliates, Technological Institutions, Professional Bodies and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Providers) ⁶
Evaluation [of Listing or Alignment]	A systematic method of examination of each module comprising a qualification to determine the extent to which the entire qualification meets the criteria as set out in the relevant OAAAQA Policy together with the qualification's OQF Level and OQF Credit Value
Foreign and International Qualifications	Foreign qualifications relate to qualifications awarded in a country other than Oman (for example, a United Kingdom Awarding Body). International qualifications relate to qualifications awarded by an International Awarding Body (for example, Cisco and Microsoft)
Governance [of the OQF]	The overall responsibility for the OQF, including setting the strategic direction and approving the overarching policies for the framework
Implementation [of the OQF]	Carrying out all OQF activities, including the processes for Listing, Alignment, Re-Listing and Re-Alignment; promoting and disseminating the OQF to stakeholders; supporting all Awarding Bodies offering qualifications in Oman, and maintaining the National Register of Qualifications
Institution	Education or training provider for schools, academic, technological, professional and technical and vocational qualifications
Level Descriptors [of the OQF]	A set of progressive statements, which describe the expected outcomes at each level of the OQF in regard to the six characteristics of Knowledge; Skills; Communication, Numeracy, Information Communication Technology Skills;

⁵ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 19.04.2021).

⁶ Adapted from <http://qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/#a>.

	Autonomy and Responsibility; Employability and Values; and Learning to Learn
Listing [a qualification on the OQF]	An evaluation of an Omani qualification against the Listing Criteria and the OQF Level Descriptors to determine the OQF Level and the OQF Credit Value of the entire qualification
Management [of the OQF]	Ensuring all OQF activities are carried out effectively and efficiently following the OAAAQA Policies relating to the Oman Qualifications Framework
Module	A component of a qualification. Also known as course or unit by some Awarding Bodies
National Register of Qualifications [NRQ]	An online official record of all nationally recognised qualifications Listed on, or Aligned to, the OQF. Managed by the DGNQF, the NRQ is available to stakeholders and the general public. Submission and evaluation of Listing and Alignment applications are carried out through the NRQ online system, allowing for secure storage and easy retrieval of documentation
Notional Learning Hours	The volume of learning estimated to be required by a typical learner at a specified level to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the units, modules or courses that comprise a qualification
Oman Qualifications Framework [OQF]	An instrument to describe, compare and classify qualifications from all sectors of education and training in Oman. It is based on one set of generic Level Descriptors, which describe the expected outcomes at each of its ten levels. The OQF provides a reference point for qualifications delivered and awarded in Oman; the comparison between Omani qualifications and Foreign or International qualifications; and the Recognition of Prior Learning
OQF Credit Value	The number of OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours, which are allocated to units, modules, courses and qualifications for learning that is verified through reliable and valid assessment
OQF Level	An indicator of relative demand, complexity, depth of knowledge and learner autonomy as described in the OQF Level Descriptors ⁷

⁷ Adapted from D Gosling and J Moon, *How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria* (London: Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer, SEEC Office, 2001).

Placement [of a qualification on the NRQ]	The inclusion of a qualification on the National Register of Qualifications following the nine-stage Listing or Alignment process, which includes a Proposal, Recommendation, Verification and Approval of the OQF Level and OQF Credit Value of the qualification
Programme	A set of units, modules or courses, which are designed to lead to a qualification on a national qualifications framework
Qualification	An award issued by an Awarding Body when, following established standards, the Awarding Body determines that the learner has achieved the Learning Outcomes of all the units, modules or courses of the programme
Quality Assurance	The implementation of planned and systematic processes and systems, either internal or external and independent to an educational institution, that assess the institution's programmes, services and activities as well as the processes that support these, in relation to relevant standards/benchmarks/frameworks ⁸
Recognition of Prior Learning	The process of assessing a learner's application for OQF Credit on the grounds of learning that was previously acquired through formal, informal and/or non-formal learning
Re-Listing or Re-Alignment	A review process for Listed and Aligned qualifications to ensure that the Listing or Alignment Criteria were maintained throughout the delivery of the qualification and no major changes were made to the Learning Outcomes of the units, modules or courses that impacted on the OQF Level and/or OQF Credit Value of the entire qualification
Stakeholder	Any party that has an interest in the activities of the OQF ⁹

7. References

Gosling, D and J Moon, *How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria* (London: Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer, SEEC Office, 2001).

⁸ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 19.04.2021).

⁹ Adapted from OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 13.09.2018).

8. Document History

Document History				
Version	Date Approved	Circulation	Approved by	Brief Description
1	18 May 2022	-	OAAAQA Board	This first version contained the procedure for the Policy for the Governance, Management and Implementation of the Oman Qualifications Framework.