



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

**POLICY FOR THE ALIGNMENT OF FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS TO THE OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

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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 ALIGNMENT OF FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS TO THE OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a common approach for the Alignment of Foreign and International qualifications to the Oman Qualifications Framework (OQF) to ensure the evaluation for Alignment is carried out consistently and that all Aligned qualifications, placed on the National Register of Qualifications (NRQ) meet the Alignment Criteria.

Alignment is defined as `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`.

Foreign qualifications are qualifications awarded by an Awarding Body from a country other than Oman. International qualifications are qualifications awarded by an International Awarding Body (e.g., Cisco and Microsoft).

This policy sets out the:

- Benefits of a common approach to Alignment
- Alignment Criteria
- Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

This policy should be read in conjunction with the OAAAQA Policy for the Quality Assurance of the OQF.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Alignment of Foreign and International qualifications, delivered in Oman, from all sectors of education and training. Alignment to the OQF is mandatory¹ and applies to new and existing Foreign and International qualifications:

- Owned and/or awarded by a Foreign or International Awarding Body

¹ Royal Decree 9/2021

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- Developed by an Omani education or training provider and awarded by a Foreign or International Awarding Body
- Jointly developed by an Omani education or training provider and a Foreign or International Awarding Body, awarded by the Foreign or International Awarding Body
- Training certificates, developed by employers, awarded by a Foreign or International Awarding Body

From the date of the OQF implementation, Foreign and International Awarding Bodies delivering or planning to deliver a qualification in Oman must apply for the Alignment of the qualification to the OQF:

- Within 5 years, for qualifications currently offered in Oman
- Before delivery, for qualifications not currently offered in Oman

2.1 Users of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- The Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education
- Foreign and International Awarding Bodies of Education and Training Qualifications
- Education and Training Providers that award Foreign or International Qualifications
- Foreign and International Professional Bodies

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
- Education and Training Providers
- Employers
- Other Interested Parties²

3. Policy Statement

Alignment is the process of evaluating a Foreign or International qualification against the Alignment Criteria and the OQF Level Descriptors to determine the OQF Level of Alignment and the comparable

² 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.

OQF Credit Value, if applicable, before the placement of the qualification on the Alignment section of the NRQ.

3.1 Alignment Criteria

The Foreign or International Awarding Body must:

- Own and/or award the programme that leads to the qualification
- Be quality assured/accredited by a recognised external quality assurance agency
- Have robust institutional quality assurance measures in place, ensuring comparability with that required by Omani Awarding Bodies for the institutional license
- Have arrangements in place for communicating with each education or training provider delivering the qualification in Oman

The Foreign or International qualification must have:

- A programme license from the relevant licensing body, as required by the Omani licensing regulations
- Quality assurance measures in place
- Clear Learning Outcomes that are subject to quality-assured summative assessment

3.2 Benefits of a Common Approach to the Alignment of Foreign and International Qualifications Delivered in Oman

The Alignment of Foreign and International qualifications to the OQF is a matter of professional judgment by those who have knowledge, skills and experience in the relevant subject, discipline occupation or profession and knowledge of the OQF. A common approach to Alignment provides the following benefits:

- Informs Foreign and International Awarding Bodies of the quality assurance arrangements required to meet the Alignment Criteria
- Ensures fairness and consistency of the Alignment process
- Develops and increases mutual trust and understanding of the OQF for Foreign or International Awarding Bodies whose qualifications are being, or may be, delivered in Oman

3.3 OQF Level

OQF Level is defined as 'an indicator of relative demand, complexity, depth of knowledge and learner autonomy as described by the OQF Level Descriptors'.³

³ 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).

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Derived from the range of formal qualifications in Oman, the OQF has ten Levels, which increase in demand to reflect progression in learning; Level 1 is for elementary education and training and Level 10 is for the most complex, at the forefront in the development of new knowledge and skills.

The OQF Level of Alignment of a qualification is determined through an evaluation of the modules that comprise the qualification, against the Alignment Criteria and the OQF Level Descriptors. Alignment enables comparability of a Foreign or International qualification to an Omani qualification at the same OQF Level.

3.4 OQF Credit

OQF Credit is defined as 'a numerical indicator of the volume of learning, awarded for the achievement of all the Learning Outcomes of a unit, module, course and/or qualification, expressed in either OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours'.

Both OQF Credit Points and OQF Credit Hours are based on notional learning hours defined as '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'.

The calculation of notional learning hours includes all the learning activities needed to achieve the Learning Outcomes. Examples of activities include, but are not exclusive to, class/lecture contact time; laboratory work; workshops, self-study; research; homework; fieldwork; assignments; preparation for assessment and assessment.

As OQF Credit indicates the size or volume of the learning required to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the modules that comprise the qualification, it can be used to describe and compare qualifications.

3.4.1 OQF Credit Points

- One OQF Credit Point equates to ten notional learning hours
- Whole OQF Credit Points must be allocated, not fractions
- A minimum of four OQF Credit Points (minimum 40 notional learning hours) is required for a qualification to be Aligned to the OQF and placed on the Alignment section of the NRQ

3.4.2 OQF Credit Hours

- One OQF Credit Hour corresponds to three hours per week for one semester (a minimum of 14 weeks)

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- Based on a 14-week semester, one OQF Credit Hour equates to a minimum of 42 notional learning hours
- Each OQF Credit Hour comprises a combination of activities, for example, this may be, but is not exclusive to:
 - One-hour class contact time and two hours of learning activities
 - Two hours of class laboratory work and one hour of learning activities
 - Three hours of learning activities⁴
- A minimum of one OQF Credit Hour (minimum 42 notional learning hours) is required for a qualification to be Aligned to the OQF and placed on the Alignment section of the NRQ

3.4.3 Comparable OQF Credit Value

The OQF Credit Value is defined as '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'.

The Foreign or International Awarding Body must determine the comparable OQF Credit Value for each module and for the entire qualification. This can be based on the number of notional learning hours, equated to either OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours. Alternatively, where a different set of principles is used⁵ to calculate the Credit Value of units, modules, courses and qualifications, the comparable OQF Credit Value may be based on the credit system used e.g., 60 ECTS Credit Points broadly corresponds to 120 OQF Credit Points.

3.5 Institutional Quality Assurance and Communication Arrangements required for Alignment

3.5.1 Institutional Quality Assurance Arrangements

Unlike an Omani Awarding Body, a Foreign or International Awarding Body does not require an institutional license from a licensing body to operate in Oman. To Align its qualifications to the OQF, the Foreign or International Awarding Body must be accredited by an external quality assurance agency and provide information and evidence on its institutional quality assurance **in addition to** the information and evidence for the quality assurance of the qualification.

⁴ Section 3.3 sets out examples of learning activities.

⁵ E.g., Credit Units used by Australian HEIs, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) or the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

Foreign and International Awarding Bodies must follow the OAAAQA Policy for the Quality Assurance of the OQF, which provides details of the quality assurance requirement for Alignment (see Appendix C4).

3.5.2 Communication Arrangements

There must be a communication strategy and/or detailed arrangements in place to ensure effective communication between the Foreign or International Awarding Body and the education or training provider(s) delivering the qualification in Oman.

3.6 Roles and Responsibilities for the Alignment of a Foreign or International Qualification

3.6.1 Foreign or International Awarding Body

A Foreign or International Awarding Body makes an Alignment application for a qualification that it owns and/or awards, which is delivered in Oman. The application can be made in either English or Arabic, depending on the language in which the qualification is delivered.

To complete the Alignment Application Form, the Foreign or International Awarding Body establishes an Alignment Committee responsible for:

- Ensuring the quality assurance measures comply with the OAAAQA Policy for the Quality Assurance of the OQF (see Appendix C4)
- Evaluating the qualification to ensure it meets the Alignment Criteria (see section 3.1)
- Proposing the OQF Level of Alignment and, if applicable, the comparable OQF Credit Value for each module and for the entire qualification
- Completing the online Alignment Application Form and checking it has:
 - Appropriate and relevant supporting materials
 - Details of the contact person within the Foreign or International Awarding Body with responsibility for communication on all issues related to the Alignment application
 - The signature of the authorised representative from the Foreign or International Awarding Body with authority to submit Alignment applications
- Checking the Alignment application for completeness and consistency
- Submitting the Alignment Application Form electronically to the DGNQF together with the relevant supporting materials⁶

⁶ The Alignment Application Form includes a template, which must be completed for each module to provide the module overview, the Learning Outcomes and the Assessment Criteria along with the Committee's proposal for the OQF Level of Alignment and, if applicable, the comparable OQF Credit Value.

3.6.2 Directorate General of the National Qualifications Framework (DGNQF)

The DGNQF is responsible for:

- Forming an OQF Alignment Panel for each Alignment application
- Implementing the Alignment Process following the relevant OAAAQA Policies relating to the OQF to reach the Final Alignment Evaluation Report
- Placing Aligned qualifications on the Alignment section of the NRQ, where appropriate
- Providing feedback and support to the Foreign and International Awarding Body concerning the Alignment process, as required
- Implementing the OQF process for appeals against the Alignment Evaluation Report and/or the outcome, including amending the Final Listing Evaluation Report based on the decision of the OQF Appeal Committee, if applicable
- Providing OAAAQA capacity building training on the Alignment process for stakeholders, as required

3.6.3 OAAAQA Executive Office

The OAAAQA CEO is responsible for:

- Approving the:
 - Appointment of OQFERs to the National Register of External Reviewer (National ER Register), following recommendation by the DGNQF or, where required, the removal of OQFERs from the register
 - Second Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report as the Final Alignment Evaluation Report

3.6.4 OAAAQA Board

The OAAAQA Board is responsible for:

- Approving the:
 - Outcomes of Alignment evaluations and, where appropriate, the placement of qualifications on the Alignment section of the NRQ
 - Yearly (annual) report on the OQF (see section 4.7)
 - Fees for activities associated with the Alignment process, including those for OQF appeals before submission to the Ministry of Finance for approval

4. Procedure

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

4.1 Foreign or International Awarding Body

To prepare the Alignment application, the Foreign or International Awarding Body that owns the qualification forms a small OQF Alignment Committee comprising subject and quality assurance experts who are familiar with NQFs. Ideally, this should be no more than five suitably competent individuals, facilitated by an OQF Alignment Committee Chair. More than one OQF Alignment Committee may be formed, depending on the size of the qualification, available resources and/or the specialisations within the qualification; but the one Chair facilitates and coordinates the Alignment activity across multiple OQF Alignment Committees.

The OQF Alignment Committee may comprise professionals from the education or training provider delivering the qualification in Oman. For objectivity, where possible, it is advisable to have at least one member who is independent of the qualification.

4.1.1 The OQF Alignment Committee

The OQF Alignment Committee:

- Takes responsibility for the completion of the online Alignment Application Form gathering information and supporting materials to provide evidence in relation to the Alignment Criteria (see section 3.1)
- Ensures compliance with the OAAAQA Policy for the Quality Assurance of the OQF
- Proposes the
 - OQF Level of Alignment for each module of the qualification by evaluating the Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and other relevant information against the OQF Level Descriptors and provides rationales/reasons for the proposed Alignment
 - Comparable OQF Credit Value of each module (see section 3.4.3)
 - OQF Level of Alignment and, if applicable, the comparable OQF Credit Value of the entire qualification
- Puts a mechanism in place to check the Alignment Application Form before its submission to the DGNQF ensuring that it:
 - Is completed fully and all the supporting materials mentioned in the application are attached
 - Includes the most recent external quality assurance/accreditation report from the external quality assurance agency
 - Details of the institutional and programme quality assurance measures are in place to meet the Alignment Criteria⁷

⁷ See the OAAAQA Policy for the Quality Assurance of the OQF

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- Details of the arrangements in place for communicating with the education or training providers delivering the qualification in Oman
- Is consistent in that there is no conflicting information in the application form and the Alignment templates
- Is signed by the senior member of staff within the Foreign or International Awarding Body with the authority to submit Alignment applications. Incomplete Alignment applications are not accepted
- Sends the fees for Alignment to the OAAAQA Financial Affairs Department
- Submits the Alignment application to the DGNQF

4.1.2 Review of the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report

The Foreign or International Awarding Body reviews the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report checking for accuracy and, providing feedback, if any. The Foreign or International Awarding Body returns the draft report to the Director General of the DGNQF within ten working days of receipt.

4.1.3 Intention to Appeal

The Director General of the DGNQF sends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body along with information that if required an appeal against the outcome and/or the content of the report can be made.

The Foreign or International Awarding Body is requested to inform the Director General of the DGNQF of an intention to appeal the Alignment outcome and/or the Evaluation Report using the OQF Appeal Application Form which should be submitted to the DGNQF within ten working days from the date the Foreign or International Awarding Body received the approved Final Alignment Evaluation Report.

The OQF appeal process is set out in OQF Appeals Manual which is available from the DGNQF or can be accessed from <https://www.aaaaqa.gov.om/Oman-Qualifications-Framework/General>.

4.2 Directorate General of the National Qualifications Framework (DGNQF)

The Director General of the DGNQF:

- Forms an OQF Alignment Panel for each Alignment application (see section 4.3)
- Acknowledges receipt of an Alignment Application Form from the Foreign or International Awarding Body
- Agrees the timescale for the Alignment evaluation with the OQF Review Director (OQFRD)
- Supports the OQF Alignment Panel on issues concerning the Alignment of the qualification, if needed

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- Reviews the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report and provides feedback to the QQFRD, as required
- Submits the final version of the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body with the request to check for accuracy and provide feedback, as required
- Reviews the Second Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report and provides feedback to the QQFRD, as required
- Submits the final version of the Second Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report to the OAAAQA CEO for consideration of approval as the Final Alignment Evaluation Report
- Prepares the documentation for the OAAAQA Board, with the outcome of the Alignment evaluation for consideration of approval
- Sends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body, informing them of the approved outcome of the Alignment evaluation and calls attention to the opportunity that the Foreign or International Awarding Body may appeal the Alignment Evaluation Report and/or the outcome (see Appendix A)
- Provides feedback and support, as required, to the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - If approved, the qualification is placed on the Alignment Section of the NRQ
 - If not approved, takes forward actions as directed by the OAAAQA Board
- Informs the OQF Alignment Panel of the OAAAQA Board decision and, where appropriate, discusses the actions to be taken
- Implements the process for an appeal against the Final Alignment Evaluation Report and/or the outcome following the OAAAQA process set out in the OQF Appeals Manual
- Amends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report based on the decisions of the OQF Appeal Committee, if applicable

4.3 OQF Alignment Panel

The OQF Alignment Panel comprises an QQFRD and a minimum of two approved OQFERs that must:

- Have knowledge and experience of the subject area of the qualification
- Have completed OAAAQA Capacity Building Workshops:
 - On the Alignment process
 - For OQFERs
- Be from different organisations
- Have no conflict of interest with the Foreign or International Awarding Body applying for Alignment

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Collectively, the OQF Alignment Panel:

- Prepares the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report for review by the Director General of the DGNQF and actions feedback, if any
- Considers and actions feedback, if any, on the First Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report from the Awarding Body
- Completes the Second Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report for review by the Director General of the DGNQF and actions feedback, if any, in preparation for the submission of the Second Draft to the OAAAQA CEO for consideration of approval as the Final Alignment Evaluation Report
- If required, actions feedback from the OAAAQA CEO to reach the Final Listing Evaluation Report

The specific responsibilities of the OQFERs and the OQFRD are set out in 4.3.1 and 4.3.2.

4.3.1 OQF External Reviewer (OQFER)

Each OQFER:

- Independently evaluates the Alignment application together with the qualification and the supporting materials to ensure compliance with the OAAAQA Policy on the Quality Assurance of the OQF and the Alignment Criteria (see section 3.1)
- Reviews the Alignment rationales/reasons for each module that comprises the qualification and the reasons for the proposed OQF Level of Alignment to ensure that they are valid and consistent with information in the module specifications and the OQF Level Descriptors
- Reviews the proposed comparable OQF Credit Value, if applicable, for each module that comprises the qualification to ensure there are an adequate number of notional learning hours to enable learners to achieve the Learning Outcomes, the comparable OQF Credit Value is justified and consistent with the credit system used by the Foreign or International Awarding Body
- Provides written details to the OQFRD where an Alignment evaluation cannot progress because further information is required or there are concerns regarding the Alignment application
- Attends and participates in OQF Alignment Panel meetings and meetings with staff within the Foreign or International Awarding Body that were directly involved in the Alignment process and other relevant staff, as required
- Completes the initial Alignment Evaluation Report, providing an initial recommendation on the:
 - Foreign or International Awarding Body's institutional quality assurance measures
 - Evaluation of the quality assurance measures in place for the qualification

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- OQF Level of Alignment and, if applicable, the comparable OQF Credit Value of each module and the entire qualification together with comment and/or conditions on any aspect of the proposal from the Foreign or International Awarding Body
- Submits the completed initial Alignment Evaluation Report to the OQFRD within the agreed timescale
- Works in conjunction with the OQFRD to complete the First and Second Drafts of the Alignment Evaluation Report, actioning feedback from the Director General of the DGNQF, Foreign or International Awarding Body and the OAAAQA CEO, as required, to reach the Final Alignment Evaluation Report

4.3.2 OQF Review Director (OQFRD)

The OQFRD is the point of contact between the OQFERs and the Foreign or International Awarding Body. The OQFERs do not contact the Foreign or International Awarding Body directly; all contact is made through the OQFRD.

The OQFRD:

- Reviews the Alignment application from the Foreign or International Awarding Body and brings together the initial Alignment Evaluation Reports from the OQFERs
- Considers the OQFERs' initial Alignment recommendations
- Prepares for meetings with the OQFERs and, if required, staff within the Foreign or International Awarding Body involved with the Alignment process to discuss any aspect of the Alignment application and clarify issues raised for example, where there are different views on the outcome of the initial Alignment evaluations and/or where there are different views on the OQF Level and/or comparable OQF Credit Value of the entire qualification
- Carries out the verification of an agreed percentage of the modules comprising the qualification. The selection includes modules where the OQFERs have different initial recommendations on the OQF Level of Alignment and/or the comparable OQF Credit Value, if any
- Completes the Verification Report to include:
 - The outcome of the Verification Review
 - Information on modules that were subject to further evaluation, if any
 - Details of discussions between the OQF Alignment Panel and/or the Foreign or International Awarding Body, if any
- Informs the Director General of the DGNQF of issues concerning the Alignment, as required
- In conjunction with the OQFERs, prepares the First and Second drafts of the Alignment Evaluation Report

4.4 OAAAQA Executive Office

The OAAAQA CEO considers for approval:

- Recommendations from the Director General of the DGNQF for the appointment of OQFERs to the National ER Register or, where required, the removal of OQFERs from the Register
- The Second Draft of the Alignment Evaluation Report for approval as the Final Alignment Evaluation Report

4.5 OAAAQA Board

The OAAAQA Board considers for approval the:

- Outcome of the Alignment evaluation as given in the Final Alignment Evaluation Report
- Placement of the qualification on the Alignment Section of the NRQ, if applicable (see Appendix A)
- Yearly (annual) report on the OQF (see section 4.7)
- Fees for activities associated with the Alignment process, including those for Alignment applications and Alignment appeals following the OAAAQA Policy on Fees Charged for OQF Activities and Appeals⁸, before submission to the Ministry of Finance for approval

4.6 Major Change

The Foreign or International Awarding Body must inform the DGNQF in writing of any major change to the programme of an Aligned qualification.⁹ A major change is defined as 'a change that affects the OQF Level and/or OQF Credit Value of the qualification or impacts on the qualification meeting the Listing or Alignment Criteria and subsequently its placement on the National Register of Qualifications'. Examples include, but are not limited to, changes to the:

- Institutional quality assurance
- Quality assurance of the programme that leads to the qualification
- Name of the Awarding Body
- Qualification title
- Design and/or length of the qualification, including the addition of new modules

⁸ To be developed.

⁹ See the OAAAQA Policy on Major Change Notification for the Oman Qualifications Framework

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Minor changes, that do not affect the OQF Level of Alignment and/or the comparable OQF Credit Value, may be made to modules without the need to inform the DGNQF but they should be noted in the Re-Alignment Application Form.

4.7 Annual Report

The DGNQF prepares a yearly (annual) report for the OAAAQA Board on the implementation of the OQF. The report includes the number of Aligned qualifications together with details of the level of Alignment to the OQF and comparable OQF Credit Value, subject discipline; and issues (if any) arising from the Alignment process.

5. Abbreviations

ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRQ	National Register of Qualifications
OAAAQA	Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education
OQF	Oman Qualifications Framework

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 external to- and independent from- the institution. Accredited status is conferred by this body for a defined period of time ¹⁰
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

¹⁰ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 19.04.2021).

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Assessment	The process of judging performance against specified targets/reference points ¹¹
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) ¹²
Characteristic	An attribute of the OQF Level Descriptors. There are six characteristics: Knowledge; Skills; Communication, Numeracy, Information Communication Technology Skills; Autonomy and Responsibility; Employability and Values and Learning to Learn. These six characteristics combine to form the OQF Level Descriptors
Credit System	A set of principles according to which the credit value of units, modules, courses and qualifications are calculated
Credit Transfer	The process of using the credit gained for completed stand-alone units, modules or courses of a programme or qualification in the pursuit of another programme or qualification ¹³
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)
Knowledge Learning Outcome	The acquisition and comprehension of facts, principles, theories and practices related to an area of work or learning

¹¹ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary (accessed on 19.04.2021).

¹² Adapted from <http://qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/#a>.

¹³ Adapted from OAAAQA Online Glossary, www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary (accessed on 19.04.2021).

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	What a learner is expected to know (knowledge), do (skills) or apply (competencies), as a result of his/her undertaking a unit, module, course or a programme leading to a qualification ¹⁴
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; Autonomy and Responsibility; Employability and Values; and Learning to Learn
Licensing	An evaluative process leading to formal approval from the relevant Omani government body for institutions and/or their programmes. Institutions include organisations such as schools, universities, technical and vocational education and training providers
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
Major Change	A change that affects the OQF Level and/or OQF Credit Value of the qualification or impacts on the qualification meeting the Listing or Alignment Criteria and subsequently its placement on the National Register of Qualifications
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

¹⁴ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary (accessed on 19.04.2021).

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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	A numerical indicator of the volume of learning, awarded for the achievement of all the Learning Outcomes of a unit, module, course and/or qualification, expressed in either OQF Credit Points or OQF Credit Hours
OQF Credit Hour	A unit of measurement, which describes the volume of learning required by a typical learner to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the units, modules or courses, which lead to a qualification. One OQF Credit Hour is three hours per week for one semester (minimum 14 weeks), which equates to a minimum of 42 notional learning hours ¹⁵
OQF Credit Point	A unit of measurement, which describes the volume of learning required by a typical learner to achieve the Learning Outcomes of the units, modules or courses, which lead to a qualification. One OQF Credit Point equates to ten notional learning hours ¹⁶
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 ¹⁷

¹⁵ Each OQF Credit Hour comprises a combination of activities that are required to achieve the Learning Outcomes, such as class or lecture contact time, laboratory work, workshops, self-study, research, homework, fieldwork, assignments, preparation for assessment and assessment.

¹⁶ Each OQF Credit Point comprises a combination of activities that are required to achieve the Learning Outcomes, such as class or lecture contact time, laboratory work, workshops, self-study, research, homework, fieldwork, assignments, preparation for assessment and assessment.

¹⁷ 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).

POLICY FOR THE ALIGNMENT OF FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS TO THE OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

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
Progression	A learning pathway taken by learners as they develop their expertise in a discipline and achieve qualifications at higher levels on the OQF
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	The extent to which an educational institution's systems, processes and structures result in outcomes for the institution and/or its programmes, which meet stakeholder needs through the attainment of relevant standards/benchmarks ¹⁸
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 ¹⁹
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 ²⁰

¹⁸ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, www.oaaa.gov.om/Training.aspx#Glossary (accessed on 19.04.2021).

¹⁹ See OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 19.04.2021).

²⁰ Adapted from OAAAQA Online Glossary, <https://www.oaaaqa.gov.om/About-the-OAAA/Glossary> (accessed on 13.09.2018).

POLICY FOR THE ALIGNMENT OF FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS TO THE OMAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Summative Assessment	An evaluative process, which measures a learner's ability to demonstrate knowledge, skills and other characteristics against Assessment Criteria; the results are recorded and contribute to the learner's overall mark and/or grade
Verification [of Listing or Alignment]	An objective moderation of a Listing or Alignment application and its associated Evaluation Report to check that the Listing or Alignment process was carried out correctly and is consistent across different OQF External Reviewers, thus ensuring the qualification (and modules) meet the Listing or Alignment Criteria and the outcomes of the relevant OQF Level Descriptors

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. 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 Listing Qualifications on the Oman Qualifications Framework.

APPENDIX A: ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE OAAAQA BOARD DECISION FOR ALIGNMENT

The following actions are taken, depending on the decision of the OAAAQA Board on the Alignment outcome.

- If the OAAAQA Board approves the outcome that recommends the qualification for Alignment, the DGNQF:
 - Informs the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Sends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Places the qualification on the Alignment Section of the NRQ
- If the OAAAQA Board approves the outcome that Recommends the qualification for Alignment with Condition, the DGNQF:
 - Informs of the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Sends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Discusses the requirements of the condition with the Foreign or International Awarding Body and reaches an agreement on a suitable timeframe to allow for the necessary changes to be made
 - Informs the Foreign or International Awarding Body of the opportunity to appeal the Final Alignment Evaluation Report and/or the outcome

The qualification is not placed on the Alignment Section of the NRQ until the condition placed on the qualification is met by the Awarding Body within a timescale agreed with the DGNQF.

- If the OAAAQA Board approves the outcome that recommends the qualification is Not Recommended for Alignment, the DGNQF:
 - Informs the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Sends the Final Alignment Evaluation Report to the Foreign or International Awarding Body
 - Informs the Foreign or International Awarding Body of the opportunity to appeal the Final Alignment Evaluation Report and/or the outcome
- If the OAAAQA Board does not approve the Alignment outcome as it does not agree with the recommended OQF Level of Alignment and/or the comparable OQF Credit Value, it sets out the reasons and provides the DGNQF with direction regarding the actions that it should take so that the Alignment application can be re-evaluated and resubmitted for approval