



**Referencing the Samoa Qualifications Framework to
the Pacific Qualifications Framework**

Contents

Acronyms	4
Introduction and background	5
Pacific Qualifications Recognition project	5
Country Context	5
Criterion 1A: Education and Training System	7
Governance of the Education and Training System	7
Ministry of Education and Culture	7
Samoa Qualifications Authority.....	7
National University of Samoa	8
Structure of the Education System	8
Early Childhood Education (ECE)	10
Primary Education.....	10
Secondary Education	10
Post-School Education and Training (PSET).....	11
Professional and Community Learning and Informal Learning	14
Professional and Community Learning (PCL)	14
Informal Learning.....	14
Pathways and Linkages	14
Reforms	16
Secondary school reform.....	16
SQA Act 2010 review	16
Criterion 1B: Legitimacy of Relevant National Bodies	17
Stakeholder engagement process.....	17
Stakeholder engagement overall feedback.....	22
Criterion 2: Qualifications and Standards	22
Procedures for Inclusion of Qualifications and Standards	22
The Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF)	22
Qualification levels, level descriptors and types.....	23
Nationally developed and provider developed qualifications	26
Characteristics of a qualification	27
National Competency Standards	29
Process for developing Samoa Qualifications	29
National Competency Standards Development	30
Allocating Qualifications and Standards to SQF Levels	30
Validation of Learning.....	30
Registration of Qualifications on the SQF.....	31
Qualifications levels related to education provision in the country	31
Qualifications that are not part of the SQF	31
University of the South Pacific.....	32
Criterion 3: Link to PQF qualification levels	35
Level alignment process.....	35
Methodological approach.....	36

Structural comparison	37
Technical comparison	38
Overall analysis	38
Criterion 4: Quality Assurance of Education and Training.....	41
Assuring Quality Education.....	41
Quality Assurance of Secondary Education.....	42
Quality Assurance of PSET	42
Provider Registration	42
Programme Accreditation	43
National External Moderation.....	44
Workplace Assessment	46
Quality Audit and Compliance	46
Professional and Community Learning (PCL)	46
Cancellation or suspension of a provider’s registration	47
Quality Assurance of Universities	47
QA of University of the South Pacific	47
QA of National University of Samoa	48
QA of Oceania University of Medicine (OUM).....	49
Criterion 5: Supporting Information Systems.....	49
Overview	49
School Qualification Information Management	50
Secondary Qualification Management	50
Secondary School Learner Management.....	50
Data storage and security	51
Post Secondary Information System Review	51
Qualification Management	51
Provider Management	51
File server and cloud services	52
Learner management	52
User Roles	52
System Architecture and Infrastructure	53
Roadmap.....	53
Glossary.....	54
Appendix.....	55

Acronyms

APTC	Australia Pacific Training Coalition
ARR	Annual Registration Renewal
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECETTI	Early Childhood Education Teacher's Training Institute
EQAP	Educational Quality and Assessment Programme
FNQF	Fiji National Qualifications Framework
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture, Samoa
NCECES	National Council of Early Childhood Education for Samoa
NCS	National Competency Standards
NEM	National External Moderation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NUS	National University of Samoa
OGG	One Government Grant
OUM	Oceania University of Medicine
PA	Programme Accreditation
PAASCU	Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities
PacSIMS	Pacific Schools Information Management System
PQAB	Pacific Qualifications Accreditation Board
PQF	Pacific Qualifications Framework
PRa	Programme Re-accreditation
PR	Provider Registration
PSET	Post School Education and Training
RCC	Recognition of Current Competency
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RPCL	Recognition of Professional and Community Learning
SSLC	Samoa School Leaving Certificate
SQ	Samoa Qualifications
SQA	Samoa Qualifications Authority
SQF	Samoa Qualifications Framework
SRFQ	Samoa Recognition of Foreign Qualifications
PacTAFE	Pacific Technical and Further Education
QA	Quality Audit
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
USP	University of the South Pacific
WPA	Workplace Assessments

Introduction and background

Pacific Qualifications Recognition project

This report was compiled as a part of the Pacific Qualifications Recognition Project. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) is funding the project, which runs over five-years (2024-2028). The project is being led in partnership between the Pacific Community's (SPC) Educational Quality and Assessment Programme and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), working closely with education ministries and qualifications' authorities of Pacific countries party to the PACER Plus trade agreement (Cook Islands, Niue, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, New Zealand, Vanuatu and Tonga).

The purpose of the Pacific Qualifications Recognition project is to improve the understanding of Pacific qualifications inside and outside the Pacific region. The PQR project includes the comparing of the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF) against the regional Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF). This referencing report will be useful for people seeking to understand the qualifications offered in Samoa.

Country Context

Samoa is a small archipelago island country in the centre of the South Pacific Ocean. The total land area is 2,842 km², consisting of 2 main islands (which together account for 99% of the total land area), 2 smaller, inhabited islands, and 6 smaller, uninhabited islands. The capital city Apia, is located on the central north coast of Upolu, Samoa's second-largest island.

Samoa's population is 205,557 (Samoa Population and Housing Census, 2021). The main island of Upolu is home to more than three-quarters (78%) of Samoa's population (Population and Housing Census, 2021, p.17). Samoa has two official languages – Gagana Samoa, and English.

Traditionally, Samoa's economy depended on agriculture and fisheries. Today, key factors in the economy are development aid, private family remittances from overseas, and agricultural exports. Agriculture employs two-thirds of the labour force in Samoa and accounts for 90% of exports, featuring coconut cream, coconut oil and noni (juice of the *nonu* fruit).

In 2022, a significant portion (25%) of employment is in the informal economy, characterised by a lack of legal protection, secured benefits, and welfare protection. The labour force participation rate for men (57%) is higher than women (31%). 30% of the youth population are not in employment, education, or training, and 13% of the youth population are unemployed.

The number of Samoan citizens participating in regional labour mobility schemes is increasing year-on-year. This is specifically through the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) and New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) schemes. The number of Samoan citizens participating in labour mobility schemes is more than doubled from 3013 placements in 2018/19 to 7116 placements in 2023/24. The Government's 2023 policy on labour mobility schemes noted that these schemes offer benefits to Samoa but severely affect labour supply for domestic businesses. There is 'little research to date showing that participation in the temporary labour migration schemes lead to upskilling or more transformative contributions, other than greater purchasing power'¹.

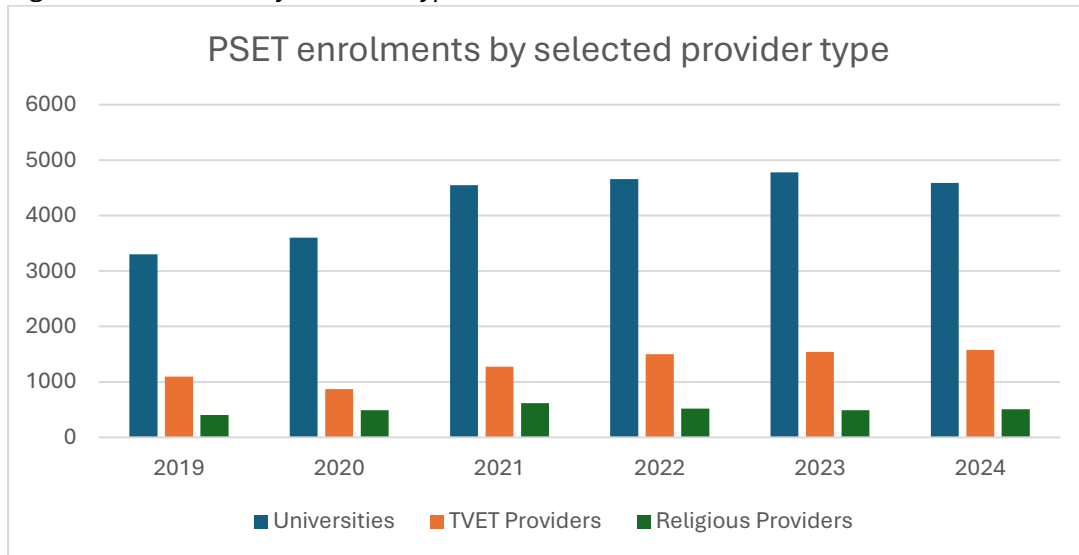
Since the mid-1990s, Samoa has actively reformed its public and private sectors to drive sustained economic growth. Successive Governments have focused on growing a well-qualified population and workforce by strengthening post-school education and training (PSET). This includes a focus on delivering relevant training and skills to support national economic development and meet international standards.

¹ [RSE-POLICY-2023.-Fuafuaga-o-faatinoga-mo-le-faigafaavae-mo-galuega-faavaitaimi-i-ausetalia-ma-niu-sila-5-41-1.pdf](#)

Participation rates in PSET have increased from 4804 in 2019 to 6804 in 2023 which is an increase of 42%. During the same reporting period, enrolments for females also increased by 48% and males showed an increase by 33%.

The establishment of a national qualifications authority, Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) in 2006 was part of these reforms. SQA’s role in regulating and monitoring PSET in Samoa was an important step to strengthening the education and training system.

Figure 1: Enrolment by Provider Type



In 2023, 70% of students in formal education were enrolled in various programmes at higher education institutions/universities. The TVET providers accounted for 23% of total enrolments, while 7% of students were enrolled in programmes delivered by providers of religious / mission owned institutions.

Overall, the enrolment for programmes delivered by higher education institutions/universities and TVET providers are each increased by 3%, whereas the enrolment in religious instruction providers is declined by 6% respectively.

Table 1: Enrolment by Field of Study

Field of study	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Agriculture, Environment and related studies	286	138	188	283	310	414
Architecture and Building	168	161	286	315	293	332
Creative Arts	53	56	93	50	61	32
Education	573	815	766	683	643	516
Engineering and related technologies	501	418	564	566	686	422
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	344	284	389	360	442	464
Health	405	360	418	394	403	352
Information Technology	88	293	181	209	203	221
Management and Commerce	905	803	1223	1505	1228	1244
Mixed Field Programmes	211	343	491	512	829	830
Natural and Physical Sciences	291	257	411	404	390	483
Society and Culture	979	1941	1430	1397	1316	1364
Total	4809	4969	6440	6678	6804	6674

Criterion 1A: Education and Training System

Governance of the Education and Training System

There are three government agencies that are responsible for the education and training system in Samoa; the Ministry of Education & Culture (MEC), the Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA), and the National University of Samoa (NUS).

Ministry of Education and Culture

The MEC is the central government agency responsible for the compulsory education sector. The MEC sets policy, advises the Minister and Government, and regulates early childhood education, primary and secondary education in Samoa². The MEC's functions are stipulated in the Education Act 2009, Education Amendment 2017; Teachers Act, 2016 and Teachers Amendment Act 2020³.

The Education Amendment Bill 2017 makes education compulsory from early childhood education (at age 4) through to senior secondary at age 16⁴. The MEC develops regulations and policies that govern the planning, implementation and monitoring of curricula and educational activities for all primary and secondary education including private and mission schools. The MEC registers mission and private schools, and are required to comply with all policies⁵.

Recent changes gave schools greater autonomy by allowing district communities, religious organisations and school committees to make decisions on a schools' daily operations. MEC sets out obligations and responsibilities of good governance and monitors school performance.

In 2018, the Government introduced the One Government Grant (OGG) initiative that provides annual financial assistance to the compulsory education sector. The OGG consolidates all education funds and ensures equitable support for government, mission, and private schools (early childhood education centres, primary and secondary schools, special service providers, and technical and vocational institutions). The OGG aims to provide schools with resources to meet and exceed the Minimum Service Standards. The MEC administers and monitors the OGG in collaboration with the boards and governing bodies of mission and private schools.

The National Council of Early Childhood Education for Samoa (NCECES) oversees the registration and monitoring of ECE centres. MEC supports ECE by providing learning materials for students, along with manuals and training for teachers.

Samoa Qualifications Authority

The SQA was established in August 2005 and came into force by an act of Parliament under the Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2006. The 2006 Act was repealed and replaced with the Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010⁶.

Under the 2010 Act, SQA is mandated to advise the Minister and Government on the strategic direction, as well as regulate, and coordinate qualifications and PSET in Samoa. The SQA is responsible for working with overseas government agencies and other organisations to recognise overseas qualifications in Samoa and achieve international recognition of qualifications awarded by Samoa. The SQA collaborates and partners with national qualifications and quality assurance organisations globally and regionally.

² MESC, Education Sector Plan 2019-2024, p. 10

³ Ministry of Education and Sports website: <https://www.mesc.gov.ws/publications/> accessed 29.05.2024

⁴ MESC, Education Amendment Bill 2017 Annual Report 2021-2022, [MESC-Annual-Report-FY2021-2022-FINAL.pdf](https://www.mesc.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MESC-Annual-Report-FY2021-2022-FINAL.pdf), <https://www.mesc.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MESC-Annual-Report-FY2021-2022-FINAL.pdf>, accessed 3.6.2024

⁵ Education Act 2009, <https://www.mesc.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Education-Act-2009.pdf>, accessed 3.6.24

⁶ [Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010](https://www.mesc.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Education-Act-2009.pdf)

The SQA is a Public Beneficial Body under the Public Bodies (Performance and Accountability) Act 2001 and the Public Finance Management Act 2001. SQA is responsible to two Ministers: The Minister of Education and the Minister for Public Enterprises.

The SQA is governed by a Board of Directors, appointed by the government, that provides governance and oversight of the SQA's strategic direction and finances. The SQA receives an annual appropriation through the government's annual budget process. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand provide financial assistance through an education sector support programme that is aligned to the Government of Samoa's Education Sector Plan. A work-plan of activities is agreed at an education sector level and the allocation of funds included in the Government's annual budget appropriations.

National University of Samoa

The National University of Samoa is a public institution and public beneficiary body under the National University of Samoa Act 2006⁷ and the Public Finance Management Act 2001. The NUS is mandated to provide 'education and training, including academic, technical and vocational training and continuing education at appropriate levels responsive to the needs of the people of Samoa' and support the study of Samoan language and culture. The NUS Act also provides a legal framework to govern the core functions of the University, with the University Council as the governing body.

As a PSET provider in Samoa, the NUS must comply with regulations, policies, and standards set by the SQA. These include quality assurance processes for provider registration, programme accreditation and re-accreditation, quality audit, and recognition of professional and community learning.

Structure of the Education System

Samoa's education system includes non-compulsory early childhood education, an 8-year primary school (Years 1-8), and a 4-year secondary school (Years 9-12) culminating in the Samoa School Leaving Certificate (SSLC).

Formal education starts at age five, and the system aims to provide a holistic and quality education, though challenges exist in upper secondary retention and early learning access. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) is the responsible government agency.

Samoa's education system's four sectors – ECE, primary, secondary and PSET are detailed in Figure 2 below.

⁷ [TULAFONO O LE IUNIVESITE AOA O SAMOA 2006](#)

Figure 2: Education in Samoa for the different levels and age groups

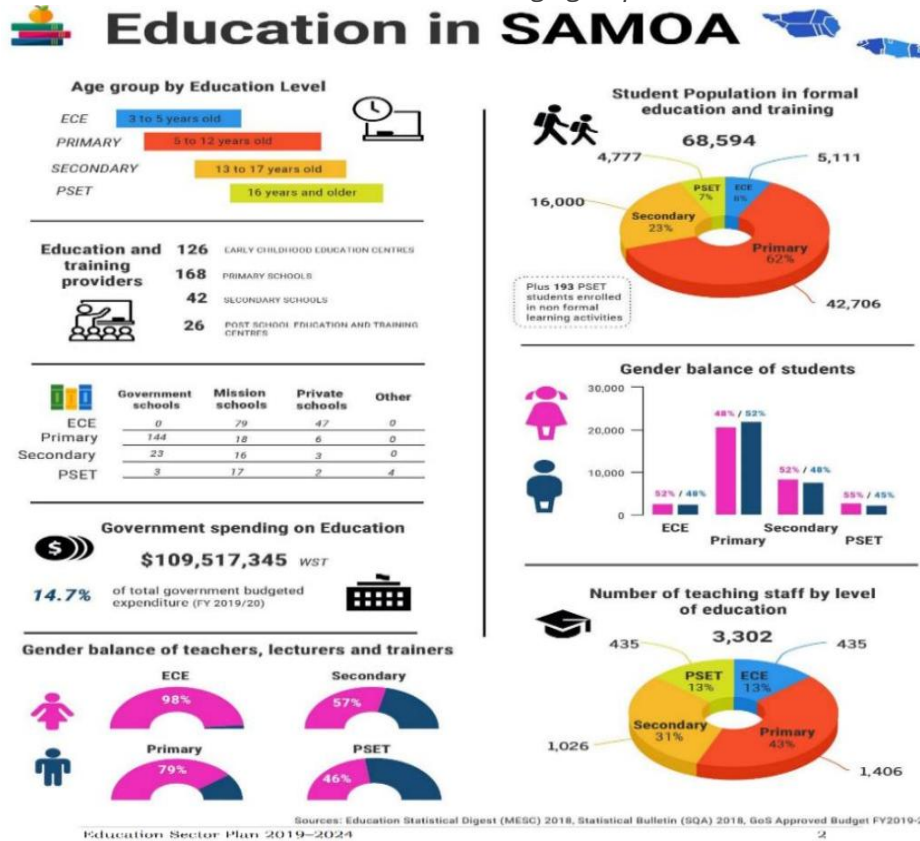
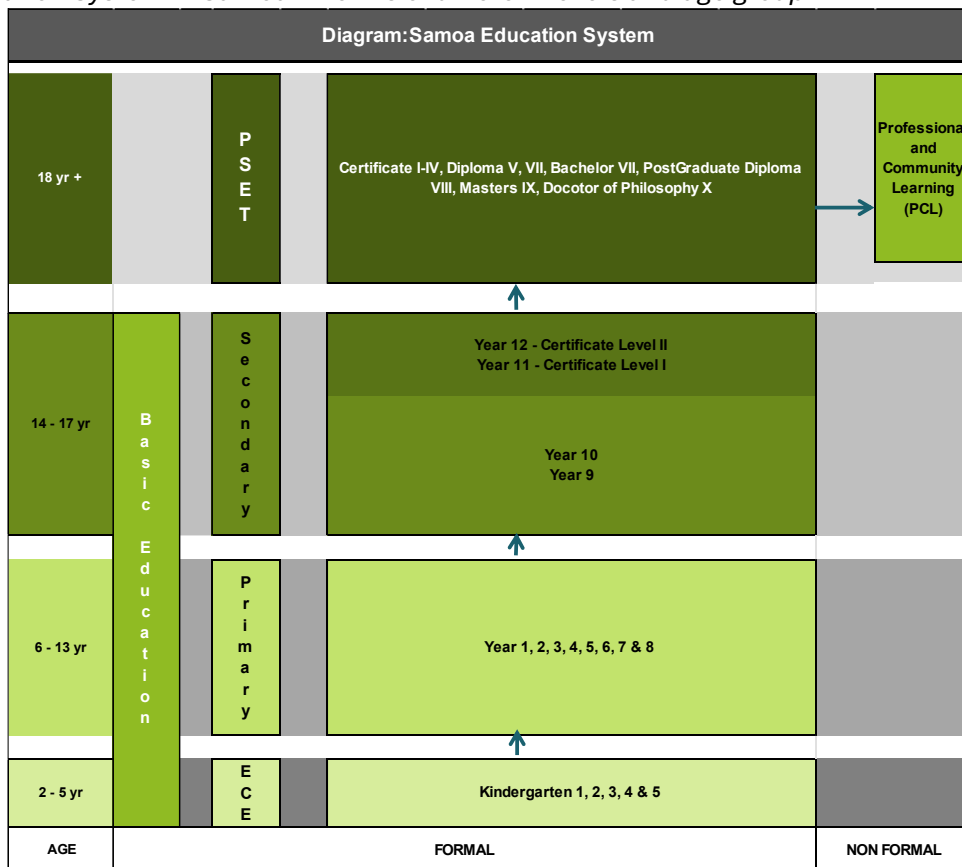


Figure 3: Education System in Samoa in terms of different levels and age group



Early Childhood Education (ECE)

A child can enrol an ECE from the age of 3 years old until they enter primary education, which is compulsory from the age of 5 years old⁸.

The National Council of Early Childhood Education Samoa (NCECES) is an NGO that guides how ECE centres operate. The NCECES Board is made up of members from various ECE centres in Samoa, most of which are owned and managed by church denominations⁹. A small number of ECE centres operate as private or non-governmental providers.

Typically, ECE centres develop and deliver their own learning activities and decide their own hours of operation. NUS offers a Bachelor of Education in ECE tailored for prospective teachers for early childhood education. Graduates of the Certificate IV in Early Childhood Education from the Early Childhood Education Teacher's Training Institute (ECETTI) are eligible to enroll in the National University of Samoa's Bachelor of Education (ECE) program. The minimum qualification to teach in early childhood education is the Diploma in Early Childhood Education, which is typically awarded after completing a two-year programme.

Primary Education

In 2024, Samoa had a total of 178 registered primary schools - 144 government schools, 23 mission schools and 11 private schools¹⁰.

Primary education covers Years 1 to 8 of the formal education system. Children begin their primary education journey between the ages of 5 or 6 until they turn 12 or 13 years old. This means that Years 7 and 8 are part of the Primary school system.

Seven core subjects are taught throughout primary education with national assessments conducted at the end of Years 4, 6, and 8 for all government primary schools. Prior to 2021, Year 8 students were able to receive the Samoa Certificate of Achievement. Mission and private schools are not legally obligated to participate in the national assessments however, many private schools choose to do so.

Secondary Education

In 2024, there were 42 secondary schools in Samoa – 23 government schools, 16 mission schools and 3 private schools¹¹.

The Secondary Education system in Samoa is four years. Students typically progress from primary to secondary education from 13-14 years of age, starting at Year 9 and progressing through to Year 12 at 16-17 years of age. Year 9 students continue with core subjects from primary education. Upon successful completion of Year 9, students choose between 2 learning pathways:

- academic (commerce, science, arts)
- technical and vocational.

For TVET, there are many secondary schools that have established as PSET providers, registered with SQA, to deliver Samoa Certificates level I at Year 11 and Samoa Certificates level II at Year 12 respectively in various trade areas. These schools offer students flexible learning pathways where students can simultaneously sit the National examination for Samoa School Leaving Certificate.

⁸ Under the Education Act 2009, primary education is compulsory

⁹ Such as Methodist, Catholic, Congregational Church, and Anglican Church

¹⁰ MEC, Educational Statistical Digest, 2023

file:///C:/Users/tupe.isara/Desktop/Referencing%20TWG/Ministry%20of%20Education%20and%20Culture%20%E2%80%93%20Government%20of%20Samoa_files/Digest-2023-Final-v3.pdf, accessed 23.6.2024

¹¹ *ibid*

Students in Year 12 sit a national examination to receive a Samoa School Leaving Certificate which determines their progression to PSET. Students are either enrolled into a foundation year to prepare them for university or into a technical and vocational education and training programme.

Policy changes introduced in 2020, changed the secondary school system from 5-years to 4-years, removing Year 13. The secondary school curriculum has been re-packaged and reorganised by the MEC to ensure the alignment of learning outcomes and curricula to the new four-year secondary system. Students entering higher education studies are required to complete a prerequisite studies foundation (preparatory) year to enter a degree programme. The foundation year certificate is not a registered qualification on the Samoa Qualifications Framework. These are various requirements for admission into PSET providers such as matured students, bridging courses, RCC and RPL.

Both Samoan and English are interchangeably used as the medium of instruction for secondary education.

Post-School Education and Training (PSET)

The PSET system in Samoa includes both higher education and TVET. PSET is any type of education and training delivered outside the compulsory education system at primary and secondary level. PSET, in Samoa, is delivered by universities, theological colleges and religious institutions, TVET providers. PSET also includes the apprenticeship scheme, professional and community learning (short courses) conducted by government, non-government or community-based organisations.

SQA is the lead government agency responsible for regulating and coordinating the entire PSET sub-sectors.

SQA is mandated to regulate the PSET system in Samoa by:

- registering all organisations that deliver post school education and training in Samoa
- accrediting education programmes
- registering and listing qualifications on the Samoa Qualifications Framework
- recognizing professional and community learning (short courses)
- recognizing overseas qualifications in Samoa for the purposes of employment or further study.

PSET providers must comply with all requirements and quality standards set out by SQA and by law for delivering PSET in Samoa. All programmes accredited by the SQA are listed between Levels I and X on the Samoa Qualifications Framework. The SQF Policies 2024 is in its third edition and sets out the rules and procedures for the qualifications system in Samoa.

In 2025, there were 25 PSET providers registered in Samoa by SQA:

- 3 universities
- 9 religious providers
- 13 TVET providers¹².

6,804 students were enrolled in formal PSET in Samoa in the 2024 academic year. Of the total enrolments:

- 58% were female
- 42% were male
- 72% were 25 years or younger
- 59% were enrolled in higher education studies
- 41% were enrolled in TVET studies.

Nearly 40% of enrolments were in Management and Commerce, and Society and Culture disciplines.

This data excludes enrolments in the apprenticeship scheme due to the revised apprenticeship structure,

¹² PSET Statistical Bulletin 2022, p.5

that was introduced in 2022.

The newly revised structure for the apprenticeship programme, approved as a mode of delivery, now incorporates the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF) at Levels III and IV. This enables the awarding of a Samoa Qualification at Level IV for six trade areas, namely:

- Samoa Certificate IV in Automotive Engineering
- Samoa Certificate IV in Electrical Engineering
- Samoa Certificate IV in Fitting and Machining
- Samoa Certificate IV in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
- Samoa Certificate IV in Plumbing
- Samoa Certificate IV in Welding

Since its inception, the Apprenticeship Scheme had not integrated any National Competency Standards or Samoa Qualifications into its delivery. This was primarily due to the unavailability of Samoa Qualifications at the time. The development of the National Competency Standards and Samoa Qualifications only commenced in the early 2010s.

The transition to the new Apprenticeship structure since 2022 has the following enrolment:

Table 2: Apprenticeship enrolments (2022-2025)

Trade areas	Enrolments confirmed 2022-2023	Enrolment confirmed 2024-2025
1. Automotive Engineering	9	10
2. Carpentry	18	17
3. Plumbing	30	27
4. Electrical Engineering	38	51
5. Fitting and Machining	1	1
6. Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	3	3

The Apprenticeship Programmes for all six trade areas are delivered by the National University of Samoa over a three-year period. Upon successful completion of the programme, apprentices are awarded the following qualifications:

- Samoa Apprenticeship Certificate IV in Automotive Engineering/ any other five trade area
- Samoa Apprenticeship Certificate III in Automotive Engineering/ any other five trade area
- Samoa Apprenticeship Certificate (Skills)

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour is the administrator, while the National University of Samoa (NUS) is the provider for the delivery of Apprenticeship programmes. The SQA coordinates workplace assessment in line with the apprenticeship programmes in Samoa.

The National University of Samoa

The NUS is Samoa's only national, co-educational university, established by an act of parliament in 1984. The NUS offers programmes from certificates to diploma qualifications in TVET and diplomas to postgraduate qualifications in higher education. The NUS faculties include Arts, Business and Entrepreneurship, Education, Nursing, Science, Medicine and the Centre for Samoan Studies.

The NUS is categorized as a state-owned enterprise or public beneficiary body. The NUS is governed by the University Council and reports to the Minister of Education and the Minister for Public Enterprises. The Pro-Chancellor is the Chair of the Council that is responsible for policy-making and overall management.

The Senate is the principal academic body which advises the Council on academic matters such as programmes of study, awards, and admissions. It is Chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and is made up of

academic leaders, staff, and student representatives. Cabinet appoints the Vice Chancellor and members of the Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Education and the Minister of Public Beneficiary Bodies. The Vice Chancellor is the chief executive officer, responsible for the day-to-day administration of the university.

The NUS receives most of its funding from government grants and also benefits from international grants for research and infrastructure projects. The NUS's programme (both vocational and higher education) goes through an internal quality assurance process and is approved by the Council prior to applying to SQA for accreditation, and listing of their qualifications on the SQF. NUS does not have self-accreditation status and submits all its programmes to SQA for full accreditation.

University of the South Pacific

The University of the South Pacific (USP) is a regional university established to offer PSET across the Pacific. USP is governed by its twelve member countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

USP offers 328 formal programmes, from foundation to doctoral level. The majority of these programmes are delivered at the main Laucala campus in Fiji. The Fiji Labasa campus and campuses in each of the other 11 governing countries offer a selection of the 328 programmes in response to local demand. USP also supports skills development across the region through informal continuing professional development programmes.

Pacific Technical and Further Education (Pacific TAFE) is the section within USP that offers preliminary and foundation programmes and over 40 vocational programmes at sub degree level. Most vocational programmes are derived from Australian vocational curricula, customised by USP to meet the needs of the Pacific region, and accredited on the Fiji National Qualifications Framework (FNQF). USP has agreements with a number of international professional associations to recognise some of these qualifications.

The USP Alafua Campus in Samoa works collaboratively with its stakeholders from private organisations and government ministries in the area of Agriculture (sustainable and Agribusiness). The USP Alafua Campus is registered by SQA as a PSET provider and its programmes are currently accredited through its main campus in Laucala.

In 2025, the USP Alafua Campus submitted five academic programmes to undergo the SQA accreditation process. This requirement arises from the need for provider registration and the fact that the campus delivers agriculture programmes in Samoa. As Samoa is one of the member countries and owners of USP, all programmes offered locally must be accredited by SQA to ensure compliance with national quality standards.

The Oceania University of Medicine

The Oceania University of Medicine (OUM) was founded in 2002 by an Act of Parliament to address the shortage of medical physicians in Samoa. The OUM is registered by SQA and holds international accreditation from the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU). The OUM was granted World Federation for Medical Education recognition status through its accreditation with PAASCU. The OUM has submitted a Doctor of Medicine programme to the SQA for accreditation.

The OUM offers a Doctor of Medicine (MD) programme that combines interactive distance learning for pre-clinical studies with traditional, hands-on clinical training at affiliated teaching hospitals and clinics, including mandatory rotations in Apia, Samoa. The Vice-Chancellor and Dean is based in the main office in Motootua, Samoa. Other faculties are located in Australia and the USA.

Professional and Community Learning and Informal Learning

Professional and Community Learning (PCL)

Professional and Community learning (previously non-formal learning) has become more prominent with a strong emphasis towards continuous education and lifelong learning that supports personal and professional growth for the people of Samoa. PCL is a recognized and legitimate form of education and training in Samoa under the SQA's mandated functions stipulated in the Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010.

The SQA Guidelines for Recognition of Professional and Community Learning (RPCL) defines professional and community learning as:

“Organised learning which occurs outside the context of formal education institutions. Professional and Community learning opportunities are characterised by diversity, flexibility and responsiveness to the identified learning needs of communities and individual learners”.

The recognition process for PCL Providers begins with the submission of an application form, along with supporting evidence (SQA Guidelines for Recognition of Professional and Community Learning 2024, p.7). Upon receipt, the SQA acknowledges the application within five working days and requires the PCLP to submit a self-evaluation form. This is followed by a preliminary review and, if necessary, additional information requests. After which, SQA arranges a site visit within ten working days to assist the PCLP in completing the self-evaluation and verifying evidence against the recognition criteria. A SQA evaluator then examines all documentation, prepares a draft report highlighting good practice, areas for improvement, and a recommendation for recognition, which the PCLP reviews and responds to with an action plan. The draft report is moderated independently, and once all requirements are addressed, the final report is submitted to the SQA Board through the CEO for a decision. The Board's outcome is formally communicated to the provider, who may resubmit if recognition is denied or lodge an appeal in line with SQA policy. The entire process is designed to be supportive, transparent, and is generally completed within two months.

There are currently 66 PCL providers in Samoa, including government ministries, non-government organisations, professional associations, private businesses, individuals, and PSET institutions. These providers deliver short-term training activities that promote continuous learning, skills upgrading, and improved quality of life for individuals, organisations, and society. Recognised PCLs cover a wide range of fields, from customer service to basic computer skills, while also embedding generic skills and national competency standards (NCSs). This integration allows PCL achievements to carry credit value and provide academic pathways through mechanisms such as cross-credit, Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC), and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), thereby linking community-based learning with formal qualifications

Informal Learning

Informal learning complements and enriches formal and PCL education and training. In Samoa, informal learning revolves around participation in everyday family, church and community settings. It differs from formal and PCL education and training in that there is no set curriculum.

Informal learning also happens through listening to school radio broadcasting programs, home tutorials and watching educational programmes on television. Other examples are participation in school career exhibitions, school speech competitions, field trip visits and educational games.

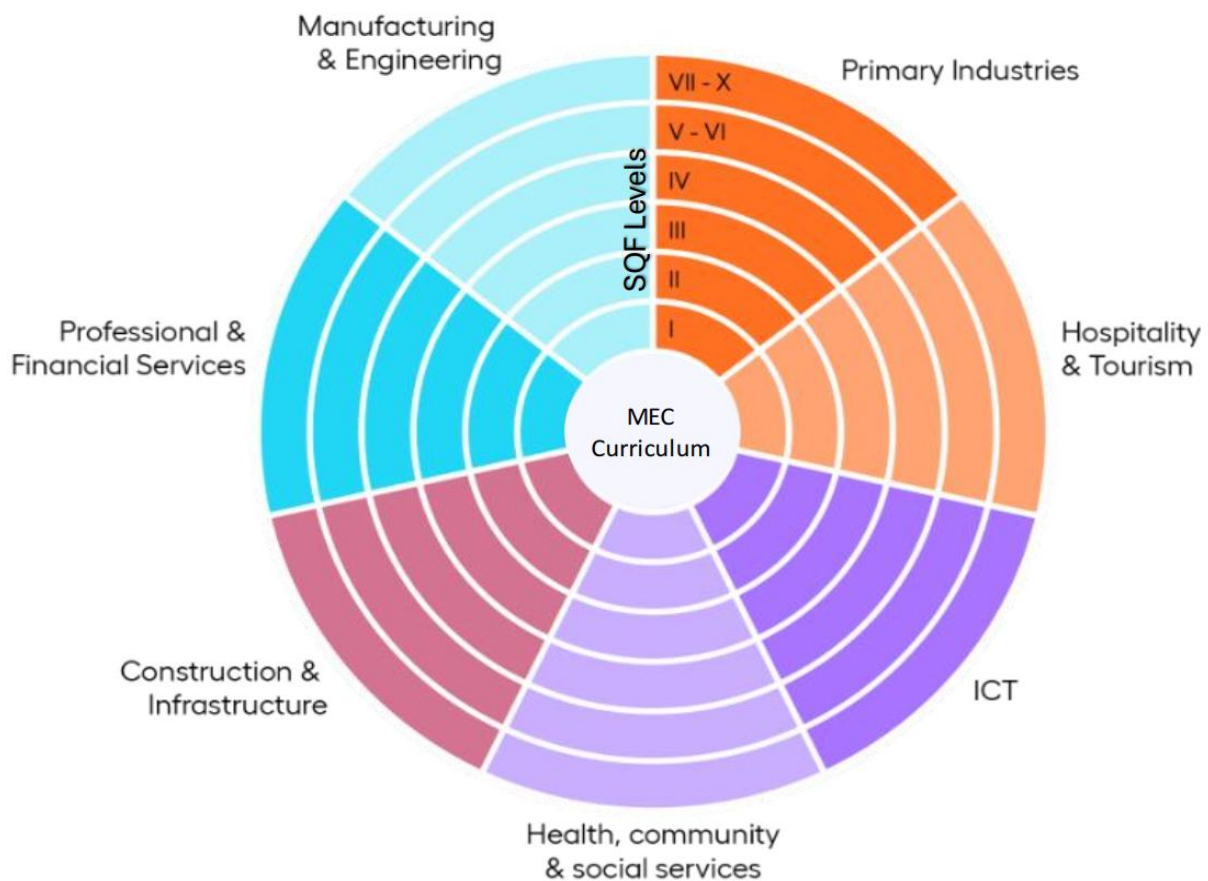
Pathways and Linkages

The Learning Pathways Framework¹³ is a tool developed by SQA and approved in 2024. Over the years, employers raised concerns about the mismatch between skills being taught by training institutions, and the knowledge and skills required by employers and the industry.

¹³ SQA, Learning Pathways Framework and associated Guidelines 2024

To address these challenges, the SQA developed a Learning Pathways Framework that maps competency standards to Samoa’s industry priorities. The framework also provides career guidance to assist educators and employers to identify gaps in the education and training programmes and assist learners to explore options and make informed decisions during their learning and career journeys.

Figure 4: Learning Pathways Framework



The Learning Pathways Framework presents seven broadly defined, sector-based pathways. The framework is designed to illustrate the relationship between the subjects taught at secondary level to the programmes offered by PSET providers, which are linked to the occupations in the major sectors of Samoa’s economy.

The seven pathways were prioritized for initial development following a series of stakeholder consultations in 2021 and 2022. Further learning pathways could be developed in the future and added to the Framework in response to skills demand or emerging industries. Learners can use the tool to map their study options to occupations. From the employers’ perspective, the Framework can help them recognize a graduate’s skills and capabilities relevant to their industries. The framework promotes quality of teaching and learning and provides a wide holistic approach towards a robust education and training system for Samoa.

Students completing secondary school education have several options, partly determined by the outcome of their secondary education:

- preparatory study, such as a foundation programme, or university preparatory year at NUS or USP, which can be a pathway to a scholarship to study towards a Bachelor degree locally or overseas
- study at a Samoan university or theological college
- study at a TVET institution. SQA qualifications can scaffold from lower levels to higher levels on the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF).

- pursue a career in the labour market.

Table 3: Pathway from Senior Secondary school into PSET

NUS	NUS	USP	TVET Provider	Theological College	PCL Provider	MCIL
TVET programme	Foundation programme*	Preparatory programme*	TVET programme	Theology and Divinity	Short Courses	Apprenticeship
Secondary school						

*Denotes prerequisite requirements to enter the programme.

Reforms

Secondary school reform

A major recent reform in Samoa’s education system is the shift from a 5-year to a 4-year secondary school structure, replacing a model that had been in place for over 40 years. This change followed sector-wide consultations in 2013, led by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (now called Ministry of Education and Culture).

The reform involved revising the curriculum to fit the new 4-year structure and reviewing the TVET stream. Previously, the curriculum was divided into four separate streams—arts, commerce, science, and TVET. The new approach blends these into a more holistic programme, offering students broader learning options and practical, hands-on skills.

Students will be able to gain credits towards and complete national certificates at Levels I and II on the SQF, creating clearer pathways from secondary school into TVET programs and future careers. Many secondary schools are now offering Samoa Certificate alongside tradition subjects. For example a secondary school can register and be accredited to deliver a Certificate I in computer science.

SQA Act 2010 review

The SQA Act 2010 is under a review to ensure that the role and function of the SQA remains relevant and fit for purpose. Phase one of this programme of work is nearing its completion with the reviews of the following policies and procedures completed or nearing its completion:

1. Samoa Quality Assurance Framework 2022
2. Samoa Qualifications Framework 2024 – Third Edition
3. Foreign Qualifications Recognition Services 2024
4. Learning Pathways Framework 2024
5. Samoa Qualifications and National Competency Standards 2025 (pending)
6. Communication and Engagement Strategy 2025 (pending)
7. Organisational Structure Review and Workforce Development Plan Review 2025 (pending).

SQA will commence phase two, to review and amend SQA’s legislation once all policy reviews are completed.

Implementation of the SQF

The Samoa Qualifications Framework – Third Edition 2024 was approved by the SQA Board in May 2025. This is the third review of the SQF since its adoption in June 2012.

The implementation and awareness of the revised SQF will be rolled out to PSET providers in January 2025. The implementation of the SQF is done simultaneously with its associated policies such as Quality Assurance Standards and Policies 2022, Programme Accreditation Guidelines and Criteria and the Registration of Qualifications on the SQF.

In addition, the assessment of the foreign qualifications using the revised Guidelines for Foreign Qualifications Recognition and their comparable levels on the SQF. The review of the Guidelines for the Development and Review of the Samoa Qualifications and National Competency Standards is currently

underway.

Criterion 1B: Legitimacy of Relevant National Bodies

Stakeholder engagement process

The compilation of this report was largely carried out by SQA, NZQA and SPC as a part of the Pacific Qualifications Recognition project. Work on the report started in April 2024. This included compiling all the information required for each Criterion to provide an overview of Samoa’s education and qualifications systems.

SQA, NZQA and SPC also carried out exploratory technical work comparing the SQF and the PQF. This technical work led to:

- a much clearer understanding of the different systems supporting qualifications
- an understanding of the key drivers relating to qualifications frameworks and how these materialise in Samoa and the Pacific
- analysis of the comparability of the two frameworks and their levels
- open and in-depth analysis and discussion on opportunities, challenges, benefits and risks.

To ensure that the technical work findings were accurate, representatives from SQA carried out stakeholder engagement in Samoa from 14-18 July 2025. The engagement was supported by NZQA and SPC virtually, as no delegate visits were allowed to Samoa due to the August 2025 general elections. The stakeholders were determined by SQA and those engaged with were:

Table 4: Stakeholders and their responsibilities

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
Samoa Qualifications Authority	Staff	SQA ensures that Samoa’s qualifications are valued as credible, both nationally and internationally. SQA is responsible for the quality assurance of all Post School Education and Training (PSET) providers in Samoa. Its mandated functions included the quality assurance of academic programmes, the registration of qualifications on the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF) and the recognition of professional and community learning activities. Which created pathways for learners to enter into an academic programme that leads to an award of a registered qualification on the SQF.
Samoa Qualifications Authority Board of Directors.	Board of Directors	SQA Board of Directors is the governing body that provides strategic direction and advice pertaining to the overall performance of SQA mandated functions. It also approves analytical reports (both financial and divisional) pertaining to matters related to the legal mandate of the Authority as the national quality assurance agency for Post School Education and Training.
Government Ministries, and State-Owned Enterprises/ Corporations		
Ministry of Education and Culture	Central Agency for the Education Sector.	The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the quality assurance of compulsory education from Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Education (years 4 – 14).
Public Service Commission	Representatives from Management	The Samoa Public Service Commission is the central agency for Human Resource Management and Human Resource Professional Development in the Public Service. It focuses on planning for the human resource needs of the

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
		<p>Public Service. It develops and promotes policies for the efficient and effective management of the people employed under the Public Service Act.</p> <p>It conducts monitoring and evaluating of human resource management practices of the Ministries as well as providing advice and assistance on human resources management matters on request by the Ministries.</p> <p>Its 'vision' and 'mission' are "Public Service Excellence" and "to provide quality public services" respectively.</p> <p>PSC has utilised the SQA's Recognition of Foreign Qualifications Services for applications from individuals overseas who have sought employment opportunities in the public sector.</p> <p>The facilitation of scholarships for further studies and short as well as long term professional capacity building is one of its mandates.</p>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Samoa	Middle Management representatives	<p>The Samoa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAF) and Trade is responsible for the administration of Government's business with foreign countries as well as international organisations.</p> <p>It also endeavours to initiate and continue to provide high quality and professional policy advice to Government on the management of Samoa's foreign and trade relations.</p> <p>The Ministry is committed to promoting Samoa's national interests to achieve most benefits in relation to political, trade and economic and security objectives.</p> <p>All matters that required the participation and engagement of SQA at the regional and international levels whether to attend meeting and project driven initiatives are directed through MFAT.</p>
Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration	Assistant Chief Executive Officer – Policy and Planning Assistant Chief Executive Officer – Sector	<p>The Ministry deals with gathering inputs from the public to develop justice-related legislation and improve the justice system.</p> <p>The Ministry is aware of the SQA's mandated roles and functions. In particular the recognition of the foreign qualifications' services. Similarly, their awareness on the recognition of professional and community learning activities. This will help recognise their multiple trainings conducted once the quality standards and criteria are met.</p>
Accident Compensation Corporation - Samoa	Manager of Safety Promotion	<p>The Accident Compensation Corporation deals with accident compensation claims, measures undertaken in handling victim's grievances, the accidents qualified in the scheme, funding and different types of compensation.</p> <p>SQA and its PSET providers are well aware of the safety procedures and protocols to closely follow in case of accidents that may occur in the workshops during the delivery of accredited TVET programmes and their associated qualifications on the SQF.</p> <p>The claims for compensation the learners are entitled to whilst</p>

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
		using heavy tools in workshops are well informed.
Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	Senior Human Resource Officer Senior Policy Analyst	The Ministry of Community and Information Technology plays a vital role in making awareness on the safety use of the internet and its various applications. Simultaneously, the awareness on cyber security, its benefits and risks for all users, particularly the youth and public at large. MCIT is the regulator of all policies relating to Information and Communication Technology at the national level. SQA works collaboratively with MCIT as one of the core stakeholders for the development of Samoa Qualifications in ICT for the SQF levels I – IV.
Ministry of Public Enterprises	Principal Performance Analyst	The Ministry of Public Enterprises looks after all the State-owned Enterprises including SQA as one of the non-beneficiary bodies.
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Senior Finance Officer Senior Monitoring and Evaluation	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) contributes to the development of the Samoa qualifications in the field of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry for SQF levels I-IV.
Attorney General Office	Manager Corporate Services	The Attorney General Office (AGO) provides legal advice for all government ministries and State-owned Enterprises. SQA seeks advice from the AGO in all contracts pertaining to the Authority's work. AGO recruits some of its lawyers from the Pacific Islands e.g. Fiji, Vanuatu & PNG. A few interns are from Australia.
Legislative Assembly	Principal Human Resource Officer	Legislative Assembly mandate involves the parliamentary proceedings and recruitment of qualified personnel. It works in relation to SQA is based on the recruitment of qualified graduates from PSET providers both at the national and international levels.
Development Bank of Samoa	Manager Corporate Services Manager Audit	The interest indicated by most of these stakeholders are the recruitment and selection processes. As the demand for more qualified personnel, most of the positions being advertised are competitive at the local and regional levels.
Electric Power Corporation	Human Resource Manager Human Resource Development Officer	
Gambling Control Authority	Manager Human Resource & Administration Manager ICT	
Samoa Bureau of Statistics	Senior Migration Officer	
Samoa Law Reform Commission	Executive Assistant	
Land Transport Authority	Manager Corporate Services	

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
National Kidney Foundation	Principal Human Resource	
Samoa Airways	Legal Counsel	
Samoa Ports Authority	Principal Human Resource Officer	
Samoa Post Limited	Principal Finance and Administration	
Samoa Shipping Corporations	Senior Officers	
Samoa Tourism Authority	Training & Education Officer	
Samoa International Finance Authority	Senior Human Resource Officer	
Samoa Institute of Directors	Chief Executive Officer	
Unit Trust of Samoa	Principal Human Resource Officer	
Samoa Fire and Emergency Services	Commander Ambulance Officer	
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Association, Samoa	President Executive Committee Member	<p>The RACAS is an association that regulates and provides licensing for qualified tradesmen/ women for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC) area.</p> <p>The RACAS plays a vital role in the development of the Samoa qualifications in the field of RAC and its related areas. RAC has been a member of the Registration qualification panel during the review of the RAC qualifications for SQF Levels I-IV.</p>
Samoa Information Technology Association	President	The Samoa Information Technology Association (SITA) registers members as qualified IT specialists. It plays an important role in the development of the Samoa qualifications in the fields of Management of Information Systems and Communication and Technology space. The SITA is a member of the review panel and Registration of Qualifications panel.
Samoa Plumbers Association	President	<p>The Samoa Plumbers Association registers qualified plumbers and regulates plumbing works for domestic and commercial operations. It plays a vital role in the development and review of the Samoa qualifications in the field of Plumbing for the SQF levels I-IV.</p> <p>The Association has its representatives as Sector Advisory Group and Registration of Qualifications panel.</p>
PSET Providers		
Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS)	Director of Education Lecturer (CCCSFAM) Trainer/ Lecturer	<p>The PSET providers are SQA's main stakeholders.</p> <p>They continuously meeting the quality standards by satisfying the criteria and requirements of various quality assurance processes.</p>
Assembly of God in Samoa Theological	Interim Director	Almost all of the PSET providers have submitted their academic programmes to undergo the Programme Accreditation and Re-accreditation processes. A few has undertaken the quality audit

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
College		process.
Don Bosco Technical Centre	Coordinator	The graduates of these registered qualifications on the SQF are employed at the national level with others migrated overseas (including the pacific region).
Early Childhood Education Teacher Training Institute	President	From the consultation conducted on the PQR project, the PSET providers have valued their contributions by having well-
Malua Theological College	Principal Lecturer	established quality assurances processes in place to enable the comparability of SQF against the PQF and across the region, including New Zealand and Australia. This is due to the migration of Samoans with qualifications overseas as well as the seasonal working schemes in New Zealand and Australia respectively
Moamoa Theological College	Students	
National University of Samoa	Director – Quality Programmes and other Services Unit Senior Quality Assurance Officer	
Pacific Australia Pass (formerly knowns as APTC)	Country Director – Samoa/ Tonga	
Pesega TVET Institute	PTVETI Head of School	
Samoa Business Hub	Senior Trainer Principal Trainer	
Samoa Police Training Academy	Police Inspector Police Training Officer	
South Pacific Nazarene Theological College	Registrar	
Tesese Institute	Deputy Head of Institute Trainer/ Teacher in Office Administration	
University of the South Pacific	Campus Director Discipline Coordinator for Agriculture Food Technology	
Worldwide Mission Training Centre	Principal Assistant Pastor	
Private Businesses / Professional and Community Training Providers		
KL Security Services Limited	Managing Director	It is the provider of security services in Samoa. SQA has recognised one of its professional and community learning activities. Also seeking assistance in terms of quality standards. Was interested to explore its options to becoming a formal PSET provider.
Samoa Umbrella for Non-	Program Team Leader	One of the civil societies’ organisations that provides assistance in terms of project management and facilitation of technical

National Bodies	Personnel engaged	Responsibilities
Governmental Organisations		advice in various areas, such as climate change and sustainable environment. Has recognised two of its professional and community learning activities.

Stakeholder engagement overall feedback

Stakeholders were provided an overview of the report’s findings including where pertinent, the analysis of the comparability between the SQF and PQF. Stakeholder engagement was very positive with the majority:

- agreeing with the overall project benefits for Samoa
- endorsing the report’s outcomes on Samoa’s education and qualifications system
- agreeing with the work to establish comparability between the SQF and the PQF
- agreeing with the plans to strengthen Samoa’s education and qualifications system
- agreeing with the plans to strengthen the PQF.

Criterion 2: Qualifications and Standards

The SQF provides a national, integrated framework of learning achievements. The SQF facilitates access, mobility, and progression within education, training, and career pathways. The SQF is a classification tool that defines and recognises quality assured qualifications in Samoa. The SQA is the custodian of the SQF and oversees its implementation and ongoing review to ensure quality and consistency in education and training across the system.

Each of the eight quality assurance processes managed by SQA has its own register, operated and closely monitored by designated teams within the Quality Assurance Division. Central to these processes is the SQF Register, which serves as the authoritative record of all quality-assured qualifications that meet the requirements of the SQF. Inclusion in this register signifies that a qualification has successfully met national quality assurance standards and is formally recognised within Samoa’s education and training system. These forms of records are the key mechanism through which transparency, credibility, and portability of qualifications are assured for learners, providers, and employers

Procedures for Inclusion of Qualifications and Standards

The Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF)

The establishment of the SQA by the Government of Samoa reflects its commitment to strengthening the PSET sector by setting standards and criteria for providers, their academic programmes, and the qualifications they offer.

One of SQA’s key functions is to “determine a national qualifications structure for Samoa, including the definition of terms to ensure and maintain the national and international credibility of qualifications and the good standing of PSET organisations” (Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010, Section 4(1)).

Before the establishment of the SQA, providers developed and delivered their own programmes and implemented quality assurance policies with minimal technical guidance and support.

Since 2012, the SQF has undergone three reviews. The first unified national qualifications framework for all qualifications offered in Samoa was introduced in 2006 as part of SQA’s legislative mandate. SQF policies define the framework as “a technical tool that sets out a general framework for regulated PSET qualifications.”¹⁴

¹⁴ SQF Policies 2024. P.4

SQF organises quality-assured qualifications by level and type. It was developed through collaboration among the education sector, PSET providers (including higher education and TVET institutions), industry, professional associations, government and private organisations, and religious bodies.

The SQF recognizes differences in breadth and depth of qualification types without losing transparency at the national level. It is robust, flexible and improves understanding and acceptance of all qualifications within providers, between providers, with employers and other relevant stakeholders, and across borders.

The SQF's 10 levels and types of qualifications are detailed in the *Samoa Qualifications Framework 3rd Edition, 2024 pp 7 -14*, replacing the 2012 version of the SQF. Table 5 visually represents the ascending levels to indicate a clear progression of learning between levels.

Table 5: SQF qualifications mapped against levels

LEVEL	POST SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (PSET) QUALIFICATIONS
X	DOCTORAL DEGREE
IX	MASTER'S DEGREE
VIII	BACHELOR DEGREE WITH HONOURS; POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE; POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
VII	BACHELOR DEGREE; GRADUATE CERTIFICATE; GRADUATE DIPLOMA
VI	ADVANCED DIPLOMA
V	DIPLOMA
IV	CERTIFICATE
III	CERTIFICATE
II	CERTIFICATE
I	CERTIFICATE

The SQF allows flexibility for individuals and PSET providers. For example, a qualification at Level III may include components of qualifications from higher or lower levels, according to the guidelines set out in the qualification description. The SQF is also structured to provide individuals with pathways through and between work and further study.

Qualification levels, level descriptors and types

The SQF is described in terms of levels and level descriptors (learning outcomes). There are 10 levels on the SQF with Level I having the lowest complexity of learning outcomes and Level X having the highest complexity of learning outcomes (Table 6).

The generic learning outcomes of the SQF state what graduates are expected to know and be able to do following successful completion of a qualifications at a specific SQF level. The learning outcomes on the SQF are described in terms of Knowledge, Skills and Application of Knowledge and Skills (see Appendix 1).

Qualifications must also specify purpose, outcomes, level, credit values (an estimate of learning effort), specifications for the components of the qualification, and entry requirements. The qualification must include these characteristics to be registered on the SQF. Table 6 describes the SQF qualification types.

Table 6: Qualification types and definitions

Qualifications type	SQF Level	Definition of types of qualifications and levels
Doctoral degree	X	A Doctoral Degree qualifies an individual to work as an independent scholar by demonstrating the individual's capability to apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice.
Master's degree	IX	A Master's Degree qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research, a pathway for further learning, professional practice and/or scholarship. A Master's Degree usually builds on a Bachelor Degree, Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree or a Postgraduate Diploma in a specific area. It may also build on extensive relevant professional experience. The outcomes are demonstrably in advance of undergraduate study, and require individuals to engage in research and/or advanced scholarship. Master's Degrees are constituted in one discipline or coherent programme of study. They may be undertaken by taught courses or research, or by a combination of both.
Postgraduate Diploma	VIII	A Postgraduate Diploma extends and deepens an individual's knowledge and skills. It builds upon existing skills and knowledge from specified subjects, usually gained in a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate. The qualification can prepare individuals for independent research and scholarship in a specific subject.
Postgraduate Certificate		A Postgraduate Certificate extends and deepens an individual's knowledge and skills. It builds upon existing skills and knowledge from a specified subject, usually gained in a Bachelor degree in the same area.
Bachelor degree with Honours		A Bachelor degree with Honours qualifies individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a specific context to undertake research or professional work and as a pathway for research and further learning. Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning. A Bachelor degree with Honours qualification is normally available only to individuals who have achieved highly in a Level VII Bachelor level qualification and/or shown an aptitude for research. It may be embedded in a Bachelor qualification or a discrete postgraduate degree following a Bachelor Degree.
Graduate Diploma	VII	A Graduate Diploma enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue a significant body of study at an advanced undergraduate level. The Graduate Diploma can bridge people into postgraduate study and/or broaden knowledge and skills in a familiar subject or discipline, or develop knowledge in a new area. A person with a Graduate Diploma is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a new area of study or advanced

Qualifications type	SQF Level	Definition of types of qualifications and levels
		theoretical and technical knowledge in their existing discipline or professional area.
Graduate Certificate		<p>A Graduate Certificate enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue further study, usually in a new area, at an advanced undergraduate level. Its purpose is often as a bridge to postgraduate studies for people developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, profession or subject and/or to broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in another qualification.</p> <p>The qualification will provide graduates with advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work. A person with a Graduate Certificate is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree and some outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a new area of study.</p>
Bachelor		<p>A Bachelor degree provides the graduate with a systematic and coherent introduction to a body of knowledge and to problem solving techniques involved in self-directed work and study.</p> <p>A Bachelor degree involves at least one sequential study programme where content is progressively developed to form the basis of further study or professional practice.</p> <p>A Bachelor degree is a standard requirement for postgraduate studies.</p> <p>The full degree should specify a spread of credit across Levels V to VII so that the qualification demonstrates progression, reflects the requirements of the degree definition and achieves the associated learning outcomes in a way that is appropriate to the subject area.</p>
Diploma	VI	An Advanced Diploma at Level VI qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill in a specialised area which may be in a strategic context. Graduates will have broad knowledge and skill for highly skilled work or further learning.
	V	A Diploma at Level V qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill within a specific field of work or study. The graduate will be qualified for paraprofessional or skilled work.
Certificate	IV	A Certificate IV qualifies graduates with knowledge and skill to work or study in a broad or specialised field. Graduates will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skill for specialised work or study. See additional note in Section 2.6.
	III	A Certificate III qualifies graduates with knowledge and skill to perform a specific work role or to study in a specific field of study. The graduate will acquire a broad range of knowledge and skill to undertake skilled work.
	II	A Certificate II qualifies graduates with introductory knowledge and skills to enter a field of work to undertake mainly routine tasks or further study.

Qualifications type	SQF Level	Definition of types of qualifications and levels
	I	A Certificate I qualifies graduates with basic functional knowledge and skill that provide a stepping stone to entry to the workforce, further study or community engagement.

Nationally developed and provider developed qualifications

There are two broad types of qualifications that can be registered on the SQF:

1. Samoa qualifications – developed by SQA to meet national industry needs
2. Provider qualifications – developed by individual providers.

Both qualification types are required to meet the same criteria to be registered on the SQF. Table 7 outlines similarities and differences between the Samoa Qualification and a provider developed qualification.

Table 7: Similarities and differences between Samoa (national) and Provider qualifications

Criteria	Samoa/National Qualifications	Provider Qualifications
Qualification Developer	<p>Samoa Qualifications are only developed by the SQA - Qualifications Division through a process that aligns with the SQF. To develop a Samoa Qualification there must be a national priority or need for the qualifications and pathways to be developed.</p> <p>SQA facilitates stakeholder consultations to determine the needs and design standards that are aligned with industry skills and determine the scope and qualifications to be developed.</p> <p>Once Samoa Qualifications are developed or reviewed they are endorsed and validated by relevant stakeholders and industry groups.</p> <p>There are a total 101 Samoa Qualifications currently registered on the Samoa Qualifications Framework. These qualifications are mainly in the TVET domain.</p> <p>Most of the registered qualifications are at Certificate Levels I-IV</p>	<p>Provider qualifications are developed by an individual or group of providers such as universities, TVET providers, religious institutions.</p> <p>A provider qualification must satisfy the requirements for programme accreditation before it is registered on the SQF.</p> <p>There are currently 75 provider developed qualifications registered on the SQF. All PSET Providers can develop whichever programme or qualification at any level that they can offer depending on the trainers' qualifications, teaching and learning resources as well as financial support.</p>
Use of title	<p>Can use 'Samoa' and 'national' in their titles. For example, Samoa Certificate II in Information and Communication Technology.</p>	<p>Cannot use 'Samoa' or 'national' in their titles unless approved by SQA in accordance with Guidelines for the Use of the Protected Terms.</p> <p>For example: NUS Bachelor of Science in Secondary Teaching (Level VII)</p>
Development Guidelines	<p>Developed in accordance with SQA's Guidelines for the Development of Samoa Qualifications and National</p>	<p>Developed in accordance with SQA's Programme Accreditation process. The</p>

Criteria	Samoa/National Qualifications	Provider Qualifications
	<p>Competency Standards¹⁵, and meet specific protected criteria¹⁶ characteristics for the development of SQs and NCSs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational Analysis • Review • Validation <p>Endorsement There are 4 key</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>qualifications and the programme of study are developed concurrently. This ensures consistency of information across all documentation.</p>
Stakeholder Engagement	<p>Advice from the relevant Sector Advisory Group. Industry, community and education involvement through consultation and different phases of the development and review processes for Samoa qualifications.</p>	<p>Industry, community and education involvement through providers' own development and review processes, working with the provider's relevant Industry or Curriculum Advisory Group.</p>
Use of National Competency Standards (NCS).	<p>Made up of NCS.</p> <p>It is one of the NCSs for one of the Samoa qualifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MF09015 Demonstrate care and timeliness as an employee 	<p>May include up to 50% of NCSs. If the provider proposes a qualification made up of more than 50% NCSs, SQA advises the provider to use the national qualification. Providers must inform SQA of the use of NCS.</p>
Registration on the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF)	<p>The qualification is developed and registered on the SQF.</p>	<p>The qualification registration and programme accreditation happen concurrently.</p>
	<p>Registered and listed on SQF after being developed or reviewed.</p>	<p>Registered and listed on SQF once accredited.</p>
Programme Offering Requirements	<p>Registered providers can develop related programmes of study, which are then accredited by SQA before being offered.</p>	<p>Registered providers develop the qualification and programme concurrently and are accredited by SQA to offer the related programmes of study.</p>
Review Cycle	<p>It is reviewed every 5 years</p> <p>All Samoa qualifications registered on the SQF are due for review every 5 years. This is done for SQs that have not been packaged by the providers for programme delivery.</p>	<p>Have their own internal review cycles. Programmes are due for re-accreditation with SQA after 5 years, so Providers tend to follow a 5 year review cycle.</p>

Characteristics of a qualification

Under the SQF, a qualification must include the following characteristics in order to be registered:

- a purpose statement
- a title, including the qualification developer
- an outcome statement

¹⁵ See Guidelines for the Development of Samoa Qualifications and National Competency Standards; Link: <https://www.sqa.gov.ws/qualification/#qafunctions>

¹⁶ See the Samoa Qualifications Framework 3rd Edition 2024, Appendix B, Protected Terms p.43. <https://www.sqa.gov.ws/qualification/#qafunctions>

- an appropriate level
- a statement summarising industry and community support; for the qualification
- a credit value
- specifications for the components of the qualification
- entry requirements.

Examples of a Samoa qualification and a provider developed qualifications are attached as Appendix 2.

[Samoa Qualifications Register of Registered Qualifications on the SQF](#)

The SQA maintains and keeps its Registers for various Quality Assurance processes including the Register of Registered Qualifications.

The number of PSET providers with accredited programmes and registered associated qualifications are reported in the SQA Corporate Plan, Statistical Bulletins, Education Sector Plan and SQA Annual Report.

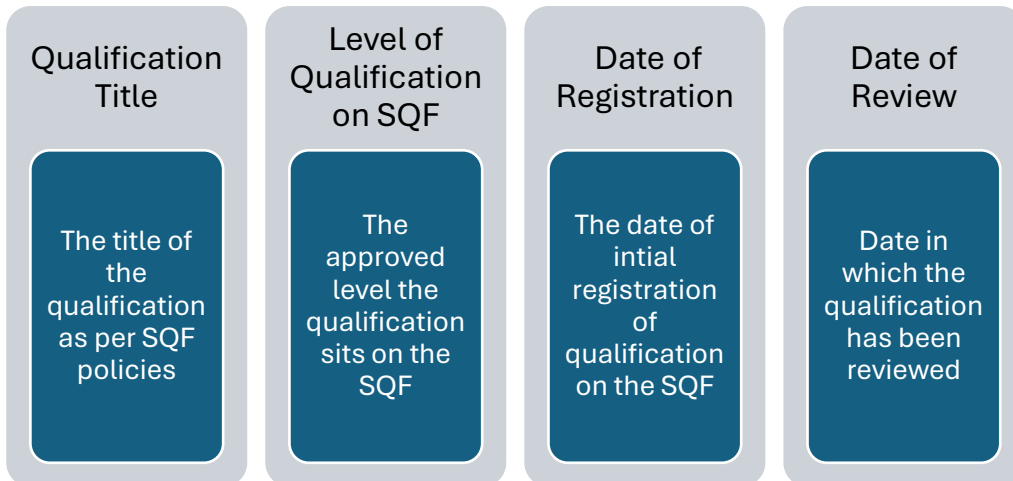
The SQA is currently working on its Strengthening Plan and part of it is to ensure that the searchable functions on the SQA website captures the registered qualifications delivered by various PSET providers. Similarly, the public accessibility to information pertaining to the providers with programmes not accredited and the summary of quality audit findings extracted from the full Quality Audit Report.

The SQA MIS has completed the database for the Quality Assurance processes. The plan is in place for training of the QA officers to input data and update information to reflect the revised forms for various processes such as programme accreditation and re-accreditation.

Key Components of the Qualifications Register (Figure 5) are:

- Qualification title
- level of qualification on SQF
- date of registration
- date of review.

Figure 5: Samoa Qualification components



Every qualification registered on the SQF must meet all the criteria for qualification registration. SQA provides a set of *Guidelines for Registration of Qualifications on the SQF 2022* (Refer to Appendix 3).

It is an offence under the Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010 to misrepresent the purpose, title, outcomes or level of a qualification registered by the SQA, or falsely or fraudulently claim that a qualification has been registered by the SQA.

SQA may consult relevant overseas institutions for qualifications at Level VIII or above, to establish the international academic and professional credibility of the proposed qualification.

National Competency Standards

Under the Samoa Qualifications Authority's 2010 Act, SQA is required to collaborate with national stakeholders to identify training needs and subsequently define occupational standards particularly for trades, technical, and professional fields. These standards, known as national competency standards (NCSs) enable education and training programs to meet the skill requirements of employers. For all the Samoa Qualifications registered on the SQF, it is approximately 866 NCSs from the different fields and subfields (*Refer to List of Samoa Qualifications on Appendix 4 and SQA Field and Subfields on Appendix 5 respectively*).

The NCSs are validated and approved by relevant national stakeholder groups, which include industry representatives, community members, professional associations, government bodies, and non-governmental organisations. The NCSs are designed through a functional analysis process to outline the necessary functions, learning outcomes, and performance standards according to SQF policies. This helps assess an individual's ability to perform tasks to the required workplace standards.

Process for developing Samoa Qualifications

The process of developing Samoa Qualifications follows four phases, as shown in Figure 6. Stakeholder engagement is an important part of each phase. A broad, sector-wide approach is used to ensure that generic skills and knowledge are integrated into competency standards for all qualifications, as these are critical across all sectors. The NCSs also consider international standards by aligning them with global benchmarks for the roles outlined in the functional map.

SQA's role in this process is overall coordination, making sure there is adequate industry representation and involvement, and ensuring adherence to SQA's templates and guidelines. A separate section in SQA reviews the draft qualification and NCSs against the SQA Quality Standards and requirements for registration

Figure 6: Samoa Qualifications Development Process



Samoa Qualifications are characterised by:

- The active participation of relevant national industry, professional, and community groups in their creation and approval.
- The inclusion of components with assigned credit values.
- The recognition of both broad, transferable generic skills and specialized industry or professional knowledge.
- A flexible framework that offers learners clear milestones, career options, and adaptable qualification pathways.

NB: locally developed qualifications are required to meet these requirements.

National Competency Standards Development

NCS's define the skills needed for effective workplace performance. They follow a standard format and are nationally endorsed by relevant stakeholders for use in a specific industry or sector, such as Tourism and Hospitality, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, Sustainable Energy and other Trade areas. It includes NCSs incorporated in PCLs and PQs.

NCS for Generic Skills are developed and registered on the SQF separately and providers can include them when designing their provider qualifications. PSET providers can use up to 50% NCS content and still call it a provider qualification.

SQA sets up Sector Advisory Groups, which consist of key stakeholders who provide technical advice for a specific sector for which the NCSs are being developed;

- At least 2 representatives from the private sector. These representatives should be affiliated with the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour-registered businesses
- At least 2 representatives of non-governmental organisations and community-Based organisations
- At least 2 representatives of PSET providers recommended by SQA
- A representative from each government body with mandated responsibility for the sector
- Representatives from relevant incorporated professional associations
- 2 SQA members.

Allocating Qualifications and Standards to SQF Levels

The SQF has 10 levels, defined by level descriptors that outline knowledge, skills, and their application (Appendix 1).

Qualification developers (SQA and providers), define what learners will be able to know, do and apply as learning outcomes. They then use the level descriptors to assign levels to these learning outcomes. These outcomes guide teaching methods, assessments, and evaluation of students learning in programme design and implementation.

Before a qualification can be registered on the SQF, SQA evaluators review the levels to which qualification developers have assigned the learning outcomes and work with the developers to ensure consistency across all qualifications on the SQF. The qualification registration panel is a combination of experts in the particular field pertaining to the programme to be registered under the guidance of SQA.

SQA engages the qualification registration panel made up of industry and subject matter experts and academics to evaluate programmes to ensure they meet the quality standards for programme accreditation and qualifications registration. The development and evaluation of Samoa Qualifications are operationalized by separate divisions with SQA. Independent panel members ensure the integrity of the process for registering Samoa Qualifications on the SQF.

Validation of Learning

Learning outcomes play a crucial role in validating learning, as they provide clear expectations for what

learners should know, understand, and be able to do. These outcomes help providers measure the performance of skills and knowledge to the specified standards outlined in the qualifications for each sector. Well-defined learning outcomes are essential for educators to determine the appropriate methods for assessing and evaluating students' understanding of key competencies.

Registration of Qualifications on the SQF

Qualifications must meet all qualifications registration criteria to be registered on the SQF. The SQF only registers full qualifications, not individual short courses or sub-sets of a full qualification¹⁷, though components may be recorded if the provider agrees and follows SQA-approved formats. All registered qualifications and their NCS are documented in the Quality Assured Qualifications Register.

Qualifications levels related to education provision in the country

There are two secondary school qualifications - the Samoa School Certificate (SSC) and the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate (SSLC), for Years 10 and 12. These qualifications are administered by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and are not currently registered on the SQF. The inclusion of the SSLC qualification on the SQF has been discussed by the SQA and MEC who are the owners and responsible for the secondary school qualifications.

Both secondary qualifications are used as key entry pathways into PSET at various SQF levels. This aligns with one of the SQF's core functions to promote connections and learning pathways between the school and PSET sector.

There are examples of secondary schools offering Samoa Qualifications to students alongside mainstream subjects. These vocational qualifications and pathways are popular among students and schools as another pathway and option to traditional subjects.

The Samoa Certificates III and IV in seven trade areas¹⁸ are now used in the revised three-year apprenticeship structure, replacing the previous four-year scheme. The NUS submitted the programme for these qualifications, which were accredited in 2023.

The foundation programmes offered by the NUS have been accredited, and their corresponding qualifications are registered on the SQF at Level IV. These include:

- NUS Certificate IV in Foundation Science
- NUS Certificate IV in Foundation Agriculture
- NUS Certificate IV in Tropical Horticulture
- NUS Certificate IV in Computer Operating

Most TVET providers offer qualifications at Level II of the SQF, including both provider and Samoa qualifications in various trade areas. This provides valuable opportunities for learners interested in pursuing careers in the trades.

Higher education institutions, including theological colleges, offer qualifications starting from Level IV and above on the SQF.

Participation in professional and community learning activities can also serve as a clear pathway into formal programmes that lead to recognized qualifications.

Qualifications that are not part of the SQF

The Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) was an international PSET provider that existed until 2024 and delivered programmes that were not registered on the SQF. APTC delivered programmes that are

¹⁷ Components can be referred to National Competency Standard (NCS), subject or module.

¹⁸ Automotive Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Carpentry, Fitting and Machining, Plumbing, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning and Welding.

developed by its parent body, TAFE Queensland, and some were aligned with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The APTC programme has been disestablished and TAFE Queensland has since taken on registration for 2025.

University of the South Pacific

USP identifies regional needs for education and training and uses one of the following approaches for qualifications development:

- Bespoke development of regional qualifications using USP's internal academic processes to align with internal requirements and the requirements of the Fiji National Qualifications Framework (FNQF). This is the university's dominant model at all levels.
- Identification of an existing qualification offered elsewhere that aligns with the needs of the region. Pacific TAFE has used this model for most of its vocational programmes, drawing on qualifications from the AQF. In this case, qualifications are subsequently accredited by the Higher Education Commission Fiji (HECF) and placed on the FNQF.

USP develops qualifications through its curriculum and program approval process, which has the following steps:

- Establish an advisory committee, with regional representation, including industry, academic and student representatives
- Draft programme proposal - overall programme outcomes, learning outcomes, level, volume of learning, assessment approach and delivery approach
- Advisory committee feedback
- Board of Studies for the relevant university department endorsement
- Academic Unit Standards and Quality Committee endorsement
- Academic Programmes Committee endorsement
- Senate approval
- Council final approval
- Submission to HECF, approval and listing on the FNQF.

While USP is a regional university governed by 12 Pacific countries, in Samoa, USP is also required to meet the national requirements in which it delivers education and training programmes.

In April 2025, the University of the South Pacific (USP) submitted five Agriculture programmes delivered at its Alafua Campus for Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) programme accreditation process. These programmes are:

- Bachelor of Agriculture
- Bachelor of Commerce (Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Agriculture
- Master of Agriculture
- Doctor of Philosophy in Agriculture

USP has also indicated its intention to submit a work plan by mid-November 2025 to address the requirements and recommendations outlined in the Programme Accreditation reports. The University has consistently complied with SQA quality standards and criteria across various quality assurance processes, including Annual Registration Renewal and Programme Accreditation.

As Pacific countries develop national qualifications frameworks, this means qualifications being offered in that country may need to be approved by the national regulatory body and listed on the national framework. The majority of USP's programmes are offered in Fiji and are required to be registered on the Fiji National Qualifications Framework.

Over the last 6 years, between 600 and 730 learners each year, have enrolled in USP programmes across all levels, from foundation and vocational certificates to post-graduate and masters programmes. Table 8

details the requirements for USP for the qualification types that have been offered at the USP Alafua campus in the last 6 years.

Table 8: Qualification types studied at USP Alafua Campus and associated requirements

Qualification type	Requirements
Certificate III (Pacific TAFE)	Level 3 on the FNQF 40-60 credits ¹⁹ (400-600 learning hours, FNQF system) A minimum of 40 credits at the level of the qualification or above Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts, and are used to prepare candidates for both employment and further education and training. Entry requirements into certificate level qualifications can vary depending on the level of the certificate and the degree of technical difficulty.
Certificate IV (Pacific TAFE)	Level 4 on the FNQF 40-110 credits ²⁰ (400-1100 learning hours, FNQF system) A minimum of 40 credits at the level of the qualification or above Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts, and are used to prepare candidates for both employment and further education and training. Entry requirements into certificate level qualifications can vary depending on the level of the certificate and the degree of technical difficulty.
Diploma (Pacific TAFE)	Level 5 on the FNQF 80-160 credits (800 -1600 learning hours, FNQF system) A minimum of 72 credits from the level of the qualifications with the remainder able to be from the level below Purpose: To qualify individuals with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skills within a specific field of work or study
Advanced Diploma/ Associate Degree (Pacific TAFE)	Level 6 on the FNQF 120-200 credits (1200-2000 learning hours, FNQF system) A minimum of 72 credits from the level of the qualifications with the remainder able to be from the level below Purpose: To qualify individuals with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skills within a specialized/ strategic context
Certificate (USP schools)	Level 7 on FNQF Minimum 45 credit points ²¹ (1125-1350 hours notional learning time, Bologna system) Certificate programmes provide short academic programmes appropriate to the acquisition of basic knowledge and operational skills, together with an introduction to the theoretical aspects of the areas of study. Where the Certificate is part of a staircasing arrangement, all the credits from the Certificate may be transferred to the Diploma programme. Where the Certificate is not part of a staircasing programme only 50% of the credits may be transferred to the Diploma programme. Admission requirements follow the admission requirements for degree programmes.
Diploma (USP Schools)	Level 7 on the FNQF Minimum 60 credit points (1500-1800 hours notional learning time, Bologna system) The Diploma programme is an expansion of the Certificate programme Students completing a Diploma may continue into the Bachelor's Degree.

¹⁹ On the FNQF 1 credit is 10 learning hours, 1 year full time study is 120 credits, 1200 learning hours
form.readdoc.php

²⁰ On the FNQF 1 credit is 10 learning hours

²¹ USP define 1 credit point as 25-30 learning hours, following the Bologna system, 1 year full time study is 60 credit points, 1500-1800 hours notional learning time - form.readdoc.php

	<p>Where the Diploma is part of a staircasing arrangement, all the credits from the Diploma may be transferred to the Bachelor's programme. Where the Diploma is not part of a staircasing programme only 50% of the credits may be transferred to the degree programme.</p> <p>Students admitted to degree programmes must pass at least 75% of 100-level courses required for the programme before progressing to the 200-level courses, and 75% of 200-level courses required for the programme before progressing to 300- level.</p>
Bachelor degree (USP Schools)	<p>Level 7 on the FNQF</p> <p>3 year Bachelor - 180 credit points (4500-5400 notional learning time, Bologna system)</p> <p>4 year Prescribed Bachelor – 240 credit points – (6000-7200 notional learning time, Bologna system)</p> <p>5 year Combined Bachelor – 300 credit points (7500-9000 notional learning time, Bologna system)</p>
Professional Diploma (USP Schools)	<p>Level 8 on the FNQF</p> <p>Minimum of 60 credit points (1500-1800 hours notional learning time, Bologna system)</p>
Postgraduate Certificate (USP Schools)	<p>Level 8 on the FNQF</p> <p>3 Minimum of 30 credit points (750-900 hours notional learning time, Bologna system)</p>
Postgraduate Diploma	<p>Level 8 on FNQF</p> <p>Minimum of 60 credit points (1500-1800 hours notional learning time, Bologna system)</p>
Masters (USP Schools)	<p>Level 9 on FNQF</p> <p>Minimum of 120 credit points (3000-3600 hours notional learning time, Bologna system)</p> <p>Where the Masters builds upon 4 years of prior study successfully completed at Bachelor Degree Level or above, it can be fewer than 120 credit points, but no fewer than 60 credit points. All credit points for a Master's Degree must be achieved at Levels 8 and 9</p>
PhD (USP Schools)	<p>Level 10 On FNQF</p> <p>To be eligible for the award of a Ph.D. Degree, a student must complete at least 180 credit points (4500-5400 hours notional learning time, Bologna system). All credit points for a Ph.D. Degree must be achieved at Level 10.</p> <p>Level 9 credit points will be counted for Master's students who upgrade their Master's thesis degree to a Ph.D.</p>

The USP Alafua Campus are systematically progressing the submission of its programmes for accreditation. To date USP have submitted five programmes, in agriculture, to undergo SQA's accreditation process. More qualifications will be submitted over time, as USP looks to have its qualifications registered on the SQF.

USP's Workforce Development Training Unit, within Pacific TAFE, develop continuing and community education programmes to meet a mix of regional and local needs. USP have submitted many of these courses to be recognised under SQA's Professional and Community Learning framework.

Continuing and community education goes through USPs internal quality assurance process however is not systematically quality assured because these programmes or short courses do not meet the definition of a full qualification.

Criterion 3: Link to PQF qualification levels

Level alignment process

As a part of the Criterion 3 process, the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF) was compared against the Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF) using level descriptor, qualification types and qualifications examples comparison.

The SQF is a ten-level national qualifications framework (NQF) for Samoa. All tertiary qualifications accredited by SQA are listed on the SQF.

The PQF was established in 2009 following decisions made by Pacific Ministers of Education. As a part of the PQR project, the PQF is being reviewed with opportunities for strengthening being identified. The PQF is a ten-level regional qualifications framework that is designed to support recognition of Pacific qualifications by acting as an agreed benchmark between Pacific countries and other countries for how levels of NQFs and the qualifications in national qualifications systems can be compared and understood across the region. The PQF can also act as an NQF for countries that do not have their own NQF.

SQA carried out comparative analysis, which compared the SQF level descriptors and qualification types against the PQF. To test the level alignment initial findings, SQA, NZQA and SPC then carried out further analysis using selected qualifications from Samoa, the PQF and another from the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework²² participating in the referencing process.

Table 9: Qualification testing process (testing levelling outcomes)

Process	Steps
Process 1 – comparing national qualifications to the PQF	Samoa compared 3 national qualifications (qualifications documents) to the Pacific Qualification Framework - this was to determine where the qualification might sit on the Pacific Qualifications Framework, double checking levelling outcomes. SPC also tested how they would list one qualification from the Samoa Qualifications Framework on the PQF.
Process 2 – comparing a PQF qualification to the NQF	Samoa checked how 2 qualifications from the PQF would compare to their own national framework (double checking levelling outcomes).
Process 3 – comparing another national qualification to the NQF	Samoa checked how one qualification from another NQF would be ‘recognised’ in their own national system – as in how it could be compared with levels and qualifications on the national framework, double checking levelling outcomes.

The NZQA Qualifications Recognition Service also carried out ‘recognition’ analysis on selected qualifications from Samoa. The PQR project team collated the national analysis which was shared at the June 2025 in-person workshop, enabling SQA to identify and understand similarities and differences in:

- the kinds of qualifications listed on levels of each framework
- learning outcomes i.e. definitions of what a learner can be expected to know, understand and do as a result of a learning experience
- qualification's purpose
- graduate pathways for learners who complete qualifications.

The overall analysis looking at level descriptors, qualification types and specific qualification examples

²² Level 7 Bachelor of Teaching (Primary)

found that generally there is a high level of comparability between the SQF and the PQF, although as expected, there are some differences in the use of terminology, and minor differences in qualification type descriptors and associated requirements. The following is an overall summary of the analysis carried out with more detailed analysis found in Appendix 6.

Methodological approach

To determine the comparability of the SQF and PQF levels, the following elements were used:

- structural comparison of the two frameworks – comparing the concepts of learning outcomes and the way the levels are defined
- technical comparison of the two frameworks included a linguistic/textual analysis and comparison of the level descriptors in both frameworks
- contextual matching – use of typical examples of qualifications types linked to levels to enrich the context.

Appendix 6 highlights the level descriptors and qualification type descriptions for both the SQF and PQF. The two frameworks were compared using the above approach, with colour coding to depict what was similar (green) or different (orange) between the level descriptors and qualification type descriptions. Key concepts were noted for what was similar and different between the frameworks.

Table 10 is an example of how the comparison was carried out for Level 2 from the SQF and PQF. Where something was deemed different, a ‘best fit’ approach was applied. This is used when an exact match between levels and types cannot be made, and the overall information is analysed to decide where a ‘best fit’ level compares with another. In practice, during this process the concept of ‘best fit’ was not used, as there is a high level of comparability between the terms and concepts used in the SQF and NZQCF, with some differences in domain structures and the application of the concept of ‘autonomy’.

Key concepts were compared between the NZQCF and PQF. The comparison found:

- The language of the knowledge learning outcomes of both frameworks is very similar, at this level though with structural differences in the domains.
- The key difference between the SQF and PQF level descriptors is in the use of the concept of ‘autonomy’. The SQF considers autonomy in learning, whereas the PQF considers autonomy in the workplace – this was a common finding across all the level comparisons. A close reading of the SQF *application* domain and the PQF *autonomy* domain was required to make the comparison, along with analysis of qualifications to test for differences.
- Both frameworks refer to *factual and operational knowledge* (facts and operations) and students having skills where they can apply *known solutions to problems or issues*.
- Both frameworks refer to students learning with *general supervision or close support and direction* highlighting the support still provided at this level.
- The SQF refers to *collaboration with others* which is not explicit in the PQF level descriptors, however when reviewing the PQF Level 2 Sustainable Energy qualification, a graduate should be able to demonstrate that they have *collaborate(d) with others*.

Overall, it was deemed that SQF and PQF Level 2 are comparable, with key concepts around knowledge, skills and application/autonomy being similar.

Table 10: Example of Level 2 SQF and PQF comparison

SQF		PQF		
Knowledge: Graduates will have knowledge of basic facts or of operations relevant to work in a defined context	Certificate Level 2		Certificate Level 2	
	Levels and credits	Level 2: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level II or above. Guideline maximum 80	Knowledge and skills: are factual or manual or operational	Levels and credits

<p>and/or for learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate in order to apply known processes and known solutions to problems that are familiar. Graduates will have the skills to apply known methods, tools and materials in work or further learning</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in structured contexts under general supervision in collaboration with others</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>A Certificate II qualifies graduates with introductory knowledge and skills to enter a field of work to undertake mainly routine tasks or further study.</p>	<p>Application:</p> <p>are structured and stable</p> <p>involve straightforward issues that are addressed by set, known solutions</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1–4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).</p>
	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>Autonomy:</p> <p>close support and direction or</p> <p>guidance minimal judgement or discretion required</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>

Structural comparison

To fully understand each PQF and SQF level, the following principles must be considered:

Table 11: PQF and SQF principles that guided comparison

PQF	SQF
The level descriptors refer to both work and study contexts and reflect specialisations as well as generalisations	
To distinguish between levels and express the increased complexity of learning outcomes, key words are used as indicators of threshold levels e.g. PQF level 1: ‘basic foundational knowledge’ and PQF level 8: ‘highly advanced knowledge’; PQF level 1: ‘immediate support and clear direction’ and PQF level 10: ‘independent and original thinking’	To distinguish between levels and express the increased complexity of learning outcomes, key words are used as indicators of threshold levels e.g. SQF level 1: ‘functional knowledge’ and SQF level 8: ‘advanced theoretical and technical knowledge’; SQF level 1: ‘under direction and supervision’ and SQF level 10: ‘independent researcher.. authoritative judgement’
Each level builds on and subsumes the levels beneath	
Each qualification type sits on one of the levels	
Each level is based on the complexity of outcomes, with level one the least complex and level ten the most complex.	

Both the SQF and PQF have 10 levels, and have three domains, although the titles differ, with SQF including Knowledge, Skills and Application, whilst PQF includes Knowledge and Skills, Application and Autonomy. In the SQF ‘Application’ is described as the context in which a graduate applies knowledge and skills – the SQF also explicitly references a Samoan cultural context. In the PQF, the two domains ‘Application and Autonomy’ both capture the application of knowledge and skills. The SQF ‘Application’ and PQF ‘Application and Autonomy’ domains highlight a level of accountability and responsibility as the levels increase. The dimensions covered in the SQF ‘Skills’ domain are all contained in the PQF. However, rather than being contained in a single domain in the PQF, they may be found (albeit quite broadly) across the three domains.

The SQF has 14 qualification types listed on their framework, whereas the PQF has 15 qualification types.

The SQF does not explicitly mention qualification entry requirements across all the levels, although some entry requirements are clarified in the 'characteristics of a qualification' section of the SQF documentation. In line with the SQF requirements, education providers, when designing qualifications, are required to define admission criteria based on the qualification level and type, so individual qualification entry requirements are established at the programme design and approval stage, in alignment with the SQF level descriptors. The PQF has explicit entry requirements for the higher levels such as; the Graduate Certificate Level 7, Graduate Diploma Level 7, Postgraduate Certificate Level 8, Postgraduate Diploma Level 8, Master's Level 9 and Doctoral Degree Level 10. The credit requirements from Level 1 – Level 4 qualifications differ between the SQF and PQF.

Qualification type names can differ between the PQF and SQF, although learning outcomes appear comparable. As an example, the SQF has an Advance Diploma at Level 6 however the learning outcomes appear comparable to the PQF Diploma Level 6. The use of the terminology 'Advance Diploma' seems to be to differentiate between Diploma Level 5 and the diploma qualification offered in Level 6 of the SQF.

Not all the PQF qualification types are applicable for every national system, as the range of PQF qualifications was originally designed for relevance to the range of different kinds of national qualifications available across diverse Pacific countries. As an example, the PQF also has an Associate Degree qualification type (drawn from qualifications typically available in countries connected with US education traditions) that focuses 'on learning within a work context, underpinned by both vocational and academic understanding' which is a learning outcome that is not comparable to any other qualification in the SQF. As it stands, a PQF Associate Degree qualification has yet to be developed for the Pacific.

Technical comparison

Both frameworks include concepts of making judgements, supervision, leadership and responsibility in the 'Application' domain / 'Application and Autonomy' domains, although the SQF also includes working and communicating/working with others (Level 2-10), whereas the PQF does not.

The 'Autonomy' domain is the key domain that appears different to the structure of the level descriptors of the SQF. The 'Autonomy' domain for the PQF describes autonomy in a working environment. The SQF 'application' domain refers to levels of autonomy in learning. While these differences appear potentially substantial, a broader look at the qualification type definitions in each framework shows greater comparability than the level descriptors alone show. In completing the referencing analysis, the advice of the NZQA Qualifications Recognition Service was sought on how differences in 'autonomy' are treated for the purpose of individual qualifications recognition: in recognition, it is generally considered too subject to judgement to be able to consider it an appropriate measure for determining 'substantial' difference.

The focus on specialisation comes through at different levels for both frameworks. For the PQF, Level 5, 6, 9 and 10 focus on one area/discipline, Level 7-8 focus on one or more areas/discipline, and Level 1-2 does not specify a focus area. For the SQF, Level 2-6 and Level 10 focus on one area/discipline, Level 7 and 9 focus on one or more areas/discipline, and Level 1 and 8 do not specify a focus area. However this is not considered a substantial difference between the two frameworks, but rather is a focus on the depth of learning.

Overall analysis

Overall there is a high level of comparability between the levels of the SQF and PQF, with two of the level descriptor domains being closely comparable, and the third area found to be somewhat different but not 'substantially' different. The PQF Autonomy domain is different to the relevant parts of the SQF descriptors as it defines autonomy in the workplace, whereas the SQF defines autonomy in learning. However, this is not considered a 'substantial' difference – when looking at the analysis of qualification examples, the expression of 'autonomy' in the learning outcomes of the SQF and PQF qualification examples appear generally comparable. Advice from the NZQA Qualifications Recognition Service has also noted that 'autonomy' is a secondary area of consideration when recognising qualifications, as it is

an area that is subject to judgement. On balance, the analysis found that the level alignment is comparable, especially once taking into consideration the more detailed work to compare qualification examples to levels of the PQF.

Where there are differences in credit requirements for PQF and SQF qualifications, this has not been treated as a ‘substantial’ difference, noting that the volume of learning in qualifications can vary between systems. The minimum credit requirement for all levels is the same, the upper limit that can vary. A key consideration will be to ensure that where regional qualifications are designed for use in national systems that the credits align with national limits where needed.

For both frameworks, most of the qualification types are similar at each level, except for the PQF Level 6 Associate Degree which has no comparable qualification in the SQF.

Table 12: Level outcome table

SQF	PQF
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

Level to level comparisons
2 level descriptor domains comparable, 1 different – but not substantially different Some qualification type definitions different, but not substantially different

Table 13: Level to level outcome summary

Level 1	<p>For Level 1, the level descriptors are similar, the SQF describes ‘functional knowledge’ which has some comparability to how the PQF describes ‘basic, foundational’ knowledge. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy as well as collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions are comparable, with both frameworks noting generic definitions for their learning outcomes. The minimum credit requirement for both the SQF and PQF Level 1 Certificate is 40 credits, however the maximum requirements differ, with the SQF being 80 credits and the PQF being up to 120 credits. This is not a substantial difference as maximum credit requirements can differ, as long as the minimum credit requirements are the same, which in this context they are.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 1 and SQF Level 1 are comparable.</p>
Level 2	<p>For Level 2, the level descriptors are similar, with the SQF describing knowledge as ‘basic facts or operations’ that is comparable to PQF’s ‘factual’ ‘manual’ and ‘operational’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy as well as collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions are comparable, with both frameworks noting generic definitions for their learning outcomes. The minimum credit requirement for both the SQF and PQF Level 2 Certificate is 40 credits, however the maximum requirements differ, with the SQF being 80 credits and the PQF being up to 120 credits. This is not a substantial difference as maximum credit requirements can differ, as long as the minimum credit requirements are the same, which in this context they are.</p>

	<p>Overall, PQF Level 2 and SQF Level 2 are comparable.</p>
Level 3	<p>For Level 3, the level descriptors are similar, with the SQF describing knowledge as ‘facts and procedures and technical’ that is comparable to PQF’s ‘factual’ ‘procedural’ ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy, responsibility as well as collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions are comparable, with both frameworks noting generic definitions for their learning outcomes. The minimum credit requirement for both the SQF and PQF Level 3 Certificate is 40 credits, however the maximum requirements differ, with the SQF being 120 credits and the PQF being up to 240 credits. This is not a substantial difference as maximum credit requirements can differ, as long as the minimum credit requirements are the same, which in this context they are.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 3 and SQF Level 3 are comparable.</p>
Level 4	<p>For Level 4, the level descriptors are similar, with the SQF describing knowledge as ‘facts’ ‘theoretical’ and ‘practical’ which has comparability to ‘factual’ ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’ in the PQF. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy, responsibility as well as collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions are comparable, with both frameworks noting generic definitions for their learning outcomes. The minimum credit requirement for both the SQF and PQF Level 4 Certificate is 40 credits, however the maximum requirements differ, with the SQF being 120 credits and the PQF being up to 240 credits. This is not a substantial difference as maximum credit requirements can differ, as long as the minimum credit requirements are the same, which in this context they are.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 4 and SQF Level 4 are comparable.</p>
Level 5	<p>For Level 5, the level descriptors are similar, both describe knowledge that is ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy, responsibility and collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions are comparable, with both frameworks offering generic learning outcomes. The minimum and maximum credit requirements are the same for both the PQF and SQF Level 5 Diploma.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 5 and SQF Level 5 are comparable.</p>
Level 6	<p>For Level 6, the level descriptors are very similar, both describe knowledge that is ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy, responsibility and collaboration with others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>The SQF offers an Advanced Diploma at Level 6, however this seems comparable with the PQF Diploma at Level 6, with comparable learning outcomes and credit requirements. PQF also has an associate degree Level 6 that focuses on learning both in academia but also within a work placement which is not comparable to any other qualification in SQF.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 6 Diploma and SQF Level 6 Advanced Diploma are comparable. The PQF Level Associate Degree is not comparable to other qualifications offered in the SQF.</p>
Level 7	<p>For Level 7, the level descriptors are very similar, both describe knowledge that is ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy as well as communicating ideas to others, these are not substantive differences.</p>

	<p>Qualification type definitions and credit requirements are comparable, with both frameworks offering generic learning outcomes and similar minimum and maximum credits.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 7 and SQF Level 7 are comparable.</p>
Level 8	<p>For Level 8, the level descriptors are very similar, both describe knowledge that is ‘advanced’, ‘technical’ and ‘theoretical’. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy as well as communicating ideas to others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions and credit requirements are comparable, with both frameworks offering generic learning outcomes and similar minimum and maximum credits.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 8 and SQF Level 8 are comparable.</p>
Level 9	<p>For Level 9, the level descriptors are very similar, with both frameworks noting ‘advanced’ or ‘mastery’ of an understanding of a complex body of knowledge. While there are some distinctions between the PQF and SQF definitions for autonomy and communicating to others, these are not substantive differences.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions and credit requirements are comparable, with both frameworks offering generic learning outcomes and similar minimum and maximum credits.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 9 and SQF Level 9 are comparable.</p>
Level 10	<p>For Level 10, the level descriptors are similar, with both frameworks describing a ‘complex body of knowledge’ ‘research’, and ‘original knowledge/thinking’. There is comparability between the PQF and SQF on their definitions for autonomy.</p> <p>Qualification type definitions and credit requirements are comparable, with both frameworks offering generic learning outcomes and similar minimum and maximum credits.</p> <p>Overall, PQF Level 10 and SQF Level 10 are comparable.</p>

Criterion 4: Quality Assurance of Education and Training

Assuring Quality Education

Quality assurance in education is defined as: *“All activity which ensures that the educational services of an organisation are being delivered effectively and efficiently and are in line with published goals and objectives. Quality assurance should be conducted in the first instance by an educational organisation to ensure it is delivering education services to a high standard, and also by an external regulatory body, verifying that the education services are meeting prescribed standards”*.²³

International best practice²⁴ shows that national educational quality assurance systems contain two important interrelating levels:

- Within the organisation – a reliable internal *quality management system*²⁵ focused on ensuring the quality of the education and training services provided.
- At the national level – a process of external evaluation and accreditation by an independent standard setting agency according to procedures and standards advertised by the agency.

²³ Quality Assurance Policies 2022 p.10

²⁴ See Samoa Qualifications Authority Self-Review Report for External Review against the Asia Pacific Quality Register, February 2022, pp 11 – 27.

²⁵ Quality management system is comprised of policies, processes, systems that the provider has in place to guide their operations. Various committees, governing body and approval processes are included.

SQA has adopted a single set of quality standards to state requirements that PSET providers must meet in order to deliver education and training in Samoa; institutional registration (accreditation), and programmatic accreditation. PSET providers are encouraged to use the 10 SQA Quality Standards for internal monitoring, quality assurance and quality improvement of their activities.

Table 14: SQA Quality Standards

#	Standard
Standard 1	Organisation
Standard 2	Programme Development and Review
Standard 3	Programme Delivery
Standard 4	Assessment and Moderation
Standard 5	Reporting Learner Achievement
Standard 6	Financial Resources
Standard 7	Physical and Learning Resources
Standard 8	Personnel
Standard 9	Learner Information, Entry and Support
Standard 10	Research, Applied Research, Field and Project Work (if applicable)

Quality Assurance of Secondary Education

The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) is responsible for coordinating and monitoring quality assurance in primary and secondary education. As the central agency, it oversees national assessments at various levels, such as the Samoa School Certificate (SSC) for Year 10 and the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate (SSLC) for Year 12.

The revised SQF policy and guidelines has provisions for accrediting and listing Senior secondary school qualifications on the framework. SQA have held several discussions with the MEC about listing these qualifications on the SQF. Listing senior secondary qualifications on the framework would promote pathways and linkages to PSET and assist with admissions into overseas universities and other institutions.

Quality Assurance of PSET

SQA undertakes the following processes to quality assure PSET providers:

- Provider Registration
- Annual Registration Renewal (ARR)
- Programme Accreditation (PA) and Re-accreditation
- National External Moderation
- Workplace Assessments
- Quality Audit
- Recognition of Professional and Community Learning
- Qualifications Registration.

Provider Registration

The purpose of provider registration is to only allow institutions with proven capacity and capability to operate as PSET providers. There are three stages in PSET provider registration:

- Stage 1: Provider Listing
- Stage 2: Provider Registration
- Stage 3: Annual Registration Renewal

To list as a PSET provider, an organisation must complete a Provider Listing form, providing information on the organisation, details, the nature of its expected education and training activities, and the profile of

potential students by programme and Enrolment Plan.

To be registered as a PSET provider, the organisation has to provide information and evidence that it meets the Quality Standards that apply to provider registration.²⁶ Registered PSET providers renew their registration annually. There are only seven quality standards and criteria to satisfy for provider registration. These are:

- Standard 1: Organisation
- Standard 5: Reporting Learner Achievement
- Standard 6: Financial Resources
- Standard 7: Physical and Learning Resources
- Standard 8: Personnel
- Standard 9: Learner Information, Entry and Support
- Standard 10: Research (if applicable)

A registered provider must begin offering an accredited programme within two years (24 months) from the date of initial registration. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the registration. However, this period may be extended upon request and approval by the Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA). The purpose of annual registration renewal is to:

- Confirm the ongoing operations of a registered PSET provider, including data provided by the provider to SQA
- Inform SQA of changes made to programmes
- Support providers to continuously meet the SQA Quality Standards and ensure SQA support is relevant and targeted
- Inform SQA of the improvements made by a provider in relation to maintaining and meeting the requirements of the Quality Standards
- Monitor the implementation of recommendations made through provider registration or programme accreditation processes
- Provide SQA with an overview of the risks and challenges faced by providers, in order to support the PSET sector to address these challenges
- Provide feedback on how providers view their interactions with SQA
- Maintain good relations and collaboration between SQA and PSET providers.

Annual Registration Renewal focuses on 7 of the 10 Quality Standards as indicated above.

Programme Accreditation

The purpose of programme accreditation is to ensure that the programme meets the requirements of the Samoa Qualifications Framework and is of good quality²⁷, and that the provider has the appropriate resources to deliver the programme. SQA contracts subject matter expertise from PSET providers, industry and professional bodies as well as international academics for programmes from Level VII and above. For programmes from Levels I to VI, experts are recruited mainly from the national level.

All universities present in Samoa are subject to SQA programmatic accreditation, and submit annual workplans to indicate how many programmes they will submit to SQA for programme accreditation. SQA is aware of the universities' internal quality assurance processes undertaken. With SQA's mandate, these universities rely on the Authority capacity as the national quality assurance agency for the external review of their academic programmes.

In the SQA Act, it is not compulsory for PSET providers to have their programmes accredited by SQA, so not all programmes offered by PSET providers in Samoa are accredited by SQA. SQA has asked providers

²⁶ See Guidelines and Form for Post School Education and Training Provider Registration – Application Form, p.11

²⁷ See Quality Standards and Criteria for Programme Accreditation - See Guidelines and Form for PSET Programme Accreditation and Re-accreditation 2022, p

to provide information about all the qualifications they deliver. SQA captures information about qualifications offered by providers, including those that are not accredited by SQA through its tracer studies conducted tri-annually. There are 100+ qualifications offered by Samoan education providers that are not accredited by SQA.

SQA engages a panel of independent experts from academia, industry, and employers to carry out the programme accreditation process. Facilitated by SQA the panel members evaluates programme applications against Quality Standards 2-4:

- Standard 2 – Programme Development and Review
- Standard 3 – Programme Delivery
- Standard 4 – Assessment and Moderation.

Accreditation of the programme is valid for a period of five years. If a provider wishes to continue to offer a programme legally beyond the first period of programme accreditation, the provider must apply for re-accreditation of the programme.

Re-accreditation of accredited programmes verifies that a provider continues to meet the standards and criteria established during the initial accreditation.

Reaccreditation is also achieved with an independent panel consisting of expertise from the industry, academia, and employers. Reaccreditation focuses on Standards 2, 3 & 4 with all the criteria applied. Reaccreditation, also applies selected criteria from standards 5 to 10 where they are applicable to the delivery of the programme²⁸:

- Standard 2 – Programme Development and Review (all criteria)
- Standard 3 – Programme Delivery (all criteria)
- Standard 4 – Assessment and Moderation (all criteria)
- Standard 5 – Reporting Learner Achievement (1 criterion)
- Standard 6 – Financial Resources (1 criterion)
- Standard 7 – Physical and Learning Resources (1 criterion)
- Standard 8 – Personnel (2 criteria)
- Standard 9 – Learner Information Entry and Support (3 criteria)
- Standard 10 – Research or Applied Research and Project Work in the case of TVET (if applicable) (3 criteria).

National External Moderation

It is the quality checking of assessment tools, decisions, and approaches to ensure they are consistent, fair and sufficient and valid. It is usually conducted by a Quality Assurance agency and involves the contribution of PSET providers and assessors. In Samoa, National External Moderation (NEM) includes both pre-moderation and post-moderation processes. SQA coordinates the national moderation of assessment against National Competency Standards and the Samoa Qualifications, to maintain the integrity of the National Competency Standards and the Samoa Qualifications awarded to learners. There are two main processes of the NEM:

²⁸ See Guidelines and Form for PSET Programme Accreditation and Re-accreditation 2022.

Pre- Moderation Process:

January – February

Provider sends selected assessment tools to SQA

January - November

SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample

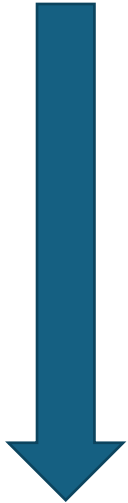
SQA sends pre-moderation report to provider outlining corrective actions and recommendations

Provider implements corrective actions and resubmits

SQA approves amended assessment tool if accepted.

Pre-moderation is complete, and the assessment tool can be used.

SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample



Post – Moderation Processes:

February – November

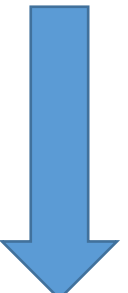
SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample

SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample

June – November

SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample

SQA pre-moderates selected high risk NCS and a random sample



Workplace Assessment

Workplace learning or industry training takes place on-the-job and fits around the normal work duties and responsibilities of trainees, rather than being based on theory and structured classroom learning. Assessment tasks relate to activities a trainee does in their day-to-day job. This process is part of the apprenticeship programmes delivered by the National University of Samoa. These apprenticeship programmes are developed from the Samoa Qualifications Levels III & IV of the six trade areas namely: Samoa Certificate IV in Automotive Engineering, Samoa Certificate IV in Electrical Engineering, Samoa Certificate IV in Fitting and Machining, Samoa Certificate IV in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Samoa Certificate IV in Plumbing and Samoa Certificate IV in Welding.

SQA's Workplace Assessment process seeks to confirm the validity and reliability of assessment in workplace training. Workplace assessment requires evidence-based evaluations of an employee's performance in real work situations, based on pre-determined performance standards. This process provides an opportunity to formally recognise the knowledge and skills gained through on-the-job training.

Quality Audit and Compliance

The purposes of a quality audit are to:

- ensure that providers meet the Quality Standards
- address any concerns that arise
- help providers to improve
- address emerging risks and opportunities in the Samoan PSET sector.

The Quality Audit is a programmatic level not necessarily an institutional one. It is another quality assurance process that will be done after the re-accreditation process. The quality audit will only focus on the areas of concerns identified for certain quality standards. So far, NUS is the only PSET provider where its Maritime and Tourism and Hospitality programmes at levels II and IV respectively.

The Quality Audits may follow a cyclical schedule as determined by SQA or may be scheduled annually or periodically with a thematic approach across a group of providers.

A special purpose audit is a quality audit conducted by SQA following the investigation of a complaint against a provider.²⁹ This aligns with the policies on Complaints and Appeals³⁰ where providers can appeal the decisions made by the SQA after the investigation is conducted.

Professional and Community Learning (PCL)

Section 4 of the Samoa Qualifications Act 2010 requires SQA to promote quality in non-formal education and training programmes to promote lifelong learning and thus contribute to economic growth, and social and psychological benefits.

Accordingly, SQA has developed and implemented a process for the Recognition of Professional and Community Learning (PCL). There are nine quality standards with their corresponding criteria to meet. The RPCL Guidelines clearly states the application of the National Competency Standards in packaging the PCL activities by any provider. These included the credit values. The credits are stackable. However any PCL activity contains NCS should not exceed the 40 credit values.

SQA's assessment against its criteria aims to ensure that the organisation or individual has in place mechanisms to effectively assess PCL activities. SQA has carried out this assessment for approximately

²⁹ See Quality Assurance Standards and Policies 2022, p.31.

³⁰ See Section 8 – Complaints and Appeals Policies of the Quality Assurance Standards and Policies 2022, p.34.

30 organisations (government ministries, private sector and civil society) since the implementation of the policy in 2017.

Effective implementation of this process fosters confidence among learners, local and business communities, the Government, and partners that learners have the skills being assessed.³¹ It also creates pathways for learners to progress into formal education at an appropriate level based on their expertise.

Both formal PSET providers and PCL providers³² can apply to SQA to deliver learning activities. Eligibility requires that the learning activity consists of at least 100 notional learning hours (equivalent to 10 credits) but does not exceed 400 notional learning hours (or 40 credits)³³.

Cancellation or suspension of a provider's registration

Through its Act the SQA has the authority to cancel or suspend a registration of the PSET provider.

Cancellation or suspension would occur after a compliance process has been completed (Section 6 of the SQA Act 2010). Grounds for cancellation or suspension can include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to respond to a compliance notice issued by the SQA
- Failure to meet standard conditions of registration or the Quality Standards
- Alleged breaches of Samoan law or failure to meet legal or statutory requirements in Samoa
- Immediate or realised risks to the safety and well-being of students or staff, including civil disruption, riots or unruly behavior.

SQA will send a final written notice to the provider advising of the details and effective date of its decision. In turn, the provider may appeal the decision made by SQA.

A PSET provider may apply to have its registration reinstated by the SQA. SQA will liaise with the provider to determine meets the quality standards and has rectified any grounds for the suspension or cancellation of its registration.

Quality Assurance of Universities

QA of University of the South Pacific

In 2015, USP developed a Planning and Quality Assurance Framework. Guiding principles are:

- quality assurance and enhancement is the responsibility of all members of the University
- quality monitoring should be embedded in all University processes and services
- internal quality initiatives should be complemented and validated by external input
- quality assurance processes should be precisely identified, documented and monitored.

USP has the following processes to assure the quality of delivery of its programmes:

- New curriculum and program approval processes (covered under Criterion 2)
- Periodic program review. As part of the initial approval process, the industry advisory committee recommends the frequency for regular review to ensure that programmes stay current. This will be between 1-5 years. The review process follows the same steps as the development process as far as Senate approval.
- Assessment of student learning. The initial curriculum and program approval process includes approval of an assessment portfolio. Department staff pre-moderate assessments and the Moderation Committee, with representation across multiple departments, does post-moderation.

Other forms of ongoing evaluation:

³¹ See Guidelines for Professional and Community Learning, September 2017, p.3

³²

Organisations that support and facilitate PCL as well as individual providers or workplaces that provides PCL professional organisations

³³ See Guidelines for Recognition of Professional and Community Learning, Sept 2017, p.17.

- collecting, analysing, and interpreting data (such as course evaluation surveys at the beginning and end of each semester)
- tracking learning results over time
- using comparative data from external sources; and
- improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results.

Alongside its internal quality assurance, USP is externally quality assured.

Prior to 2018, the Australian Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency and the New Zealand Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand universities conducted external audits of USP. In 2018, this role moved to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), a regional accrediting agency recognised by the United States Department of Education.

In 2018, WSCUC accredited USP for an initial period of 6 years. In 2025, USP has undergone reaffirmation site visits at 4 of its campuses and is awaiting the reaffirmation outcomes, which are expected to be received in July 2025. The WSCUC accreditation process is designed to build a culture of evidence and institutional improvement. WSCUC accreditation is structured around 41 criteria for review distributed across 4 standards of accreditation:

- defining institutional mission and acting with integrity
- achieving educational objectives and student success
- assuring resources and organisational structures
- creating an institution committed to quality assurance and improvement.

WSCUC's initial accreditation covered programmes at degree level and above. The 2025 accreditation extends to sub-degree programmes. As part of the 2025 accreditation process, the WSCUC team visited 4 USP campuses- Solomon Islands, Samoa, Lautoka, and Laucala. Regional campuses provided data and documentation that were part of the overall institutional evidence. Regional campus directors and staff were included in working groups, discussions and consultations that informed the self-study narrative. Staff, students and alumni from the regional campuses participated in the accreditation review.

USP is also registered with HECF, a requirement for all providers delivering qualifications in Fiji. Every 5 years, HECF conducts an institutional review of USP randomly selecting a small number of programmes to review in depth. Details of HECF's processes for reviewing institutions and programmes can be found at [Guidelines, Policies & Procedures – Higher Education Commission Fiji](#).

The HECF institutional review focuses on Fiji-based campuses in Lautoka and Labasa. Where a site visit is requested to assess campus operations, learning and teaching, and student support services, the Planning and Quality Office work with the respective Campus Director to prepare. HECF may request to interview Regional Campus Directors.

Pacific TAFE is the department at USP responsible for sub degree programmes. Pacific TAFE had Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status with the Australian Skill Authority (ASQA) and offered a small number of programmes towards qualifications on the Australian Qualifications Framework at its regional campuses. ASQA quality assured the delivery of these programmes. However, USP's RTO registration lapsed in 2024.

[QA of National University of Samoa](#)

The National University of Samoa (NUS) maintains rigorous internal processes for programme development, moderation, and academic programme review. Its Quality Programmes and Services Unit (QPSU) is responsible for overseeing the quality assurance of all academic programmes. NUS has established a structured review cycle for faculties to follow in preparation for programmes undergoing Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) accreditation.

The close working relationship between SQA and NUS enables the QPSU to submit lists of programmes

scheduled for various quality assurance processes—such as programme accreditation, re-accreditation, quality audits, and recognition of professional and community learning—in advance. This collaboration benefits both parties by facilitating logistics, identifying potential expert reviewers, and supporting efficient budget allocation.

QA of Oceania University of Medicine (OUM)

There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SQA, the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools (PAASCU) and Oceania University of Medicine, for recognising that PAASCU is accredited by World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and has accredited the *OUM Doctor of Medicine* which is a four and a half year Master's level degree. The reason this is in place is to ensure that this qualification is recognized in the United States of America. This qualification is not accredited by SQA but accepts that the accreditation of OUM is being carried out by PAASCU.

Challenges Encountered by SQA during external quality assurance work

SQA has encountered many challenges, since its establishment when it comes to regulating and quality assuring PSET in Samoa. Over time, Samoan learners, PSET providers, industry, employers and Government understand the value of ensuring that Samoa's education and training system and qualifications system are credible, nationally and internationally recognised and meets the economic and social priorities of Samoa. SQA has improved its service delivery and providers understand the importance of ensuring that every person is entitled to quality education.

The SQA Self-Review against the Asia Pacific Quality Register Criteria, was conducted post covid, and started in Oct 2021. SQA collected evidence including videos of the physical infrastructure for the review as there were no in-person site visits conducted. All of the panel meetings were conducted virtually as reviewers resided in different countries meant managing different time zones. Despite these challenges, SQA was the first agency to have its external review conducted remotely and successfully accepted to the Asia Pacific Quality Register.

The lack of resources has been a challenge for many PSE providers seeking accreditation of their programmes. SQA through the Education Sector Support Programme has been able to grant nominal funds to assist providers to meet quality standards for many of the quality assurance processes. Through these grants PSET provider have procured technical assistance to support programme and/or assessment development as an example as well as professional development for their trainers.

Artificial intelligence and digital transformation are new and emerging challenges for SQA as well as many Qualifications and Quality Assurance Agencies. The SQA continues to monitor new trends and where possible leverage support through partnerships with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand and regional bodies like the Pacific Community and UNESCO.

Criterion 5: Supporting Information Systems

Overview

Samoa secondary school national assessments are administered by the MEC. MEC are working closely with EQAP to implement EQAP's Pacific School Information Management System (PacSIMS) to manage student and teacher details, curriculum information, and assessment data.

The three universities operating in Samoa, the National University of Samoa, the University of the South Pacific, and the Oceania University of Medicine operate their own systems and the qualifications and learner information is captured by the SQA manually through its statistical bulletin.

Universities programmes are listed on the SQF as soon as they have met all the requirements of programme accreditation and quality standards.

For PSET, SQA currently operates three information management systems that are in pilot phase and not yet fully operational:

- Samoa Qualifications Authority Management Information System (SQA MIS) - used to manage registration of education providers and the accreditation process
- Record of Achievement (RoA) system - designed to manage student information
- Career Advisory Service (CAS) - intended to provide career advice.

Screenshots of the SQA MIS and RoA system are included in Appendix 7.

The SQA MIS and RoA systems are currently being piloted and progressively rolled out to PSET providers. PSET providers demonstrate a wide range of information technology capabilities ranging from manual paper passed to sophisticated student management systems.

SQA's Quality assurance processes and record management are stored on a shared government drive. A cloud service platform is used for information sharing and storage. Information on registered qualifications and national competency standards is currently accessible to the public on the SQA website via downloadable brochures (<https://www.sqa.gov.ws/> publications menu and National Competency Standards group).

The current public information available on the website is updated manually.

School Qualification Information Management

Secondary Qualification Management

The MEC's Assessment and Examinations division administers the national examinations - Year 10 Samoa School Certificate, and Year 12 Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate (SSLC) and the South Pacific Form 7 Examination Certificate.

MEC works closely with the Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) of the Pacific Community (SPC) for the processing of examination results to grades and awards. Examination data is recorded in Excel spreadsheets and stored on MEC's internal shared drives for regional reporting and benchmarking. These spreadsheets are typically managed by the Examinations Division in partnership with EQAP and are used for analysis and quality assurance purposes.

Secondary School Learner Management

At the MEC, students are assigned a Student Identification Number (SIN), typically beginning from Year 1 of primary school. This unique identifier remains with the students throughout their primary and secondary education, facilitating the tracking of enrolment, academic progress, and examination results across the national education system.

Identification is a mandatory requirement for student registration at the MEC. Proof of identity such as a birth certificate, passport, or medical records is required during a student's initial enrolment in the school system and again during national examination registration. This ensures the accuracy and consistency of student records throughout their schooling years.

The MEC employs both manual and digital systems for storing the results of secondary school national examinations. The Archives and Records Division is responsible for the manual filing of all educational data related to students and teachers under the Ministry's supervision. This includes hard copies of examination results, enrolment forms, and student transfer documents. These files are securely stored and can be accessed upon official request for purposes such as certification verification or historical record checks.

In addition to physical records, MEC maintains a centralised digital system known as the Education Management Information System (EMIS). This system is the primary tool for managing student data from

primary through secondary education. EMIS stores detailed student records, including demographic information, enrolment history, and academic performance. The results of national examinations at the secondary level—such as Year 8, Year 11, and Year 13 exams—are entered into EMIS for each student, enabling the Ministry to monitor educational progress and generate reports for national planning and decision-making.

Data storage and security

To ensure security and confidentiality, both manual and electronic data storage systems are governed by internal protocols that restrict access to authorised personnel only. EMIS is a login-based system that provides different levels of user access, allowing only trained staff to enter or modify data. These measures ensure the integrity and reliability of student examination results, which are critical for progression within the education system and for entry into further education or employment.

Post Secondary Information System Review

Qualification Management

Information about programmes accredited are currently stored on a PA register. Information about the qualifications listed on the SQF are currently stored on the Qualifications register. These registers, along with the provider information reside in one database. The information will be migrated into the new SQA Management Information System when user feedback is resolved and pilot is complete.

This database serves as the official repositories for only those qualifications and programmes that have met the established national quality assurance standards 5 (App).

Non-accredited programmes for example records of submitted but non-approved programmes such as those from PSET providers whose applications did not satisfy accreditation criteria, may be retained internally. These are kept primarily for auditing, monitoring, and reference purposes.

As part of the Annual Renewal of Registration process, PSET providers are required to report all programmes currently being offered. This allows SQA to take note of any non-accredited programmes that are in operation and to flag them for necessary quality assurance interventions. However, detailed information, including course content and structural specifications, is only entered into SQA's central data repository once a programme has successfully undergone the formal accreditation process. This approach ensures the integrity of the national qualifications system while maintaining a record of emerging or unaccredited offerings within the sector.

The SQA employs a version control system to manage and document changes to qualifications and national competency standards. Each qualification or standard is assigned a unique code, and any revisions such as updates to content, structural adjustments, or reformatting of units result in the issuance of a new version. These changes are systematically tracked to ensure transparency and consistency within the Samoa Qualifications Framework (SQF). While all historical versions are archived for reference and quality assurance purposes, only the most current version is recognised as active and listed in the Samoa Qualifications Register. PSET providers are required to deliver qualifications based on the latest approved version, as specified by SQA. Updates and version changes are communicated through formal circulars and official notices to ensure that providers remain compliant with national quality assurance standards and maintain the integrity of learner outcomes.

The current process to track life cycles and timelines is a manual one, relying on individuals to track deadline, and send reminders, and update records using diaries and spreadsheets. The new system has been designed to automate these tasks through scheduled timelines, automatic reminder emails, expiry-based status updates, and integrated workflow and case management.

Provider Management

SQA collects data from each registered PSET provider, from which it maintains a 'Provider Profile' that is used to provide contextual information on its quality management systems. The accuracy of data in the

Provider Profile is checked through the Annual Registration Renewal process. Section 30 of the Samoa Qualifications Authority Act 2010 authorises the SQA to obtain information from providers and other persons.

The Quality Assurance Division records the provider information for Annual Registration Renewal, Programme Accreditation, Recognition of Non-Formal Learning, Quality Audit, National External Moderation currently in SQA shared drives.

Quality assurance processes are managed via emails, however copies of incoming and outgoing correspondence with PSET providers are stored on the shared drive.

Case management (e.g. complaints, removing poor performers) are processed via email, word and excel.

As the SQA MIS is rolled out across providers, the system is being used to process applications. QAD set up the provider applicant and their information requirements, then create the provider a user account. A provider with a user account can login and upload required information for the provider registration, program accreditation and quality assurance processes.

The system generates emails to inform the provider of progress at steps along the process.

Provider users will receive SQA MIS generated email reminders for annual registration and quality audits.

File server and cloud services

SQA has a file server that each division has their own shared Drive. These shared drives stored all documents in excel, word, pdf, html, csv, from correspondences with PSET Providers and external panel members who are contracted for some of the quality assurance (QA) processes such as the Programme Accreditation and Re-accreditation, Registration of Qualifications as well as Quality Audit. In addition, the Development and Review of Samoa Qualifications follows the same process as the QA processes.

Reporting templates and forms are also stored on the secured shared drives.

SQA uses Cloud services, an online storage drive, for secure collaboration and to exchange confidential information.

Both services retain previous versions of the documents.

Learner management

Record of Achievement (RoA) is a student information management system and credential evaluation system currently being developed for SQA. On the RoA system, students are automatically assigned a system generated Learner Identification Number (LIN) when their enrolment is officially accepted and uploaded by a registered PSET provider.

the SQA requires all PSET providers to verify the identity of learners enrolling in accredited programmes. Accepted forms of identification include birth certificates, national identification cards, or passports. These documents are essential for accurately entering student information into the RoA database, which is used to track learner progress and to issue nationally recognised certificates.

The RoA is used for recording all student qualifications, tracking national competency standard achievement and verifying accredited programs and non-formal learning.

User Roles

There are several different types of users and roles on SQAMIS and RoA. The users and their roles are administered by the SQA IS.

SQAMIS administrators can create and modify user roles and the permissions associated with these roles. SQA MIS users are allocated roles, with only specific SQA personnel having access to modify and

update information on the SQAMIS. Administrators can view audit records of users' activity.

The SQAMIS has the functionality to allow providers to access and upload information in a dedicated provider portal. However, this function has not yet been activated and information is still being uploaded by SQA personnel manually.

System Architecture and Infrastructure

SQAMIS and ROA system were developed by a Samoan software company, ENCODE SOFTWARE SOLUTION. The information management systems are managed in-house by the IT Team and Senior Officials in the Qualifications Division.

The systems are written in PHP with a MySQL database and are deployed on an Apache Web Server running on Ubuntu.

The database is backed-up on a schedule and this file can be copied to an offsite location. Users can access these systems through VPN and internet browser.

Qualification and course booklets are publicly available on the SQA website, <https://www.sqa.gov.ws>

Roadmap

Currently providers manually submit information to SQA, but providers are currently being trained on the new SQA MIS and will login and upload and input their own information.

There is an intention to redevelop the SQA website with the goal of improving transparency and accessibility. The updated site will provide more comprehensive information to the public and will be integrated with SQAMIS to enable automatic publication of approved content.

Glossary

Annual Registration Renewal	A formal PSET provider is required to renew its registration on a yearly basis after meeting all the criteria of registration. It ensures that the PSET provider continuously complying with the quality standards and registration requirements.
National External Moderation	Is the quality checking of assessment tools, decisions and approaches to ensure they are consistent, fair, and valid. It is usually conducted by a Quality Assurance / Qualifications Agency and involves the contribution of PSET providers and assessors.
Provider Registration	The process of approving an organisation or institution to become an approved education and training provider in Samoa. In order to be registered, the provider must meet the applicable SQA Quality Standards.
Programme Accreditation (PA)	The process used to evaluate an organisation's capability to deliver an education or training programme to the required standards.
Re-accreditation (RA)	The process of a subsequent accreditation of a programme that has already been accredited by SQA. A re-accreditation typically occurs after an accredited programme has been delivered for some years, so the provider has details of the programme's design and delivery. One aim of re-accreditation is to keep programmes up-to-date and responsive to changes in content knowledge and teaching approaches.
Recognition of Professional and Community Learning	The process of recognising an organised learning which does not lead to an SQF qualification but which involves structured learning. Professional and Community learning opportunities are characterised by diversity, flexibility and responsiveness to the identified learning needs of communities and individual learners.
Registration of Qualifications	The process used to recognise that a qualification has met the criteria for inclusion in the list of quality assured qualifications on the SQF.
Trade areas	Programmes of study that leads to the award of a qualification.
Quality Audit	A systemic and independent examination of an organisation's processes, documents and records to confirm alignment with identified quality standards, and whether these organisational activities are effective.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Samoa Qualifications Framework Levels and Level Descriptors

SQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Application of skill and knowledge
I	Graduates will have functional knowledge of literacy and numeracy and how to live, work and study with other people to live productively in their community and enter work or further study	Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate on routine tasks under direction and supervision and to identify and report on any routine problems.	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in highly structured and directed work, social or learning contexts where interaction with others follows routine patterns.
II	Graduates will have knowledge of basic facts or of operations relevant to work in a defined context and/or for learning	Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate in order to apply known processes and known solutions to problems that are familiar. Graduates will have the skills to apply known methods, tools and materials in work or further learning	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in structured contexts under general supervision in collaboration with others
III	Graduates will have knowledge of facts and procedures and technical knowledge for a defined area of work and/or learning	Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate to select and apply solutions to familiar problems using a specialised range of methods, tools, materials in work and/or learning	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to make judgements about problems under limited supervision with some autonomy. They will be mainly routine and predictable and require collaboration with others. Graduates will take major responsibility for their own learning and performance.
IV Cert	Graduates will have knowledge of broad facts and practical and theoretical knowledge related to a specialised or broad area of work and/or learning	Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think, work and communicate to select solutions for known and unknown problems and to apply a range of methods, tools, materials and information to complete a range of routine and non-routine tasks	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy and to make judgements in both predictable and unpredictable contexts. Graduates will manage their own learning and take some responsibility for the work and learning of others
V Dip	Graduates will have specialised technical and theoretical knowledge in a specialised area or a broad work field and/or learning	Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think, work and communicate in order to analyse and find solutions to predictable and unpredictable problems and situations and to communicate this information to others	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in order to demonstrate autonomy, judgement in a defined responsibility in known and changing contexts and to manage the work performance and/or learning of others
VI	Graduates will have broad theoretical	Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think,	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in

SQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Application of skill and knowledge
AdvD	knowledge and deep technical knowledge in a specialised or broad area of work and/or learning	work and communicate in order to analyse information to complete a range of activities and to find solutions to unpredictable and complex problems and to communicate knowledge, skills and ideas to others to help them solve problems	order to demonstrate autonomy and judgement and take defined responsibility in contexts subject to change and to provide specialist advice and carry out specialist functions. At this level the graduates provide leadership in changing contexts and are able to fully manage their own work performance and/or learning
VII Bach	Graduates will have deep specialised technical and/or theoretical knowledge in one or more fields of study or work	Graduates will have well developed skills to think and work and to communicate, analyse, evaluate and adapt information to complete a range of activities, generate solutions to complex problems and communicate solutions, knowledge and ideas to others	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, judgement and responsibility in self-directed contexts. Graduates are expected to provide specialist advice and undertake specialist functions
VIII Bach Hons	Graduates will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines demonstrating critical understanding of key principles	Graduates will have expert specialised skills to think, work and communicate in order to critically analyse, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities and to analyse and generate solutions to complex problems and communicate solutions, knowledge, skills and ideas to others	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy and well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a learner or practitioner
IX	Graduates will have advanced understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or practice areas which is at the forefront of their discipline/practice area	Graduates will have expert specialised skills to think and work in a body of knowledge or practice area in order to analyse, critically reflect and synthesize complex information, problems and theories and to research and apply established theories and interpret and communicate knowledge, skills and ideas to both specialist and non-specialist audiences	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner
X	Graduates will have knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of study or professional practice which demonstrates a critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge.	Graduates will have expert thinking, technical and research skills in a discipline to critically reflect, synthesize and evaluate ideas and theories, develop, adapt and implement research methods to extend or re-defined existing knowledge or professional practice and to disseminate and promote new ideas to peers and others. Graduates will have the skills to be an independent researcher,	Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner or academic, showing a sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or practices at the forefront of their discipline or practice area

SQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Application of skill and knowledge
		scholar or advanced practitioner. Graduates will have generated original knowledge and understanding to make a substantial contribution to a discipline or practice area	

Appendix 2: Examples of a Samoa Qualification and a Provider Qualification
 Samoa qualification - Certificate I in Electrical Engineering

Samoa Certificate I in Electrical Engineering

Qualification Code and Title	ER1-2405 Samoa Certificate I in Electrical Engineering		
SQF Level	1	Total Credit Value	69
Qualification Purpose Statement	<p>This qualification has been designed specifically to provide a progressive pathway for people who may wish to integrate into an Electrical Engineering trade.</p> <p>This qualification is awarded to learners who have demonstrated competency in basic skills including electrical, literacy, numeracy, interpersonal and communication. Holders of this qualification will also acquire competency skills in first aid, health and safety.</p> <p>These skills have been identified by employers and stakeholders as being important to ensure a learner is equipped to be productive in the workplace, and so make an effective contribution to the industry.</p> <p>This qualification is intended to act as a springboard from which people may progress towards other higher qualification levels in Electrical Engineering. The inclusion of National Competency Standards from the electrical trade provides a pathway for students who wish to continue their training to level II, and there after take on an Electrical Apprenticeship.</p> <p>The qualification is also designed to maximise international opportunities for recognition of the skills inherent in the certificate.</p>		
OUTCOMES STATEMENT	Graduate Profile	This qualification will be awarded to individuals who have achieved all the Learning Outcomes of the National Competency Standards listed below, and also hold a current First Aid Certificate.	
	NCS Code	NCS Title	SQF Level Credit Value
	ER26019	Demonstrate basic skills in an electrical workshop	1 2
	ER26036	Select, use, and care for, electrical engineering hand tools	II 3
	ER26037	Select, use, and care for simple measuring devices used in electrical engineering	I 2
	ER45030	Apply scientific and engineering notation to solve electrical engineering problems	I 2

		MF09017	Participate and communicate in a team or group to complete a routine task	1	4
		MF09018	Complete an incident report	1	2
	Learning Pathway	Entry into this qualification is for any individual who is interested to study Electrical Engineering. On completion of this qualification, graduates may progress onto the Samoa Certificate II in Electrical Engineering.			
	Career Pathway	The Samoa Certificate I in Electrical Engineering staircases to the Samoa Certificate II in Electrical Engineering which is the pathway to the Electrical Apprenticeship scheme required for electricians. Alternatively graduates from this Certificate level may seek to work in the Electrical Engineering industry who will work under supervision of a qualified electrician.			
	Summary of industry and community support	<p>This qualification was reviewed in response to the recommendations of the Situational Analysis Consultation to inform the review of the Samoa Qualifications in the Electrical Engineering trade and in alignment with goals of the 'Post School Education and Training: Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024':</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality of PSET match national and international standards 2. PSET programmes continue to be relevant to national needs and labour market demand 3. PSET programmes are inclusive and accessible by all 4. To strengthen support to all PSET providers <p>Stakeholders in the Electrical Engineering Industry were consulted and involved at every stage of the review process, which consisted of Situational Analysis (Phase 1), reviewing and writing of NCS (Phase 2), Industry Validation (Phase 3) and Industry Endorsement (Phase 4). Consultations during the Situational Analysis, Validation and Endorsement phases included government organisations, non-government organisations and civil societies, registered professional associations, PSET providers and the private sector.</p> <p>As per normal process, SQA set up an Electrical Engineering Sector Advisory Group (EESAG) made up of representatives from the Electrical Engineering Industry and sector stakeholders to provide advice and technical input into the review of the Samoa Qualifications (SQs) and National Competency Standards (NCSs). Representatives were invited from government organisations, non-government organisations and civil societies, registered professional associations, PSET providers and the private sector. The SQ and NCSs were reviewed by the SQA with the assistance of the Electrical Engineering Review Panel and with the advice of the Electrical Engineering Sector Advisory Group.</p> <p>This qualification and the NCSs contained within have received the endorsement of the Electrical Engineering Sector Advisory Group, as well as</p>			

	other organisations that chose to document their endorsement individually.
Entry Requirements	<p>Entry into this qualification is open to any individual who is interested to study for the Electrical trade qualification. Learners may come from secondary schools who passed SSC English and Mathematics, or people that may have left school without any formal qualifications but have acquired basic Electrical skills.</p> <p>Individuals who believe they have the underpinning skills and knowledge for entry into this qualification should apply for Recognition of Prior Learning/ Recognition of Current Competency to the relevant provider.</p>
Moderation Requirements	Providers and assessors of this qualification or parts of this qualification must comply with the SQA National Moderation System. Details of this system are available from SQA.



Senate Approved: 25/11/2022
Council Approved: 02/12/2022

1. Programme Title

Diploma in Workplace Communication

2. Programme Aim

The programme aims at broadening and consolidating knowledge and appreciation of the theoretical and practical training in communication. It prepares learners with hands-on experience, skills and attitudes to function as responsible communicators in the workplace. The programme also equips learners with the skills to communicate, discuss and debate complex ideas; focusing on critical thinking, building compelling arguments and engaging with others; provide learners with personal insight into the ways in which to respond to different people, situations and events.

3. Programme Rationale

The Media and Communication Department at the National University of Samoa, through a survey in the public and private sectors (September, 2018) and a Developing a Curriculum (DACUM) workshop (June 2017) identified the gaps, new needs and industry standards for the Diploma in Workplace Communication. This programme has been developed to address gaps identified by the local industries with regards to public relations and basic communication skills in the workplace. The employers' views on key generic skills that graduates need improvement in order for them to be effective and productive employees generally include language, communication and interpersonal skills (Amosa, D, 2019). The Faculty of Arts, Media and Communication spearheads this programme to provide for the needs of the industry and the community. It also addresses part of the recommendations for the department at the last review in 2019 to progress in the field of communication. The programme offers a diversity of courses, both generic and specialised. The generic courses can be utilised by other programmes within the University. The drive to enhance professionalism, ethics, literacy, skills, and knowledge at the trainee level would contribute to quality services through communication in the workplace. Therefore, communication skills are much needed to be taught and offered to individuals. As a result, the Diploma in Workplace Communication is a good fit for filling these gaps.



4. Programme Development Team

(a) Industry Advisory Panel (IAP)

Member	Designation	Organisation
External Members – Industry Advisory Committee / IAP		
Vaitaha Alafina Ioela	Chief Executive Officer [IAP Chairperson]	Samoa Business Hub
Fasolo Utunapu	Programme Officer [IAP Deputy Chairperson]	Pacific Island Countries for the Disability Rights Fund
Papaalitele Mocimanofo Fouvaa	Tutor-Individual Postgraduate	Queensland University of Technology
Tertia Ryan	Education/SQA Consultant; Director, Samoa Spare Parts	Private Sector Representative
Savea Fiti Taustasi	Principal Quality Assurance Officer	Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) Representative
Leota Valma Galuvao	Educator	Happy Valley Learning Centre
Simona Kolose	Communication Specialist	Private Consultancy
Sua Tima	Academic Partner	Manukau Institute of Technology
Rostia Esena	Director Education, CCCS	Samoa Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions (SATVETI) Representative
Saii Taupisi Faamanu	Assistant Chief Executive Officer (ACEO), Apprenticeship Employment and Labour Market Unit	Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour (MCIL)
Faapito Opeteia	Training Coordinator	Samoa Umbrella for Non- Governmental Organisations (SUNGO) Representative
Lenara Tuipoloa	Principal Training and Development Consultant Officer	Public Service Commission (PSC) Representative
Tuiloma Sina Retzlaff	Chairperson	Journalism IAP
Fataleavave Ianosi Faasisila Enosa	Chief of Staff, MPMC	Samoa Human Resource Institute (SHRI) Representative



National University of Samoa

Member	Designation	Organisation
Futialo Tafeamaalii Philip Kerlsake	ACEO, Samoa Water Authority	President - Institute of Professional Engineers, Samoa (IPES)
Lemauga Hobart Vaai	Chief Executive Officer	Samoa Chamber of Commerce
Internal Members -National University of Samoa		
Sau'i'a Dr Louisc Matai'a Milo	Dean - Faculty of Arts	
Professor Silafau Sina Vaai	Professor of English, Department of English and Foreign Languages, Faculty of Arts	
Associate Professor Tuiloma Susana Taua'a	Associate Professor in Geography, Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Arts.	
Dr. Honiara Salanoa	Head of Department, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Arts	
Seituli Temukisa Suisala	Lecturer, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Arts	
Fuatia Malifa	Lecturer, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Arts	
*Pua Vaitu'utu'u Toimoana	Lecturer, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Arts	
Vaeluagaoaanamatuamasaga Reti	Lecturer, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Arts	
Tauvaga Vaai	Senior Professional Development Officer and Curriculum Coordinator, Oloamanu Center for Professional Development and Continuing Education (OCPDCE)	
Faith Escra	Open Distance Learning Officer, OCPDCE	
Tafymaea Schuster	Professional Development Officer (Preliminary Certificate in TVET), OCPDCE	
Tevaga Tevita Simeki	Professional Development Officer, OCPDCE	
Taiao Dr Matiu Tautumu	Director - Centre for Samoan Studies	
Leasiolagi Iemaima Gabriel	Head of Department, Department of Management, Tourism and Hospitality, Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship	
Ainsley Anesone	Lecturer, Department of Computing, Faculty of Science	

*Now with Samoa Qualifications Authority as Principal Qualifications Officer

5. Learner Profile

The learners of this programme should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theoretical and practical training in communication. Learners should also have fundamental oral and written communication skills in English and Samoan to cope with the content of all the courses in the programme.



National University of Samoa

6. Entry Criteria and Selection

6.1 Admission Requirements

Potential candidates for this programme should satisfy the following minimum requirements:

- Completed the requirements for a NUS Foundation Certificate or equivalent, or;
- Attained an equivalent qualification, and on a case by case basis been granted special / discretionary admission by the Dean of Faculty of Arts or;
- Is a mature entrant who:
 - is at least 20 years of age on 1st February of the year of admission, and;
 - has at least three years full-time relevant work experience and/or training (for which references from past and current employers or trainers must be supplied).

6.2 Mode of Study

Full time or Part Time

6.3 Duration

No more than eight semesters

7. Graduate Profile

At the completion of the Diploma in Workplace Communication programme, the graduate will have the ability to demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- Demonstrate improved knowledge of using effective communication skills (*Range: listening, speaking, reading, and writing*).
- Demonstrate an understanding of foundational theories of human communication.
- Use appropriate vocabulary in written and spoken language (both English and Samoan) related to the workplace context.
- Use correct sentence structure in all forms of formal communication within the workplace and when communicating with relevant stakeholders.
- Demonstrate the ability to write and give clear detailed instructions, as well as follow instructions accurately.
- Apply oral and written information for specific purposes.
- Apply diverse perspectives in a selection of pieces of writing.
- Write effectively for specific purposes in the workplace.
- Use graphics to present the information correctly and clearly.
- Speak with fluency and confidence in the workplace.
- Display effective problem-solving and conflict management techniques.
- Use action research skills to enhance professional communication in different workplace contexts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of information technology on business communication.
- Demonstrate knowledge of personal management skills and leadership.



National University of Samoa

- o. Display good interpersonal skills in the workplace.
- p. Demonstrate thorough knowledge about job responsibilities and role.
- q. Demonstrate the ability to respond appropriately and have a good rapport with persons of different types of background (affluent, poor, age, gender, social status, physical needs, capabilities)

8. Programme Structure, Progression, Completion and Articulation

The Diploma in Workplace Communication programme offers 16 courses, delivered in 4 semesters. Three courses HCW203, HCW204 and TBS202 which are offered in Year 2, Semester 2 are delivered within 12 weeks to allow learners to undertake their 4 weeks HCW300 Work Attachment and Portfolio Development (Work Experience) course with government ministries, industry and the private sector.

8.1 Programme Structure

Course Code	Course Title	Total Contact Hours	Total Nominal Hours	SQF Level	Credit Value
Year 1 - Semester 1					
HCW100/TCS108	Communication Fundamentals for Professionals	56	154	V	15
HCW101	Theoretical Approaches Communication	56	154	VI	15
HSA111	Introduction to Language and Linguistics (Su'csu'cga Amata Faasaicnisi o Gagana)	42	154	VI	15
TCO111	MS Office Applications 1 and the Internet	56	84	III	8
Year 1 - Semester 2					
HCW102	Translation Techniques in the Workplace Context	56	154	V	15
HCW103/TCS102	Language Skills for Professionals	56	154	V	15
HCW104	Writing for Specific Purposes	56	154	V	15
TCO121	MS Office Application 2	84	112	IV	11
Year 2 - Semester 1					
HCW200/TCS203	Business Correspondence	56	168	V	17
HCW201	Enhancing Communication Culture through Action Research	56	168	VI	17
HCW202/TCS204	Report Writing	56	168	V	17
HSA212	Samoan Sociolinguistics (Vaogagana i so o se Siosiomiaga)	42	154	VII	15



National University of Samoa

Course Code	Course Title	Total Contact Hours	Total Nominal Hours	SQF Level	Credit Value
Year 2 - Semester 2					
HCW203	Proposal Writing	48	144	V	14
HCW204	Job Seeking and Employment Skills	48	144	V	14
TBS202	Personal Management	112	168	V	17
HCW300	Work Attachment and Portfolio Development	32	180	V	18
Totals				V	238

8.2 Criteria for progression

Each course has its own requirements in which the learner must follow in order to pass until the programme is completed.

Learners must successfully complete all courses in the preceding semester to be eligible to enrol in courses of the next semester.

8.3 Criteria for completion

To complete the programme, learners are required to complete all sixteen courses specified in the programme structure.

8.4 Articulation

Learners who successfully meet the prescribed requirements of the Diploma in Workplace Communication may be eligible to pursue a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Communication Studies (forthcoming) at the National University of Samoa.

9. Teaching and Learning Strategies

Strategies used for facilitating learning ensure that the methods used match the competency standards and learning outcomes of the Diploma in Workplace Communication programme. Learning strategies are outcome based and ensure that diverse learning styles, their ability and needs are catered for. Emphasis is on the use of action methods and integrated learning approaches that enhance participation/collaboration in the learning process. Learning and teaching strategies are done face to face and supplemented with MOODLE and other relevant online platforms

10. Assessment Strategies

Assessment for this programme is Standards Based using a combination of both Competency Based Assessment and Achievement Based Assessment strategies. All summative assessment results are reported immediately to the learner when finalised. Learners should score at least 50% in all summative assessments in order to pass. The NUS Statute on Assessment and Examinations (2007) amended March 2010 and November 2012 apply to this programme.



11. Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluation is implemented both on a formal and informal basis. Feedback on the programme is obtained from Course Evaluation Form and Work Experience Attachment Report.

12. Moderation

Assessments are moderated by the Course Lecturer, Head of Media and Communication Department and Dean of Faculty of Arts. Assessment instruments, tasks, plus marking schedules are moderated in accordance with assessment conditions specified in the Course Descriptors and Assessment and Examinations Regulations of the National University of Samoa.

13. Transferable Skills

Learners enrolled in the Diploma in Workplace Communication programme will need to have the essential transferable skills that enable them to progress well in the programme.

These skills include:

- Reading and writing skills – English and Samoan
- Oral and comprehension skills – English and Samoan
- Personal management skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Analytical skills
- Computing skills
- Note-taking skills
- Research skills
- Translating skills

14. Workplace requirements

Learners should use the workplace experience component to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the Diploma in Workplace Communication programme. By the end of their work experience, learners should be familiar with the practical knowledge of all the skills developed and learned in all 16 courses of the programme.

Employers are responsible in mentoring and monitoring learners' attendance and participation in the workplace. They should also complete and submit the Work Experience Attachment Report Form to the Head of the Department on the learners' performance at the end of the attachment.

15. Recognition of Prior Learning (or Recognition of Current Competency)

RCC and RPL are not required for this programme. Learners are expected to be at the same level and are required to enroll and start the programme from the required pre-requisite courses.



NUS Regulation for Recognition of Prior Learning/Credit (2010) and Recognition of Current Competence apply

16. Required Resources

All required resources are detailed in each individual course descriptor.

17. Other Considerations

Student learning support is made available for the purposes of providing guidelines to writing assignments, planning practical teaching and preparing for competency-based assessment tasks. Facilitators of the programme will ensure that learners' interests and welfare are protected, and that emotional disharmony and stress related conditions are considered and resolved.

18. Recommended supporting documents for any new/ revised programme proposal

- Industry Advisory Meeting minutes
- Programme Regulations

Appendix 3: Qualification Registration Form

Name of Provider: _____ Current Name of Qualification: _____

Qualification Characteristics (to be filled in by the Developer/Provider)	Qualification Registration Criteria	Evidence/Evaluation Guide	SQA Use only
A. Qualification Purpose Statement			
	The stated purpose is related to identified needs	There is a clear purpose stated for the qualification	
		The purpose is related to identified individual, professional, industry or community needs	
		The purpose supports the priorities established in the Pathway for Development of Samo 2022-2026 and the PSET Strategic Plan 2022-2026??	
B. Qualification Title			
	The title is appropriate and complies with title definitions and protected terms	The title is indicative of the purpose and outcomes	
		The title indicates the qualification type and level	
		The title is appropriate and complies with qualification definitions	
C. Qualification Outcomes Statement			
	Outcomes for whole qualification reflect the stated purpose	Outcomes are clearly stated	
		Outcomes for whole qualification are reasonable and reflect the stated purpose	
		Outcomes for the whole qualification conform to level descriptors and title definition	
		Outcomes for qualification components are logical	
D. Qualification Level			
	The qualification level is appropriate	The level is consistent with the qualification definitions	
		The level is consistent with the outcome level descriptors	
		The level is consistent with the qualification outcome statement	

Name of Provider: Name of Programme:

Qualification Characteristics (to be filled in by the Developer/Provider)	Qualification Registration Criteria	Evidence/Evaluation Guide	SQA Use only
E. Support for Qualification			
	There is sufficient support from relevant national and, where appropriate international, academic, industry, professional, community or interest groups	Evidence is provided to show support for the qualification by relevant national and, where appropriate international, academic, industry, professional, community or interest groups	
		The evidence of support is sufficient	
F. Credit Value			
	The credit total is appropriate and conforms to qualification definitions	The total number of credits is shown	
		Credits are shown for each component	
		The credit total is appropriate and conforms to qualification definitions	
G. Qualification Components			
	Qualification components are defined and reflect the purpose, title and level of the qualification	For each component descriptor, the purpose, title, credit value, level, learning outcomes and/or defined competencies are clearly stated	
		For each component descriptor the entry requirements, assessment requirements and requirements for successful completion are appropriate for the learning outcomes and/or defined competencies	
		The components reflect the purpose, title and level of the qualification	
		The qualification structure is reasonable and shows an appropriate balance between compulsory and elective components, theoretical and practical requirements	
H. Entry requirements			

	Entry requirements are inclusive and reasonable for the level and complexity of the qualification	Any entry requirements or pre-requisite qualifications are stated	
		Entry requirements do not unreasonably exclude individuals because of descent, gender, social origin, place of birth, family status, or special needs	
		Entry requirements are reasonable for the level of the qualification	
		Entry requirements are reasonable for the complexity of the qualification	
I. Accreditation Requirements (Applicable for Provider Qualifications Only)			
	All the programme accreditation requirements are appropriate	The programme accreditation requirements reflect the level and complexity of the qualification	
		All the requirements for programme accreditation are satisfactorily met	

Appendix 4: Samoa Qualifications and Number of NCSs

Samoa Qualifications	Number of NCSs
Samoa Certificate I in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	10
Samoa Certificate II in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	11
Samoa Certificate III in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	26
Samoa Certificate IV in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	29
Samoa Certificate II Water and Sanitation	20
Samoa Certificate III Water and Sanitation	26
Samoa Certificate IV Water and Sanitation	42
Samoa Certificate II Construction Engineering	7
Samoa Certificate I in Sustainable Energy	8
Samoa Certificate II in Sustainable Energy	9
Samoa Certificate III in Sustainable Energy	22
Samoa Certificate IV in Sustainable Energy	17
Tusi Pasi a Samoa IV i le Gaosiga o le le Samoa	7
Tusi Pasi a Samoa IV i le Gaosiga o Fala Eseeese	6
Tusi Pasi a Samoa IV i le Gaosiga o le Siapo	5
Samoa Certificate I Sports	11
Samoa Certificate II Sports Coaching	17
Samoa Certificate II Sports Management	18
Samoa Certificate I Agriculture	8
Samoa Certificate II Agriculture (Animal Production and Health)	8
Samoa Certificate III Agriculture (Animal Production)	9
Samoa Certificate IV Agriculture (Paravet)	7
Samoa Certificate II Tropical Horticulture	6
Samoa Certificate III Tropical Horticulture	12
Samoa Certificate IV Tropical Horticulture	10
Samoa Certificate II Electronic Engineering	14
Samoa Certificate III Electronic Engineering	20
Samoa Certificate IV Electronic Engineering	11

Samoa Certificate I in Information and Communication Technology	25
Samoa Certificate II in Information and Communication Technology	29
Samoa Certificate III in Information and Communication Technology	25
Samoa Certificate IV in Information and Communication Technology	28
Samoa Certificate I Plumbing	14
Samoa Certificate II Plumbing	23
Samoa Certificate III Plumbing	33
Samoa Certificate IV Plumbing	25
Samoa Certificate I in Welding and Fabrication	20
Samoa Certificate II in Welding and Fabrication	18
Samoa Certificate III in Welding and Fabrication	31
Samoa Certificate IV in Welding and Fabrication	17
Samoa Certificate I in Welding and Fabrication	
Samoa Certificate I in Carpentry and Joinery	19
Samoa Certificate II in Carpentry and Joinery	35
Samoa Certificate III in Carpentry and Joinery	35
Samoa Certificate IV in Carpentry and Joinery	34
Samoa Certificate I in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	15
Samoa Certificate II in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	21
Samoa Certificate III in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	13
Samoa Certificate IV in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	10



SQF FIELDS AND SUBFIELDS

AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND RELATED STUDIES		AE
Agriculture	Agricultural Science	AE01
	Wool and Fibre Science	AE02
	Beekeeping	AE03
	Animal Husbandry	AE04
	Crop Production	AE05
	Equine Trades	AE06
	Wool and Fibre Harvesting	AE07
	General Land Skills	AE08
	Agriculture not elsewhere classified	AE91
Horticulture and Viticulture	Horticulture	AE09
	Viticulture	AE10
Forestry Studies	Forestry Studies	AE11
	Solid Wood Processing	AE12
Fisheries Studies	Aquaculture	AE13
	Seafood Harvesting (Fishing)	AE14
	Fisheries Studies not elsewhere classified	AE92
Environmental Studies	Land, Parks and Wildlife Management	AE15
	Environmental Studies not elsewhere classified	AE93
Other Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	Pest and Weed Control	AE16
	Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies not elsewhere classified	AE94
ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING		AB
Architecture and Urban Environment	Architecture	AB01
	Urban Design and Regional Planning	AB02
	Landscape Architecture	AB03
	Interior and Environmental Design	AB04
	Architecture and Urban Environment not elsewhere classified	AB91
Building	Building Science and Technology	AB05
	Building Construction Management	AB06
	Building Surveying (Inspection)	AB07
	Building Construction Economics (including Quantity Surveying)	AB08
	Bricklaying and Stonemasonry	AB09
	Carpentry and Joinery	AB10
	Ceiling, Wall and Floor Fixing	AB11
	Roof Fixing	AB12
Plastering	AB13	

	Furnishing Installation	AB14
	Floor Coverings	AB15
	Glazing	AB16
	Painting, Decorating, Sign Writing and Other Finishes	AB17
	Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying	AB18
	Scaffolding and Rigging	AB19
	Building not elsewhere classified	AB92
CREATIVE ARTS		CA
Performing Arts	Music	CA01
	Drama and Theatre Studies	CA02
	Dance	CA03
	Performing Arts not elsewhere classified	CA91
Visual Arts and Crafts	Fine Arts	CA05
	Photography	CA06
	Crafts	CA07
	Jewellery Making	CA09
	Floristry	CA10
	Visual Arts and Crafts not elsewhere classified	CA92
Graphic and Design Studies	Graphic Arts and Design Studies	CA11
	Textile Design	CA12
	Fashion Design	CA13
	Graphic and Design Studies not elsewhere classified	CA93
Communication and Media Studies	Audio Visual Studies	CA15
	Journalism, Communication and Media Studies	CA16
	Written Communication	CA17
	Verbal Communication	CA18
	Communication and Media Studies not elsewhere classified	CA94
Other Creative Arts	Creative Arts not elsewhere classified	CA95
EDUCATION		ED
Teacher Education	Teacher Education: Early Childhood (Pre-Service)	ED01
	Teacher Education: Primary (Pre-Service)	ED02
	Teacher Education: Secondary (Pre-Service)	ED03
	Teacher Education: Tertiary	ED04
	Teacher Education: General (Pre-Service)	ED05
	Teacher Education: Special Education	ED06
	English Language Teaching(ESOL/EFL)	ED07
	Bilingual Early Childhood Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED09
	Immersion Early Childhood Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED10
	Bilingual Primary Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED11
	Immersion Primary Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED12
	Bilingual Secondary Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED13
	Immersion Secondary Teacher Training (Pre-Service)	ED14
	Teacher Professional Development	ED15

	Teacher Education not elsewhere classified	ED91
Curriculum and Education Studies	Curriculum Studies	ED16
	Education Studies	ED17
Other Education	Education not elsewhere classified	ED92
ENGINEERING AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES		ER
Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	Manufacturing Engineering	ER01
	Printing	ER02
	Textile Making	ER03
	Garment Making	ER04
	Plastics Processing Technology	ER05
	Footwear Making	ER06
	Wood Machining and Turning	ER07
	Cabinet Making	ER08
	Furniture Upholstery and Renovation	ER09
	Furniture Polishing	ER10
	Manufacturing Engineering and Technology not elsewhere classified	ER91
Process and Resources Engineering	Chemical Engineering	ER11
	Mining and Resources Engineering	ER12
	Wood Based Manufacturing	ER13
	Materials Engineering	ER14
	Ceramics, Industrial Glass and Rubber Manufacturing	ER15
	Food (excluding Seafood) Processing Technology	ER16
	Seafood Processing	ER17
Process and Resources Engineering not elsewhere classified	ER92	
Automotive Engineering and Technology	Automotive Engineering	ER18
	Vehicle Mechanics	ER19
	Automotive Electrics and Electronics	ER20
	Automotive Vehicle Refinishing	ER21
	Automotive Body Construction	ER22
	Panel Beating	ER23
	Upholstery and Vehicle Trimming	ER24
	Automotive Vehicle Operations	ER25
	Automotive Engineering and Technology not elsewhere classified	ER93
Mechanical and Industrial Engineering and Technology	Mechanical Engineering	ER26
	Industrial Engineering	ER27
	Toolmaking	ER28
	Metal Fitting, Turning and Machining	ER29
	Sheetmetal Working	ER30
	Boiler-making and Welding	ER31
	Metal Casting and Pattern Making	ER32
	Precision Metalworking	ER33
	Plant and Machine Operations	ER34

	Mechanical and Industrial Engineering & Technology not elsewhere classified	ER94
Civil Engineering	Construction Engineering	ER35
	Structural Engineering	ER36
	Building Services Engineering	ER37
	Water and Sanitary Engineering	ER38
	Transport Engineering	ER39
	Road Construction	ER40
	Geotechnical Engineering	ER41
	Ocean Engineering	ER42
	Civil Engineering not elsewhere classified	ER95
Geomatic Engineering	Surveying	ER43
	Mapping Science	ER44
	Geomatic Engineering not elsewhere classified	ER96
Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Technology	Electrical Engineering	ER45
	Electronic Engineering	ER46
	Computer Engineering	ER47
	Communications Technologies	ER48
	Communications Equipment Installation and Maintenance	ER49
	Power Line Installation and Maintenance	ER50
	Electrical Fitting, Electrical Mechanics	ER51
	Refrigeration, Heating and Air Conditioning	ER52
	Electronic Equipment Servicing	ER53
	Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Technology not elsewhere classified	ER97
Aerospace Engineering and Technology	Aerospace Engineering	ER54
	Aircraft Maintenance Engineering	ER55
	Aircraft Operation	ER56
	Air Traffic Control	ER57
	Aerospace Engineering and Technology not elsewhere classified	ER98
Maritime Engineering and Technology	Maritime Engineering	ER58
	Marine Construction	ER59
	Marine Craft Operation	ER60
	Maritime Engineering and Technology not elsewhere classified	ER99
Other Engineering and Related Technologies	Environmental Engineering	ER61
	Orthotics and Prosthetics	ER62
	Biomedical Engineering	ER63
	Fire Technology and Rescue Services	ER64
	Rail Operations	ER65
	Cleaning	ER66
	Engineering and Related Technologies not elsewhere classified	ER100

FOOD, HOSPITALITY AND PERSONAL SERVICES		FH
Food and Hospitality	Hospitality	FH01
	Food and Beverage Service	FH02
	Butchery	FH03
	Baking and Pastry Making	FH04
	Cookery	FH05
	Food Hygiene	FH06
	Food and Hospitality not elsewhere classified	FH91
Personal Services	Beauty Therapy	FH07
	Hairdressing	FH08
	Personal Services not elsewhere classified	FH92
HEALTH		HE
Medical Studies	General Medicine	HE01
	Surgery	HE02
	Psychiatry	HE03
	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	HE04
	Paediatrics	HE05
	Anaesthesiology	HE06
	Pathology	HE07
	Radiology	HE08
	Internal Medicine	HE09
	General Practice Medicine	HE10
	Medical Studies not elsewhere classified	HE91
	Nursing	Nursing
Midwifery		HE12
Health Care Assistant		HE13
Nursing not elsewhere classified		HE90
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	HE14
Dental Studies	Dentistry	HE15
	Dental Hygiene and Therapy	HE16
	Dental Technology	HE17
	Dental Studies not elsewhere classified	HE93
Optical Science	Optometry	HE18
	Optical Technology	HE19
	Optical Science not elsewhere classified	HE94
Veterinary Studies	Veterinary Science	HE20
	Veterinary Assisting	HE21
	Veterinary Studies not elsewhere classified	HE95
Public Health	Occupational Health and Safety	HE22
	Environmental Health	HE23
	Health Education, Promotion, Counselling	HE25
	Community Health	HE26
	Epidemiology	HE27
	Public Health not elsewhere classified	HE96
Radiography	Medical Imaging Technology (Radiography) and Radiation Therapy	HE28

Rehabilitation Therapies	Physiotherapy	HE29
	Occupational Therapy	HE30
	Chiropractic and Osteopathy	HE31
	Speech Pathology	HE32
	Audiology	HE33
	Massage Therapy	HE34
	Podiatry	HE35
	Rehabilitation Therapies not elsewhere classified	HE97
Complementary Therapies	Naturopathy and Homeopathy	HE36
	Acupuncture	HE37
	Traditional Chinese Medicine	HE38
	Complementary Therapies not elsewhere classified	HE98
Other Health	Nutrition and Dietetics	HE39
	Human Movement and Sports Science	HE40
	Paramedical Studies	HE41
	First Aid	HE42
	Health not elsewhere classified	HE99
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		IT
Computer Science	Formal Language Theory	IT01
	Programming	IT02
	Computational Theory	IT03
	Compiler Construction	IT04
	Algorithms	IT05
	Data Structures	IT06
	Networks and Communications	IT07
	Computer Graphics	IT08
	Operating Systems	IT09
	Artificial Intelligence	IT10
	Computer Science not elsewhere classified	IT91
	Information Systems	Conceptual Modelling
Database Management		IT12
Systems Analysis and Design		IT13
Decision Support Systems		IT14
Information Systems not elsewhere classified		IT92
Other Information Technology	Security Science	IT15
	Information Technology not elsewhere classified	IT93
MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCE		MC
Accountancy	Accounting	MC01
	Accountancy not elsewhere classified	MC91
Business and Management	Business Management	MC02
	Human Resource Management	MC03
	Personal Management Training	MC04
	Organisation Management	MC05
	Industrial Relations	MC06
	International Business	MC07
	Education Administration	MC08

	Public and Health Care Administration	MC09
	Project Management	MC10
	Quality Management	MC11
	Hospitality Management	MC12
	Racing and Gaming Management	MC13
	Farm Management and Agribusiness	MC14
	Tourism Management	MC15
	Business and Management not elsewhere classified	MC92
Sales and Marketing	Sales	MC16

	Real Estate	MC17
	Marketing	MC18
	Advertising	MC19
	Public Relations	MC20
	Sales and Marketing not elsewhere classified	MC93
Tourism	Tourism Studies	MC21
Office Studies	Secretarial and Office Studies	MC22
	Text Processing and Office Tools	MC23
	Office Studies not elsewhere classified	MC94
Banking, Finance and Related Fields	Banking and Finance	MC24
	Insurance and Actuarial Studies	MC25
	Investment and Securities	MC26
	Banking, Finance and Related Fields not elsewhere classified	MC27
	Other Management and Commerce	MC28
	Purchasing, Warehousing and Distribution	MC29
	Valuation	MC30
	Management and Commerce not elsewhere classified	MC95
MIXED FIELDS		MF
General Education Programmes	General Primary and Secondary Education	MF01
	Literacy and Numeracy Programmes	MF02
	Learning Skills Programmes	MF03
	General Education Programmes not elsewhere classified	MF91
Social Skills Programmes	Social and Interpersonal Skills Programmes	MF04
	Life Skills	MF05
	Family/Aiga Education	MF06
	Social Skills Programmes not elsewhere classified	MF92
Employment Skills Programmes	Career Development Programmes	MF07
	Job Search Skills Programmes	MF08
	Work Practices Programmes	MF09
	Employment Skills Programmes not elsewhere classified	MF93
Other Mixed Field Programmes	Mixed Field Programmes not elsewhere classified	MF94
NATURAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES		NS

Mathematical Sciences	Mathematics	NS01
	Statistics	NS02
	Mathematical Sciences not elsewhere classified	NS91
Physics and Astronomy	Physics	NS03
	Astronomy	NS04
Chemical Sciences	Organic Chemistry	NS05
	Inorganic Chemistry	NS06
	Chemical Sciences not elsewhere classified	NS92
Earth Sciences	Atmospheric Sciences	NS07
	Geology	NS08
	Geophysics	NS09

	Geochemistry	NS10
	Soil Science	NS11
	Hydrology	NS12
	Oceanography	NS13
	Earth Sciences not elsewhere classified	NS93
Biological Sciences	Biochemistry and Cell Biology	NS14
	Botany	NS15
	Ecology and Evolution	NS16
	Marine Science	NS17
	Genetics	NS18
	Microbiology	NS19
	Human Biology	NS20
	Zoology	NS21
	Neuroscience	NS22
	Biological Sciences not elsewhere classified	NS94
Other Natural and Physical Sciences	Medical Science	NS23
	Food Science and Biotechnology	NS24
	Pharmacology	NS25
	Laboratory Technology	NS26
	Natural and Physical Sciences not elsewhere classified	NS95
SOCIETY AND CULTURE		SC
Political Science and Policy Studies	Political Science	SC01
	Policy Studies	SC02
Studies in Human Society	Sociology	SC03
	Anthropology	SC04
	History	SC05
	Art History	SC06
	Archaeology	SC07
	Classics	SC08
	Human Geography	SC09
	Women's Studies	SC11
	Studies in Human Society not elsewhere classified	SC91
	Human Welfare Studies	Social Work
Children's Services		SC13

and Services	Nanny and Early Childhood Care	SC14
	Youth Work	SC15
	Support for the Older Person	SC16
	Care for People with Disabilities	SC17
	Community Client Care	SC18
	Counselling	SC19
	Welfare Studies	SC20
	Human Welfare Studies and Services not elsewhere classified	SC92
Behavioural Science	Psychology	SC21
	Behavioural Science not elsewhere classified	SC93
Law	Business and Commercial Law	SC22
	Constitutional Law	SC23
	Criminal Law	SC24
	Family Law	SC25
	International Law	SC26
	Taxation Law	SC27
	Legal Practice	SC28
	Law not elsewhere classified	SC94
Justice and Law Enforcement	Justice Administration	SC29
	Legal Studies	SC30
	Police Studies	SC31
	Justice and Law Enforcement not elsewhere classified	SC95
Librarianship, Information Management and Curatorial Studies	Librarianship and Information Management	SC32
	Curatorial Studies	SC33
Language and Literature	English Language	SC34
	Foreign Languages	SC36
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	SC37
	Translating and Interpreting	SC38
	Linguistics	SC39
	Literature	SC40
	Language and Literature not elsewhere classified	SC96
Philosophy and Religious Studies	Philosophy	SC41
	Religious Studies	SC42
Economics and Econometrics	Economics	SC43
	Econometrics	SC44
Sport and Recreation	Sport and Recreation Activities	SC45
	Sports Coaching, Playing, Officiating and Instructing	SC46
	Sport and Recreation not elsewhere classified	SC97
Other Society and Culture	Community, Aiga, Family and Consumer Studies	SC47
	Cultural Studies	SC48
	Criminology	SC49
	Security Services	SC50
	Society and Culture not elsewhere classified	SC98
TOMAI MA ILOA SAMOA		TS

Faiva Alofilima	le Samoa	TS01
	Fala Eseeese	TS02
	Siapo	TS03
Tufuga ma Fa'atufugaga	Malofie	TS04
	Fale	TS05
	Vaa	TS06

Appendix 6: Criterion 3 - Level descriptors and qualification types comparison

Level	SQF		PQF			
1	Knowledge: Graduates will have functional knowledge of literacy and numeracy and how to live, work and study with other people to live productively in their community and enter work or further study. Skills: Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate on routine tasks under direction and supervision and to identify and report on any routine problems. Application: Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in highly structured and directed work, social or learning contexts where interaction with others follows routine patterns	Certificate Level 1		Certificate Level 1		
		Levels and credits	Level 1: Minimum 40 credits at Level 1 or above. Guideline maximum 80	Knowledge and skills:	Levels and credits	Level 1: 40-120 credits. Minimum of 40 credits at level 1 or above.
		Description	A Certificate I qualifies graduates with basic functional knowledge and skill that provide a stepping stone to entry to the workforce, further study or community engagement.	Application:	Description	Purpose Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1–4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).
		Entry requirements		Autonomy:	Entry requirements	
Level Descriptors comparison: Same: SQF uses the concept of ‘functional’ whereas PQF mentions ‘basic and foundational’ which could be inferred as similar Where PQF mentions ‘explicit’, SQF has a breakdown of types of knowledge and the contexts in which they are used, which could be a definition of ‘explicit’ SQF mentions ‘under direction and supervision’ and ‘directed work’ which could be likened to ‘clear direction’, ‘defined and repetitive’ in the PQF SQF mentions ‘routine problems’ which PQF mentions as ‘everyday issues’ Different The PQF descriptors are high level and broad, whereas the SQF descriptors unpack concepts in considerably more detail. This is evident in this level, where the knowledge domain in the SQF provides detail on the capability of learners expected at this level. However, broadly, much of the detail provided can be read as unpacking the overarching concept of ‘functional’ knowledge – similar to the PQF level descriptor. This is not likely to be a substantive difference. The PQF mentions ‘interaction with others’ which is not explicit in the SQF						
Qualification Types comparison: Same: Minimum Credit Requirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks require a minimum of 40 credits at Level 1 or above. Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications serve as an entry-level stepping stone for employment, further education, or community engagement. They both focus on basic functional knowledge and skills. Progression and Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks recognize certificates as a way to prepare individuals for further education, training, or employment. Different: Credit Range <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 1: Specifies a guideline maximum of 80 credits. PQF Level 1: Allows for a broader range of 40–120 credits. Scope & Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 1: Specifically refers to Certificate I and defines it as an entry-level qualification. PQF Level 1: Refers to certificates more generally and states they can apply across Levels 1–4. Benchmarking Against School Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQF Level 1: Mentions that certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g., Forms 5, 6, and 7). SQF Level 1: Does not explicitly mention school qualification benchmarking. 						
Level	SQF		PQF			
2	Knowledge:	Certificate Level 2	Knowledge and	Certificate Level 2		

Level	SQF		PQF		
<p>Graduates will have knowledge of basic facts or of operations relevant to work in a defined context and/or for learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate in order to apply known processes and known solutions to problems that are familiar.</p> <p>Graduates will have the skills to apply known methods, tools and materials in work or further learning</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in structured contexts under general supervision in collaboration with others</p>	<p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 2: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level II or above. Guideline maximum 80</p>	<p>skills:</p> <p>are factual or manual or operational</p>	<p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 2: 40-120 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 2 or above.</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1-4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).</p>	
	<p>Description</p> <p>A Certificate II qualifies graduates with introductory knowledge and skills to enter a field of work to undertake mainly routine tasks or further study.</p>	<p>Application:</p> <p>are structured and stable</p> <p>involve straightforward issues that are addressed by set, known solutions</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1-4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>
	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>Autonomy:</p> <p>close support and direction or guidance minimal judgement or discretion required</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks have similar concepts around 'factual' and 'operational' SQF mentions 'known processes', 'known methods' and 'structured' which can all be likened to 'structured' in PQF SQF mentions 'supervision' which can be likened to 'close support and direction' and 'guidance minimal judgement' <p>Different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF mentions 'collaboration with others' which is not mentioned in PQF PQF mentions 'manual' but this could be likened to 'facts' in SQF SQF mentions a focus on 'a defined context' whereas the PQF is not explicit about this 					
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both require a minimum of 40 credits at Level 2 or above. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications provide introductory knowledge and skills for individuals entering a field of work or further study. Both can be used to prepare learners for employment or continued education and training. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 2: Requires 60-80 credits. PQF Level 2: Allows a broader range of 40-120 credits. <p>Qualification Naming & Specificity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 2: Explicitly refers to Certificate II as the qualification at this level. PQF Level 2: Uses the broader term "certificates", without specifying Certificate II. <p>Benchmarking Against School Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQF Level 2: States that certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g., Forms 5, 6, and 7). SQF Level 2: Does not explicitly mention benchmarking against school qualifications. 					
Level	SQF		PQF		
3	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have knowledge of facts and procedures and technical knowledge for a defined area of work and/or learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have the skills to think, work and communicate to select and apply solutions to</p>	<p>Certificate Level 3</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 3: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level III or above. Guideline maximum 120</p> <p>Description</p> <p>A Certificate III qualifies graduates with knowledge and skill to perform a specific work role or to study in a specific field of study. The graduate will acquire a broad range of</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>are factual, procedural, technical, with some theoretical aspects</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are stable and predictable</p> <p>involve familiar</p>	<p>Certificate Level 3</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 3: 40-240 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 3 or above.</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Purpose Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1-4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be</p>	

Level	SQF		PQF		
	<p>familiar problems using a specialised range of methods, tools, materials in work and/or learning</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to make judgements about problems under limited supervision with some autonomy. They will be mainly routine and predictable and require collaboration with others. Graduates will take major responsibility for their own learning and performance.</p>		<p>knowledge and skill to undertake skilled work</p>	<p>issues that are addressed by selecting from known solutions</p> <p>Autonomy:</p> <p>routine supervision and direction or guidance</p> <p>some judgement and discretion required</p>	<p>benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).</p>
		Entry requirements		Entry requirements	
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks have similar concepts around 'facts' 'procedural' 'technical' and 'theoretical' (facts for SQF). SQF mentions to 'apply solutions to familiar problems' which is similar to 'familiar issues being addressed by known solutions' in PQF Both frameworks mention judgements carried out in a defined contexts involving some or limited supervision SQF mentions 'routine' and 'predictable' with PQF mentioning 'stable and predictable' <p>Different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF mentions a focus on 'a defined area of work' whereas the PQF is not explicit about this SQF mentions 'some autonomy' whereas PQF the mentions under the autonomy domain 'some judgement and discretion required', this may not be a substantive difference. SQF mentions 'collaboration with others' and 'major responsibility' which appear to be distinct from the level of autonomy defined in the PQF 					
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both require a minimum of 40 credits at Level 3 or above. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications prepare learners for employment or further education and training. Both frameworks acknowledge the role of certificates in enabling programs that help individuals transition into skilled work or study. <p>Skill Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks focus on developing knowledge and skills to undertake skilled work or further study in a specific field. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 3: Requires 60–120 credits. PQF Level 3: Allows for a broader range of 40–240 credits. <p>Qualification Naming & Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 3: Specifically refers to Certificate III, highlighting its purpose in preparing graduates for specific work roles or a field of study. PQF Level 3: Uses the general term "certificates", without specifying "Certificate III." <p>Benchmarking Against School Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQF Level 3: Mentions that certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g., Forms 5, 6, and 7). SQF Level 3: Does not explicitly mention benchmarking against school qualifications. 					
Level	SQF		PQF		
4	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have knowledge of broad facts and practical and theoretical knowledge related to a specialised or broad area of work and/or learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think, work and communicate to select solutions for known and unknown problems and to apply a range of methods, tools, materials and</p>	<p>Certificate Level 4</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 4: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level IV or above or 120 total for a university Foundation Year. Guideline maximum 120</p> <p>Description</p> <p>A Certificate IV qualifies graduates with knowledge and skill to work or study in a broad or specialised field. Graduates will have theoretical and practical knowledge and skill for specialised work or study. A Certificate IV (at Level IV) may be awarded as an exit</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>are broadly factual, with technical and theoretical aspects</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are stable but sometimes unpredictable</p> <p>involve familiar and unfamiliar issues that are addressed by interpreting or varying processes</p> <p>Autonomy:</p>	<p>Certificate Level 4</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 4: 40-240 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 4 or above.</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Purpose Certificates may be used in a wide range of contexts across Levels 1–4, and are often used as enabling programmes or to prepare candidates for employment and/or further education and training. Certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g. at Forms 5, 6 and 7 levels if relevant).</p>	

Level	SQF		PQF	
	<p>information to complete a range of routine and non-routine tasks</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy and to make judgements in both predictable and unpredictable contexts. Graduates will manage their own learning and take some responsibility for the work and learning of others</p>	<p>qualification for the completion of a University Foundation Year, such as the National University of Samoa Foundation Year. This award is for learners who, for various reasons, are unable to proceed in their studies but who have satisfied the requirements for completion of the Foundation Year by meeting the learning outcomes and required credit values for a Level IV qualification.</p>	<p>routine direction or guidance</p> <p>judgement and some planning required</p>	
		Entry requirements		Entry requirements
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks have similar concepts defining the level of knowledge ‘factual, ‘theoretical’ SQF mentions application in ‘predictable and unpredictable’ contexts, with the PQF mentioning ‘stable but sometimes unpredictable’ contexts SQF mentions ‘known and unknown problems’ with PQF mentioning ‘familiar and unfamiliar issues’ SQF mentions applying a ‘range of methods’ and a ‘range of routine and non-routine tasks’ which can be likened to ‘varying processes’ in the PQF. <p>Different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF mentions a focus on ‘specialised or broad area of work and/or learning’ whereas the PQF is not explicit about this SQF mentions ‘autonomy’, ‘managing their own learning’ and ‘responsibility for the work and learning of others’ but PQF still mentions ‘routine direction or guidance’ and no group work component. 				
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both require a minimum of 40 credits at Level 4 or above. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks allow certificates to be used for employment, further education, or training. They recognize that qualifications at this level can be used as enabling programs or preparatory courses for higher education or employment. <p>Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks acknowledge that certificates can be awarded in various contexts and specialized fields. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 4: Requires 60–120 credits (or 120 credits for a University Foundation Year). PQF Level 4: Allows for a broader range of 40–240 credits. <p>Foundation Year Recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 4: Explicitly states that Certificate IV can be awarded as an exit qualification for a University Foundation Year (e.g., National University of Samoa). PQF Level 4: Does not mention a Foundation Year specifically. <p>Benchmarking Against School Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQF Level 4: Mentions that certificates can be benchmarked against school qualifications (e.g., Forms 5, 6, and 7). SQF Level 4: Does not explicitly reference benchmarking against school qualifications. 				
Level	SQF		PQF	
5	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have specialised technical and theoretical knowledge in a specialised area or a broad work field and/or learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think, work and communicate in order to analyse and find</p>	<p>Diploma Level 5</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 5: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level V or above. Guideline maximum 240</p> <p>Description</p> <p>A Diploma at Level V qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill within a specific field of work or study. The graduate will be qualified for paraprofessional or skilled work.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>are mainly technical and theoretical, within a broad field or with depth in one area</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are both known and changing</p> <p>involve unfamiliar issues that are addressed using a</p>	<p>Diploma Level 5</p> <p>Levels and credits</p> <p>Level 5: 120-240 credits Minimum of 120 of all credits at level 4 and above, at least 72 credits at level 5.</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Purpose Diplomas often prepare learners for self-directed application of theoretical and/or technical skills and knowledge. These qualifications recognise capacity for initiative and judgement across a range of educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management roles and often</p>

Level	SQF		PQF									
	<p>solutions to predictable and unpredictable problems and situations and to communicate this information to others</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in order to demonstrate autonomy, judgement in a defined responsibility in known and changing contexts and to manage the work performance and/or learning of others</p>		<p>range of processes that require some adaptation</p> <p>Autonomy:</p> <p>general guidance or direction</p> <p>both judgement and planning required</p>	<p>build on prior qualifications or experience</p>								
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks mention specialization with a focus on 'one field or area' SQF mentions 'finding solutions to predictable and unpredictable problems' which can be likened to 'adaptation' of processes to address 'unfamiliar issues' Both frameworks mention 'judgement' Both frameworks mention 'known and changing' specific to contexts and application <p>Different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF mentions 'responsibility', 'autonomy' whereas PQF still mentions 'general guidance or direction' SQF mention managing 'the work performance and/or learning of others' which PQF does not mention PQF qualifications build on prior learning or experience – SQF does not 												
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both require a minimum of 120 credits for a Level 5 qualification. <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks allow a maximum of 240 credits at this level. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications equip graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skills in a specific field. Both prepare learners for paraprofessional, skilled work, or further education. <p>Application & Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both emphasize self-directed application of knowledge and skills. Both recognize the need for initiative and judgment in various roles. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Distribution Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 5: Requires at least 80 credits at Level 5 or above. PQF Level 5: Requires at least 72 credits at Level 5, but also allows Level 4 credits to count (minimum 120 credits from Level 4 and above). <p>Qualification Naming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 5: Specifically refers to "Diploma" as the qualification at this level. PQF Level 5: Uses the broader term "diplomas", without specifying a particular type. <p>Scope of Work Readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 5: Explicitly mentions qualification for paraprofessional and skilled work. PQF Level 5: Highlights a broader range of roles, including educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management positions. 												
6	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have broad theoretical knowledge and deep technical knowledge in a specialised or broad area of work and/or learning</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have a broad range of skills to think, work and communicate in order to analyse information to complete a range of activities and to find</p>	<p>Advanced Diploma Level 6</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Levels and credits</td> <td>Level 6: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VI or above. Guideline maximum 240</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Description</td> <td>An Advanced Diploma at Level VI qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill in a specialised area which may be in a strategic context. Graduates will have broad knowledge and skill for highly skilled work or further learning.</td> </tr> </table>	Levels and credits	Level 6: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VI or above. Guideline maximum 240	Description	An Advanced Diploma at Level VI qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill in a specialised area which may be in a strategic context. Graduates will have broad knowledge and skill for highly skilled work or further learning.	<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>are highly theoretical and/or abstract or technical, within a broad field or with depth in one area</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are subject to change with some complexity</p> <p>involve the formulation of or adaptation of</p>	<p>Diploma Level 6</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Levels and credits</td> <td>Level 6: 120-240 credits Minimum of 120 of all credits at level 5 and above, at least 72 credits at level 6.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Description</td> <td>Purpose Diplomas often prepare learners for self-directed application of theoretical and/or technical skills and knowledge. These qualifications recognise capacity for initiative and judgement across a range of educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management roles and often build on prior qualifications or experience</td> </tr> </table>	Levels and credits	Level 6: 120-240 credits Minimum of 120 of all credits at level 5 and above, at least 72 credits at level 6.	Description	Purpose Diplomas often prepare learners for self-directed application of theoretical and/or technical skills and knowledge. These qualifications recognise capacity for initiative and judgement across a range of educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management roles and often build on prior qualifications or experience
Levels and credits	Level 6: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VI or above. Guideline maximum 240											
Description	An Advanced Diploma at Level VI qualifies graduates with theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skill in a specialised area which may be in a strategic context. Graduates will have broad knowledge and skill for highly skilled work or further learning.											
Levels and credits	Level 6: 120-240 credits Minimum of 120 of all credits at level 5 and above, at least 72 credits at level 6.											
Description	Purpose Diplomas often prepare learners for self-directed application of theoretical and/or technical skills and knowledge. These qualifications recognise capacity for initiative and judgement across a range of educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management roles and often build on prior qualifications or experience											

Level	SQF		PQF	
	<p>solutions to unpredictable and complex problems and to communicate knowledge, skills and ideas to others to help them solve problems</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills in order to demonstrate autonomy and judgement and take defined responsibility in contexts subject to change and to provide specialist advice and carry out specialist functions. At this level the graduates provide leadership in changing contexts and are able to fully manage their own work performance and/or learning</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>processes to resolve complex and sometimes abstract issues</p> <p>Autonomy:</p> <p>broad guidance or direction</p> <p>well developed judgement and planning required</p>	<p>Entry requirements</p>
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks have 'theoretical' and 'technical' knowledge – the PQF does mention the concept of 'abstract' but this could be likened to 'theoretical' Both frameworks mention specialization with a focus on 'one field or area' SQF mentions 'finding solutions to unpredictable and complex problems' which can be likened to resolving 'complex and sometimes abstract issues' Both frameworks mention the concepts of exercising 'judgement' in contexts that are 'subject to change'. <p>Different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF mentions the concept of 'autonomy and judgement to take defined responsibility and 'leadership' and 'fully manage their own work performance' whereas the PQF refers to ' broad guidance or direction' - SQF mentions 'communicate knowledge, skills and ideas to others to help them solve problems' which infers group work which is not explicitly mentioned in the PQF PQF acknowledge the need for self-directed application of skills and knowledge – SQF does not PQF indicates that Level 6 qualifications can build on prior learning or experience – SQF does not 				
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both require a minimum of 120 credits for a Level 6 qualification. <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks allow a maximum of 240 credits at this level. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications emphasize theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skills in a specialized area. Both prepare learners for highly skilled work or further learning. <p>Progression & Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduates are expected to demonstrate initiative and judgment in their field. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Distribution Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 6: Requires at least 80 credits at Level 6 or above. PQF Level 6: Requires at least 72 credits at Level 6, but also allows Level 5 credits to count (minimum 120 credits from Level 5 and above). <p>Qualification Naming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 6: Specifically refers to "Advanced Diploma" as the qualification at this level. PQF Level 6: Uses the broader term "Diploma", without specifying "Advanced Diploma." <p>Context of Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 6: Mentions strategic context, indicating that graduates may apply their skills in high-level planning or leadership roles. PQF Level 6: Highlights initiative and judgment across a range of roles, including educational, vocational, technical, professional, and/or management fields. 				
See above	Not applicable		See above	Associate Degree Level 6
	Levels and credits	Not applicable		Levels and credits
	Description	Not applicable		Description
				Credit range is 120–360
				Purpose An Associate Degree is a programme designed to recognise successful progression to the full degree or directly to employment. These

Level	SQF		PQF		
				degrees focus on learning within a work context, underpinned by both vocational and academic understanding, and enable learners to demonstrate learning outcomes that are explicitly relevant to employment and professional requirements. The Associate Degree will have at least 240 credits of which at least 90 will match the Level 6 descriptor.	
		Entry requirements	Not applicable	Entry requirements	
	Different: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Associate degree focuses on learning within a work context underpinned by both vocational and academic understanding – this is not present in other qualifications found in the SQF 				
7	Knowledge: Graduates will have deep specialised technical and/or theoretical knowledge in one or more fields of study or work Skills: Graduates will have well developed skills to think and work and to communicate, analyse, evaluate and adapt information to complete a range of activities, generate solutions to complex problems and communicate solutions, knowledge and ideas to others Application: Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, judgement and responsibility in self-directed contexts. Graduates are expected to provide specialist advice and undertake specialist functions	Bachelor's Degree – Level 7		Bachelor's Degree – Level 7	
Levels and credits		Level 7: Minimum 360 in total across Levels V to VII, with at least 80 at Level VII or above Expected minimum of 480 for a four-year Bachelor qualification that includes a Foundation Year. Guideline maximum 720 (e.g. six-year degree qualification when particularly varied and detailed learning outcomes are required to be met)	Knowledge and skills: Are highly theoretical and/or technical with significant underpinning knowledge, within one or more disciplines or areas Involve critical and analytical thinking Application: Are subject to complex change involve the formulation of or substantial adaptation of processes to resolve complex and abstract issues Autonomy: Broad guidance and demonstrated self-direction Significant judgement, planning and coordination is required	Levels and credits	360-480 credits. Minimum of 360 credits at levels 5 - 7, minimum of 72 credits at Level 7 or higher
Description		A Bachelor degree provides the graduate with a systematic and coherent introduction to a body of knowledge and to problem solving techniques involved in self-directed work and study. A Bachelor degree involves at least one sequential study programme where content is progressively developed to form the basis of further study or professional practice. A Bachelor degree is a standard requirement for postgraduate studies. The full degree should specify a spread of credit across Levels V to VII so that the qualification demonstrates progression, reflects the requirements of the degree definition and achieves the associated learning outcomes in a way that is appropriate to the subject area.	Description	Purpose A Bachelor Degree is a systematic and coherent introduction to a body of knowledge of a recognised major subject (or subjects in the case of a double degree or a double major) as well as to problem-solving and associated basic techniques for self-directed work and learning. A Bachelor Degree involves at least one sequential study programme in which content is progressively developed such that it might form a basis for post-graduate study and/or professional practice.	
	Entry requirements		Entry requirements		
	Level Descriptors comparison: Same: Both frameworks mention 'technical' and 'theoretical' knowledge				

Level	SQF	PQF												
	<p>Both frameworks mention a focus on 'one or more fields / disciplines / areas'</p> <p>Both frameworks mention generating solutions or processes to resolve complex issues</p> <p>SQF has concepts of 'judgement' 'autonomy' 'responsibility' in 'self-directed contexts' which can be likened to 'self-direction'</p> <p>Different:</p> <p>In the Autonomy domain the PQF still requires 'broad guidance' whereas SQF does not explicitly mention this and instead note that graduates can provide 'specialist advice'</p> <p>SQF mentions 'communicating ideas to others' which infers group work which is not mentioned in the PQF</p>													
	<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks require a minimum of 360 credits across Levels 5 to 7. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications provide a systematic and coherent introduction to a body of knowledge in a recognized subject area. Both develop problem-solving skills and self-directed learning. Both serve as a foundation for postgraduate study and/or professional practice. <p>Progressive Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both emphasize a sequential study program where content is progressively developed to support higher-level learning and professional application. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Has a broader range of 360–720 credits, allowing for varied and detailed learning outcomes, such as in six-year degrees. PQF Level 7: Defines a credit range of 360–480 credits, typically aligning with a three- to four-year degree structure. <p>Foundation Year Consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Specifies an expected minimum of 480 credits for a four-year degree, including a Foundation Year. PQF Level 7: Does not explicitly mention Foundation Year requirements. <p>Credit Distribution & Degree Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Requires a spread of credits across Levels 5 to 7, ensuring the qualification demonstrates progression and meets degree requirements. PQF Level 7: Also requires credits from Levels 5 to 7, but does not emphasize the structured distribution as much as SQF. <p>Degree Specialization & Recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Focuses on general degree progression leading to postgraduate study. PQF Level 7: Mentions double majors or double degrees, highlighting flexibility in academic pathways. 													
	<p>See above</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="558 1576 1066 2807"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="558 1576 1066 1620">Graduate Certificate – Level 7</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="558 1620 793 1774">Levels and credits</td> <td data-bbox="793 1620 1066 1774">Level 7: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level VII or above. Guideline maximum 120</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="558 1774 793 2807">Description</td> <td data-bbox="793 1774 1066 2807">A Graduate Certificate enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue further study, usually in a new area, at an advanced undergraduate level. Its purpose is often as a bridge to postgraduate studies for people developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, profession or subject and/or to broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in another qualification. The qualification will provide graduates with advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work. A person with a Graduate Certificate is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree and some outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Graduate Certificate – Level 7		Levels and credits	Level 7: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level VII or above. Guideline maximum 120	Description	A Graduate Certificate enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue further study, usually in a new area, at an advanced undergraduate level. Its purpose is often as a bridge to postgraduate studies for people developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, profession or subject and/or to broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in another qualification. The qualification will provide graduates with advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work. A person with a Graduate Certificate is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree and some outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a	<p>See above</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1318 1576 1919 2807"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="1318 1576 1919 1620">Graduate Certificate – Level 7</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1318 1620 1533 1774">Levels and credits</td> <td data-bbox="1533 1620 1919 1774">60-120 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 7 or above</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1318 1774 1533 2807">Description</td> <td data-bbox="1533 1774 1919 2807">Purpose A Graduate Certificate is designed as a vehicle for degree graduates to pursue further study at an advanced undergraduate level. The graduate certificate is typically designed as a bridging qualification to post-graduate study for candidates developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, professional or subject area and/or as a broadening or deepening of skills or knowledge already gained in an undergraduate qualification.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Graduate Certificate – Level 7		Levels and credits	60-120 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 7 or above	Description	Purpose A Graduate Certificate is designed as a vehicle for degree graduates to pursue further study at an advanced undergraduate level. The graduate certificate is typically designed as a bridging qualification to post-graduate study for candidates developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, professional or subject area and/or as a broadening or deepening of skills or knowledge already gained in an undergraduate qualification.
Graduate Certificate – Level 7														
Levels and credits	Level 7: Minimum 60 with at least 40 at Level VII or above. Guideline maximum 120													
Description	A Graduate Certificate enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue further study, usually in a new area, at an advanced undergraduate level. Its purpose is often as a bridge to postgraduate studies for people developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, profession or subject and/or to broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in another qualification. The qualification will provide graduates with advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work. A person with a Graduate Certificate is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree and some outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a													
Graduate Certificate – Level 7														
Levels and credits	60-120 credits Minimum of 40 credits at level 7 or above													
Description	Purpose A Graduate Certificate is designed as a vehicle for degree graduates to pursue further study at an advanced undergraduate level. The graduate certificate is typically designed as a bridging qualification to post-graduate study for candidates developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, professional or subject area and/or as a broadening or deepening of skills or knowledge already gained in an undergraduate qualification.													

Level	SQF		PQF	
		new area of study.		Entry is usually open to degree graduates or to those who have been able to demonstrate equivalent practical, professional or educational experience of an appropriate kind.
	Entry requirements		Entry requirements	
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Minimum Credit Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks require a minimum of 40 credits at Level 7 or above, with the total qualification ranging from 60 to 120 credits. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications serve as a bridge for Bachelor degree graduates to pursue further study, typically in a new area or discipline. Both are designed to help graduates broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in their initial qualification, preparing them for advanced undergraduate study or postgraduate study. Both frameworks emphasize the development of advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work. <p>Target Audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications are aimed at degree graduates or individuals who have demonstrated equivalent practical, professional, or educational experience. <p>Different:</p> <p>Qualification Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Specifically refers to a Graduate Certificate as a qualification that provides advanced undergraduate-level study, usually in a new area or discipline. PQF Level 7: Also defines a Graduate Certificate but highlights that it serves as a bridging qualification to postgraduate study, with a focus on both broadening and deepening existing knowledge or developing professional and vocational knowledge in new areas. <p>Degree Structure & Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: The Graduate Certificate enables graduates to pursue study at an advanced undergraduate level, providing a foundation for postgraduate education. PQF Level 7: Emphasizes the bridging nature of the qualification, enabling learners to transition into postgraduate study, and indicates that entry is typically open to degree graduates or those with relevant practical experience. <p>Additional Entry Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 7: Does not explicitly mention entry via practical or professional experience. PQF Level 7: Specifies that entry is often open to those who have demonstrated equivalent practical, professional, or educational experience, not just formal degree holders. 				
See above	Graduate Diploma – Level 7		See above	Graduate Diploma – Level 7
	Levels and credits	Level 7: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VII or above Guideline maximum 240		Levels and credits Credit range is 120–240
	Description	A Graduate Diploma enables a Bachelor degree graduate to pursue a significant body of study at an advanced undergraduate level. The Graduate Diploma can bridge people into postgraduate study and/or broaden knowledge and skills in a familiar subject or discipline, or develop knowledge in a new area. A person with a Graduate Diploma is able to demonstrate all the outcomes of a Bachelor degree in a new area of study or advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in their existing discipline or professional area.		Description Purpose A Graduate Diploma is designed for degree graduates to pursue a significant body of study at an advanced undergraduate level. The Graduate Diploma is typically designed as a bridging qualification to post-graduate study as well as broadening knowledge and skills in a familiar subject or discipline, or developing knowledge in a new area Relationship to other qualifications A Graduate Diploma may provide the basis for post-graduate study

Level	SQF		PQF		
		Entry requirements		Entry requirements	Entry is usually open to degree graduates or may be to those who have been able to demonstrate equivalent practical, professional or educational experience of an appropriate kind.
Qualification Types comparison:					
Same:					
Minimum Credit Requirement					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks require a minimum of 120 credits with a maximum for 240 					
Purpose & Outcome					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications serve as a bridge for Bachelor degree graduates to pursue further study, typically in a new area or discipline. Both are designed to help graduates broaden or deepen skills and knowledge already gained in their initial qualification, preparing them for postgraduate study. 					
Target Audience					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications are aimed at degree graduates or individuals who have demonstrated equivalent practical, professional, or educational experience. 					
Level	SQF		PQF		
	Bachelor Honours Degree Level 8		Knowledge and skills:	Bachelor Honours Degree Level 8	
Knowledge: Graduates will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines demonstrating critical understanding of key principles Skills: Graduates will have expert specialised skills to think, work and communicate in order to critically analyse, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities and to analyse and generate solutions to complex problems and communicate solutions, knowledge, skills and ideas to others Application: Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy and well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a learner or practitioner	Level and credits	Level 8: Minimum 120 at Level VIII or higher (stand-alone), with a minimum of 30 credits for research. Minimum 480 if embedded within a Bachelor degree, with a minimum of 30 credits for research. Guideline maximum 240 (stand-alone)	are highly advanced, theoretical and technical, within one or more disciplines or areas involve critical, analytical and independent thinking	Level and credits	Level 8. 120-480 credits Minimum of 120 credits embedded in a 480 credit (or more) Bachelor degree (at Level 8) at a particular level of achievement. Minimum of 120 credits at Level 8 following a Level 7 Bachelor degree (either as a part of an integrated honours degree or as a separate qualification), with a research component.
	Description	A Bachelor degree with Honours qualifies individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a specific context to undertake research or professional work and as a pathway for research and further learning. Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning. A Bachelor degree with Honours qualification is normally available only to individuals who have achieved highly in a Level VII Bachelor level qualification and/or shown an aptitude for research. It may be embedded in a Bachelor qualification or a discrete postgraduate degree following a Bachelor Degree.	Application: are complex with some specialisation involve the formulation of processes to resolve highly complex and abstract issues Autonomy: minimal guidance and demonstrated self-direction or autonomy, significant judgement, planning, coordination and organisation required	Description	Purpose A Bachelor Degree with Honours recognises distinguished study at Level 8. It may either be a degree in itself, or a discrete post-graduate degree following a Bachelor Degree. A Bachelor Degree with Honours may recognise: a particular level of achievement in a Bachelor Degree (480 credits or more) especially in relation to work of a research nature (typically at Level 8); achievement of Level 8 following a Level 7 Bachelor Degree
	Entry requirements			Entry requirements	
Level Descriptors comparison:					
Same:					
Both frameworks mention generating solutions or processes to resolve complex issues					
Both SQF and PQF knowledge have 'advanced theoretical, technical knowledge'					
Both SQF and PQF skills require specialization and critical analysis.					
Both SQF and PQF mention autonomy of learning including 'responsibility' and 'self-direction'					
Different:					

Level	SQF	PQF																								
	<p>PQF mentions a focus on 'one or more disciplines or areas' but this is not in the SQF</p> <p>SQF mentions 'communicating ideas to others' which infers group work which is not mentioned in the PQF</p>																									
	<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Credit Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks require a minimum of 120 credits at Level 8 (stand-alone), with an emphasis on research credits (at least 30 credits). <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications aim to equip graduates with advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning. Both are designed as pathways for research and offer a route for individuals to progress to postgraduate studies. Both qualifications enable graduates to apply a body of knowledge in specific contexts and undertake research or professional work. <p>Research Component</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks include a research component, ensuring graduates have a foundation in research methodology and practical application. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Distribution & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Requires a minimum of 120 credits at Level 8 or higher if the qualification is stand-alone, and a minimum of 480 credits if the qualification is embedded within a Bachelor degree. PQF Level 8: Requires 120 credits embedded in a 480-credit Bachelor degree, or 120 credits at Level 8 following a Level 7 Bachelor degree. <p>Qualification Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Allows for a stand-alone qualification (e.g., Bachelor degree with Honours) or as an embedded qualification within a Bachelor degree. PQF Level 8: Specifically states that Level 8 may be embedded within a Bachelor degree or awarded as a separate postgraduate qualification following a Level 7 degree, with a research component. <p>Eligibility & Entry Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Emphasizes that Bachelor degree with Honours qualifications are typically available to graduates who have achieved highly in a Level 7 Bachelor qualification or shown aptitude for research. PQF Level 8: Focuses on achieving Level 8 following a Level 7 Bachelor degree and mentions the research component as an essential part of the qualification. <p>Qualification Recognition & Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Describes the qualification as a pathway for research and further learning, specifically designed for those who have excelled in their earlier academic work. <p>PQF Level 8: Emphasizes recognition of distinguished study at Level 8, which can either be embedded in a Bachelor's degree or awarded separately, based on achievement and research focus.</p>																									
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Level	SQF	PQF																
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQF Level 8: A Postgraduate Certificate is intended to extend and deepen an individual's existing knowledge in a specific area, building on what was gained in a Bachelor degree in that same field. • PQF Level 8: The Postgraduate Certificate focuses on continuing professional development and academic achievement, advancing knowledge beyond a Bachelor degree or a Graduate Certificate/Diploma. • PQF provides a foundation for further postgraduate study, whether that be a graduate diploma or master's degree. • <p>Recognition of Prior Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQF Level 8: The focus is on building knowledge in the same subject area as the Bachelor degree, with an emphasis on deepening existing skills in that field. • PQF Level 8: Recognizes continuing professional development or academic achievement in advance of the candidate's initial qualifications (Bachelor, Graduate Certificate, or Diploma), allowing for a broader range of professional or educational backgrounds. <p>Qualification Prerequisites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQF Level 8: The Postgraduate Certificate is primarily for those who have completed a Bachelor degree in the same area. • PQF Level 8: Allows for entry with a Graduate Certificate or Diploma in a related subject, or through relevant professional experience in addition to a Bachelor degree. 																	
See above	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="268 685 556 736">See above</th> <th data-bbox="556 685 1068 736">Postgraduate Diploma Level 8</th> <th data-bbox="1068 685 1314 736">See above</th> <th data-bbox="1314 685 1919 736">Postgraduate Diploma Level 8</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 736 556 890"></td> <td data-bbox="556 736 1068 890"> <p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 8: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VIII or higher. Guideline maximum 240</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1068 736 1314 890"></td> <td data-bbox="1314 736 1919 890"> <p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 8. Credit range is 120–240</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 890 556 1409"></td> <td data-bbox="556 890 1068 1409"> <p>Description</p> <p>A Postgraduate Diploma extends and deepens an individual's knowledge and skills. It builds upon existing skills and knowledge from specified subjects, usually gained in a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate. The qualification can prepare individuals for independent research and scholarship in a specific subject.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1068 890 1314 1409"></td> <td data-bbox="1314 890 1919 1409"> <p>Description</p> <p>A Post-Graduate Diploma is designed to extend and deepen a candidate's knowledge and skills by building on attainment in the principal subject(s) of the qualifying degree, graduate diploma or graduate certificate. It prepares a candidate for independent research and scholarship in the principal subject of the diploma. A person who holds a Post-Graduate Diploma may be eligible to be enrolled in a Master's Degree.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 1409 556 1739"></td> <td data-bbox="556 1409 1068 1739"> <p>Entry requirements</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1068 1409 1314 1739"></td> <td data-bbox="1314 1409 1919 1739"> <p>Entry requirements</p> <p>A candidate for the Post-Graduate Diploma in a specified subject or, where appropriate, a related area will normally have completed all requirements of the relevant Bachelor Degree or Graduate Certificate or Diploma, or has the relevant skills and knowledge acquired through appropriate work or professional experience at an additional level.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		See above	Postgraduate Diploma Level 8	See above	Postgraduate Diploma Level 8		<p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 8: Minimum 120 with at least 80 at Level VIII or higher. Guideline maximum 240</p>		<p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 8. Credit range is 120–240</p>		<p>Description</p> <p>A Postgraduate Diploma extends and deepens an individual's knowledge and skills. It builds upon existing skills and knowledge from specified subjects, usually gained in a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate. The qualification can prepare individuals for independent research and scholarship in a specific subject.</p>		<p>Description</p> <p>A Post-Graduate Diploma is designed to extend and deepen a candidate's knowledge and skills by building on attainment in the principal subject(s) of the qualifying degree, graduate diploma or graduate certificate. It prepares a candidate for independent research and scholarship in the principal subject of the diploma. A person who holds a Post-Graduate Diploma may be eligible to be enrolled in a Master's Degree.</p>		<p>Entry requirements</p>		<p>Entry requirements</p> <p>A candidate for the Post-Graduate Diploma in a specified subject or, where appropriate, a related area will normally have completed all requirements of the relevant Bachelor Degree or Graduate Certificate or Diploma, or has the relevant skills and knowledge acquired through appropriate work or professional experience at an additional level.</p>
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Level	SQF	PQF
	<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Credit Range</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both frameworks have a credit range of 120–240 credits for a Postgraduate Diploma. <p>Purpose & Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications are designed to extend and deepen an individual’s knowledge and skills, building on prior academic achievement (usually from a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma, or Graduate Certificate). Both aim to prepare candidates for independent research and scholarship in a specific subject area. <p>Target Audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both qualifications are aimed at individuals who have already completed a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma, or Graduate Certificate in a relevant subject, or those who possess relevant professional experience. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Requires a minimum of 120 credits with at least 80 credits at Level 8 or higher, and a guideline maximum of 240 credits for a Postgraduate Diploma. PQF Level 8: Allows a broader credit range, 120–480 credits, with a focus on deepening knowledge and skills. <p>Qualification Design & Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: The Postgraduate Diploma is specifically intended to build on existing knowledge and skills gained from previous qualifications, with a focus on preparing graduates for independent research in a specific subject area. PQF Level 8: The Postgraduate Diploma focuses on extending and deepening knowledge in a principal subject, preparing graduates for research and scholarship. It also suggests that the qualification can be pursued in either a specific subject or a related area, with emphasis on attaining advanced research skills. <p>Eligibility & Entry Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Emphasizes entry for individuals who have completed a Bachelor degree, Graduate Diploma, or Graduate Certificate in the same or a related subject area. PQF Level 8: Allows entry based on completion of a relevant Bachelor degree, Graduate Certificate, or Diploma, but also acknowledges the possibility of entry based on relevant professional experience in addition to formal qualifications. <p>Pathways & Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQF Level 8: Highlights the qualification as an important step toward independent research and scholarship in a specific subject area. <p>PQF Level 8: Specifically mentions that those who complete a Postgraduate Diploma may be eligible for enrollment in a Master’s Degree, indicating a more defined progression to advanced study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PQF mentions that it serves as a pathway for further study, particularly for those considering enrolling in a Master's Degree. 	

Level	SQF		PQF	
9	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have advanced understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or practice areas which is at the forefront of their discipline/practice area</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have expert specialised skills to think and work in a body of knowledge or practice area in order to analyse, critically reflect and synthesize complex information, problems and theories and to research and apply established theories and interpret and communicate knowledge, skills and ideas to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner</p>	<p>Master's Degree Level 9</p> <p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 9: Minimum 180 with at least 120 at Level IX (standalone or with nested postgraduate qualifications) or Minimum 120 following directly from a Bachelor degree with Honours qualification. Guideline maximum 240 for many Master's degrees. Guideline maximum 600 for graduate-entry professional programmes in health sciences or law</p> <p>Description</p> <p>A Master's Degree qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research, a pathway for further learning, professional practice and/or scholarship. A Master's Degree usually builds on a Bachelor Degree, Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree or a Postgraduate Diploma in a specific area. It may also build on extensive relevant professional experience. The outcomes are demonstrably in advance of undergraduate study, and require individuals to engage in research and/or advanced scholarship. Master's Degrees are constituted in one discipline or coherent programme of study. They may be undertaken by taught courses or research, or by a combination of both.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>involve mastery and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge some of which is at the forefront in one or more disciplines or areas</p> <p>involve high level critical analyses, evaluation, reflection and independent thinking</p> <p>involve research as the basis for extending or redefining knowledge or practice in one or more disciplines or areas</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are complex and specialised, generally involving some new or evolving aspects</p> <p>involve the formulation and testing of theories and processes to resolve highly complex, abstract and emergent issues</p> <p>Autonomy:</p> <p>minimal guidance and substantial autonomy, initiative, adaptability and self direction</p> <p>expert judgement and considerable planning and management required</p>	<p>Master's Degree Level 9</p> <p>Level and credits</p> <p>Level 9. Credit range is 120–240</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>A Master's degree qualifies candidates who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research, a pathway for further learning, professional practice and/or scholarship. Master's degrees usually build on a bachelor degree, graduate diploma, bachelor degree with honours or a post-graduate diploma. They usually build on extensive professional experience of an appropriate kind. Their outcomes are demonstrably in advance of undergraduate study, and require candidates to engage in research and/or advanced scholarship. Master's degrees are constituted in one discipline or a coherent programme of study. They may be undertaken by coursework or research or by a combination of both.</p> <p>i. By coursework only Entry to a Master's degree by coursework worth 120 to 240 credits is normally based on an undergraduate degree. The degree is achieved through coursework consisting of courses, project work and research in varying combinations. It may build on undergraduate study in the same academic field, or it may build on the more generic graduate attributes of an undergraduate degree in other fields, or in some cases on relevant professional experience. Master's degrees that build on generic attributes and/or experience (often called conversion masters) are usually in professional fields and are recognised as appropriate professional preparation by the profession or industry concerned</p> <p>ii. By thesis or primarily by thesis Entry to a Master's degree by thesis is normally based on a bachelor degree with honours or a post-graduate diploma in the same field of study. The degree consists of a research project that is presented in the form of a thesis, dissertation, substantial research paper or creative work, worth at least 90 credits (at Level 9).</p>

Level	SQF			PQF		
						<p>iii. By coursework and thesis Entry to a Master's degree by coursework and thesis is normally based on an undergraduate degree in the same field of study. The degree includes a thesis, dissertation, substantial research paper or creative work worth at least 90 credits and may include up to 150 credits of coursework.</p> <p>Master's degrees usually build on undergraduate degrees, Bachelor Degrees with Honours or Post-Graduate Diplomas. They may also build on extensive professional experience of an appropriate kind. The outcomes of Master's degrees are demonstrably in advance of undergraduate study and require students to engage in scholarship and/or research.</p>
		<p>Entry requirements</p>			<p>Entry requirements</p>	<p>The normal minimum entry requirement for a 240 credit Master's degree is a bachelor degree or equivalent. For a Master's degree of fewer than 240 credits, normally the minimum entry qualification is a Bachelor Degree with Honours or a Post-Graduate Diploma or undergraduate degree followed by relevant professional experience.</p>
<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Both SQF and PQF knowledge are similar – with a focus on ‘understanding complex knowledge at the forefront of a discipline/practice’</p> <p>Both frameworks have concepts of ‘autonomy’ ‘self direction’ ‘expert/authoritative judgement’ and ‘adaptability’</p> <p>Different:</p> <p>SQF mentions ‘communicating ideas to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences’ which infers group activity which is not mentioned in the PQF</p> <p>PQF mentions ‘extending or redefining knowledge’ ‘evolving aspects’ and ‘emergent issues’ whereas the SQF focuses on application and interpretation of ‘established theories’</p> <p>PQF still requires ‘minimal guidance’ whereas SQF does not explicitly mention this</p>						
<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Purpose & Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both frameworks recognize the Master's Degree as a qualification that enables individuals to apply advanced knowledge in a range of contexts such as research, professional practice, and scholarship. ○ Both qualifications typically build on previous study, whether that is a Bachelor's degree, Postgraduate Diploma, or Bachelor Degree with Honours. They also may take into account extensive professional experience. ○ The Master's degree in both frameworks involves advanced research and/or scholarship, and its outcomes are demonstrably advanced compared to undergraduate study. <p>Credit Range & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both frameworks provide a credit range of 120–240 credits for a Master's degree. However, SQF also mentions up to 600 credits for specific graduate-entry professional programs (e.g., in health sciences or law), while PQF doesn't specify this. ○ Both frameworks recognize that Master's degrees can be completed by coursework, research, or a combination of both. <p>Entry Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both frameworks require candidates to have completed a Bachelor's degree, Graduate Diploma, or Bachelor with Honours to enter a Master's program. Additionally, relevant professional experience may also be accepted in both frameworks as part of entry eligibility. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SQF Level 9: For a Master's degree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of 120 credits, with at least 120 credits at Level 9 (stand-alone or nested with other postgraduate qualifications), and a maximum of 240 credits for most Master's programs. ▪ For graduate-entry professional programs (e.g., health sciences, law), the maximum credit range is up to 600 credits. ○ PQF Level 9: For a Master's degree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The credit range is 120–240 credits. The framework does not specify the higher credit requirements for professional programs like SQF. <p>Qualification Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SQF Level 9: It outlines specific pathways within the Master's degree qualification: ○ PQF Level 9: Specifies similar pathways but lacks the specific guidance on graduate-entry professional programs (e.g., health sciences, law), which SQF includes in its description. 						

Level	SQF	PQF							
	<p>Graduate-Entry Professional Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SQF Level 9 explicitly mentions graduate-entry professional programs in fields like health sciences and law, with a maximum of 600 credits for these qualifications. This is not a feature mentioned in PQF Level 9. <p>Focus on Professional Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SQF Level 9: The Master's degree may include graduate-entry professional programs that prepare individuals for specialized professional practice, which is more explicitly outlined. <p>PQF Level 9: Emphasizes research, professional practice, and scholarship but does not specifically call out professional programs like those in health sciences or law.</p>								
10	<p>Knowledge:</p> <p>Graduates will have knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of study or professional practice which demonstrates a critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>Graduates will have expert thinking, technical and research skills in a discipline to critically reflect, synthesize and evaluate ideas and theories, develop, adapt and implement research methods to extend or re-defined existing knowledge or professional practice and to disseminate and promote new ideas to peers and others.</p> <p>Graduates will have the skills to be an independent researcher, scholar or advanced practitioner. Graduates will have generated original knowledge and understanding to make a substantial contribution to a discipline or practice area</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>Graduates will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner or academic, showing a sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or practices at the forefront of their discipline or practice area</p>	<p>Doctoral Degree</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Level and credits</td> <td>Level 10: Minimum 360. Guideline maximum 480</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Description</td> <td> <p>A Doctoral Degree qualifies an individual to work as an independent scholar by demonstrating the individual's capability to apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice.</p> <p>Research is the defining characteristic of all Doctoral degree qualifications or doctorates. While the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is generic title for a research qualification at Level X, there are also Doctoral degrees (typically titled Doctor of [field of study]) that make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the context of professional or creative practice.</p> <p>The body of work that leads to the award of a doctorate in Samoa can be one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thesis • a thesis focused on professional practice • a creative work in the visual or performing arts with a thesis • a thesis or equivalent creative work in combination with coursework • creative work in the visual or performing arts • published work. (doctorate by publication). </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Entry requirements</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Level and credits	Level 10: Minimum 360. Guideline maximum 480	Description	<p>A Doctoral Degree qualifies an individual to work as an independent scholar by demonstrating the individual's capability to apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice.</p> <p>Research is the defining characteristic of all Doctoral degree qualifications or doctorates. While the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is generic title for a research qualification at Level X, there are also Doctoral degrees (typically titled Doctor of [field of study]) that make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the context of professional or creative practice.</p> <p>The body of work that leads to the award of a doctorate in Samoa can be one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thesis • a thesis focused on professional practice • a creative work in the visual or performing arts with a thesis • a thesis or equivalent creative work in combination with coursework • creative work in the visual or performing arts • published work. (doctorate by publication). 	Entry requirements	
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		<p>Knowledge and skills:</p> <p>involve critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge at the most forefront of a discipline or area</p> <p>involve high level critical analyses, reflection of independent and original thinking</p> <p>involve the creation and interpretation of new knowledge or practice, through original advanced research that satisfies formal academic review</p> <p>Application:</p> <p>are highly complex and specialised involving new or evolving aspects</p> <p>involve the formulation and testing of theories and processes to resolve significant highly complex, abstract and emergent issues</p> <p>Autonomy:</p> <p>minimal guidance and high level of autonomy, initiative, adaptability and selfdirection</p> <p>authoritative judgement and high planning, management and innovation required</p>	<p>Doctoral Degree</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Level and credits</td> <td>Level 10: 360-480 credits (3,600-4,800 learning hours)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Description</td> <td> <p>The Doctorate is a research-based degree whereby the candidate becomes an increasingly independent scholar who makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge. For the PhD/DPhil and the named doctorate this development takes place under the guidance of recognised experts in the field of study and under circumstances that allow the candidate access to appropriate research resources. The Doctorate is awarded on the basis of an original and substantial contribution to knowledge as judged by independent experts applying contemporary international standards from within the discipline. The hallmark for achievement will be the candidate's capacity for substantial independent research or creative activity as attested by the educational institution and/or as demonstrated by submitted work. The major component of all doctorates is original research. The body of work that leads to the award of a doctorate will be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ a thesis (the PhD/DPhil); ☐ creative work in the visual or performing arts (the PhD/DPhil); ☐ a thesis or equivalent creative work in combination with coursework (the named doctorate) ☐ a thesis in combination with a creative work in the visual or performing arts (the named doctorate); ☐ published work (the higher doctorate). </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Entry requirements</td> <td>Normally the culmination of study which begins at the Bachelor level and reaches a stage beyond the Master's degree</td> </tr> </table>	Level and credits	Level 10: 360-480 credits (3,600-4,800 learning hours)	Description	<p>The Doctorate is a research-based degree whereby the candidate becomes an increasingly independent scholar who makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge. For the PhD/DPhil and the named doctorate this development takes place under the guidance of recognised experts in the field of study and under circumstances that allow the candidate access to appropriate research resources. The Doctorate is awarded on the basis of an original and substantial contribution to knowledge as judged by independent experts applying contemporary international standards from within the discipline. The hallmark for achievement will be the candidate's capacity for substantial independent research or creative activity as attested by the educational institution and/or as demonstrated by submitted work. The major component of all doctorates is original research. The body of work that leads to the award of a doctorate will be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ a thesis (the PhD/DPhil); ☐ creative work in the visual or performing arts (the PhD/DPhil); ☐ a thesis or equivalent creative work in combination with coursework (the named doctorate) ☐ a thesis in combination with a creative work in the visual or performing arts (the named doctorate); ☐ published work (the higher doctorate). 	Entry requirements	Normally the culmination of study which begins at the Bachelor level and reaches a stage beyond the Master's degree
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	<p>Level Descriptors comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>The intent of the level of learning outcomes set out in the domains of each framework are broadly comparable, although explained differently, with the SQF unpacking concepts in more detail.</p>								

Level	SQF	PQF
	<p>Both SQF and PQF knowledge mention graduates having understanding of a 'complex body of knowledge' at the 'frontier/forefront of field' involving advanced research and analysis skills.</p> <p>Both of the frameworks mention concepts of 'generated original thinking / development of new ideas' 'involving new or evolving' with advanced skills in applying these skills in practice.</p> <p>Different:</p> <p>SQF skills mention 'independent researcher / expert and leading' whereas PQF autonomy mentions there is 'minimum guidance' but does say there is 'authoritative judgement' from graduates</p> <p>SQF mentions 'promoting new ideas to peers and others' which infers group activity which is not mentioned in the PQF.</p>	
	<p>Qualification Types comparison:</p> <p>Same:</p> <p>Purpose and Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both SQF Level 10 and PQF Level 10 define the Doctoral Degree as a qualification for individuals to work as independent scholars, focusing on the original creation of knowledge and the ability to apply an extensive body of knowledge to research and professional practice. • The outcome of both degrees is the ability to make a substantial and original contribution to knowledge, which is demonstrated through the production of a thesis or equivalent creative work. <p>Credit Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both frameworks specify the credit range for the Doctoral Degree as 360-480 credits. This range aligns across both frameworks, with both defining the doctoral level qualification as requiring substantial research and creative work. <p>Research Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both qualifications are highly research-oriented, with the major component being original research. Candidates are expected to contribute substantial knowledge through their independent investigation and research, under the guidance of experts. <p>Pathways to Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Doctorate may also involve creative works in fields like visual arts or performing arts, along with a thesis or equivalent work, depending on the discipline. <p>Focus on Creative Work and Coursework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both frameworks mention that the doctorate can involve creative work (for example, in visual or performing arts) or coursework in combination with the thesis, which is an option for the named doctorate. This more detailed description allows for broader flexibility in the structure of the doctorate. <p>Different:</p> <p>Credit and Learning Hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SQF Level 10: Specifies a minimum of 360 credits and a guideline maximum of 480 credits for the doctoral qualification, without specifying learning hours. ○ PQF Level 10: Also specifies a credit range of 360-480 credits, but further outlines the learning hours associated with this qualification, specifying that it involves 3,600 to 4,800 learning hours. This level of detail regarding learning hours is not mentioned in the SQF description. <p>Types of Doctorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SQF Level 10: Provides a general description of the Doctoral Degree without specifying types beyond the standard research thesis. It mentions the overall goal of independent scholarship and new knowledge development. ○ PQF Level 10: Expands on the variety of doctoral qualifications, specifying different forms of doctorates including PhD/DPhil, named doctorates (involving a combination of thesis and coursework or creative work), and the higher doctorate (based on published work). This offers more insight into the different formats a doctorate may take within the PQF framework. <p>PhD/DPhil Specificity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PQF Level 10: Emphasizes the PhD/DPhil as a specific type of doctorate and elaborates on how it involves original research leading to a thesis or creative work, with guidance from recognized experts. It also outlines the process of awarding the doctorate based on contemporary international standards. ○ SQF Level 10: While the focus is on research, it does not go into as much detail about the PhD/DPhil distinction or the standards for awarding a doctorate. 	

Appendix 6: Screenshots of SQA systems

SQA MIS

Registered Providers:

Registered PSET Providers

Retrieved: 2025-09-26 (Friday) 1:59:55 AM
1 provider(s) found

#	Provider	Corporate Body Type	Governing Body	Contact Name
1	Australia Pacific TC (aptc)	Charitable Trust	Board	test test

Provider registration screen:

Add Provider Registration

Step 1 of 3

Provider: National University of Samoa (nus)

Corporate Body Type: Company

Physical Address: Toomataga

Postal Address: PO Box 1622
Le Pitoa Campus
Toomataga
Samoa

Governing Body: Council

Contact First Name: Mary

Contact Last Name: Nigels

Contact Designation: Contact Designation

Phone: 20972

Fax: 25489

Email: info@nus.edu.ws

Website: www.nus.edu.ws

Education Focus: Provides certificate, diploma, and undergraduate degree programs, as well as technical and vocational training

18 Years & Over: 1000

14-17 Years: 959

Add Provider Registration

Providers undergoing registration process:

Providers undergoing registration process

Retrieved: 2025-09-26 (Friday) 1:50:58 AM
2 provider registration(s) found

#	ID	Provider	Corporate Body Type	Governing Body	Contact Name	Status
1	21	Assembly of God TC (aogtc)	Charitable Trust	Board	test test	Submit Preliminary Evaluation (Step 3 of 9)
2	22	Australia Pacific TC (aptc)	Charitable Trust	Board	test test	Submit Application (Step 2 of 9)

RoA

Creating an RoA – Qualification:

RoA Report Information

RoA type * Qualification *

Qualification Information

Type	Title
Samoa Qualification	Doctor of Medicine

Code	SQF level	Credit value
71274	VI	9

NCSs
A list of all the NCSs for this qualification including their code, title, SQF level and credit value.

Code	Title	SQF level	Credit value
MF02003	Identify and use numbers one to hundred in everyday life, in a supported learning context	I	2
MF02004	Perform calculations for the workplace	II	3

Creating an RoA - NFL activity:

RoA Report Information

RoA type * NFL activity *

NFL Activity Information

Name	Main outcome of programme
S604 Community Research	Aliquid est non voluptas impedit omnis est molestiae aperiam quam queraet et.

Start date *	End date *
<input type="text" value="25/02/2023"/>	<input type="text" value="25/02/2024"/>

Learning Outcomes
A list of all the learning outcomes for this NFL activity.

Description
Learning Outcome 3
Learning Outcome 4

NCSs
A list of all the NCSs for this NFL activity including their code, title, SQF level and credit value.

Code	Title	SQF level	Credit value
IT12002	Use electronic techniques for filing purposes	I	1
MC22001	Operate a records management system in the workplace	III	3

Learner information submitted for award:

1. LIN (optional and can be left blank for new learners)
2. Matai title (optional and can be left blank)
3. First name
4. Last name
5. Gender
6. Date of birth
7. Postal address
8. Email
9. Phone number
10. Enrolment date
11. Date of award (optional and can be left blank)