



Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework

Qualification Standards

for

Initial Teacher Education: Postgraduate Certificate in Education

The process of drafting this standard is described in the Introduction.

November 2024

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) is an independent statutory body established by the Higher Education Act, no. 101 of 1997 (amended). The CHE is the Quality Council for Higher Education, advises the Minister of Higher Education and Training on all higher education issues and is responsible for quality assurance and promotion through the Higher Education Quality Committee.

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HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS SUB-FRAMEWORK

STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT: POLICY AND PROCESS

Introduction

National policy and legislative context

In terms of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, 67 of 2008, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) is the Quality Council (QC) for Higher Education. The CHE is responsible for the quality assurance of higher education qualifications.

Part of the implementation of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) is the development of qualification standards. Standards development is aligned with the *nested approach* incorporated in the HEQSF. In this approach, the outer layer providing the context for qualification standards are the NQF level descriptors developed by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in agreement with the relevant QC. One of the functions of the QC (in the case of higher education, the CHE) is to ensure that the NQF level descriptors ‘remain current and appropriate’¹. The development of qualification standards for higher education, therefore, needs to take the NQF level descriptors, as the outer layer in the *nested approach*, into account. An ancillary function is to ensure that standards themselves ‘remain current and appropriate’ in respect of qualifications awarded by higher education institutions. This means that they need to be responsive to the distinctive features of each field of study.

A secondary layer for the context in which qualification standards are developed is the HEQSF. This framework specifies the types of qualifications that may be awarded and, in some cases, the allowable variants of the qualification type. An example of variants is the provision for two variants of the Master’s degree (including the ‘professional’ variant). Another example is the distinction in the Bachelor’s degree type, between the ‘general’ and ‘professionally-oriented’ variants. The HEQSF also specifies the purpose and characteristics of each qualification type. However, as indicated in the *Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education* (CHE, 2013), neither NQF level descriptors nor the HEQSF is intended fully to address, or indeed capable of addressing, the relationship between generic qualification-type purpose and the specific characteristics of that qualification type in a particular field of study. One of the tasks of standards development is to reconcile the broad, generic description of a qualification type according to the HEQSF and the particular characteristics of qualifications awarded in diverse fields of study and disciplines, as defined by various descriptors and qualifiers.

¹ NQF Act 67 of 2008

Framework for standards development

The development of qualification standards is guided by the principles, protocols, and methodology outlined in the *Framework*, approved by the Council in March 2013. The focus of a standards statement is the relationship between the purpose of the qualification, the attributes of a graduate that manifest the purpose, and the contexts and conditions for the assessment of those attributes. A standard establishes a threshold. However, on the grounds that a standard also plays a developmental role, the statement may include, as appropriate, elaboration of terms specific to the statement, guidelines for the achievement of the graduate attributes, and recommendations for above-threshold practice.

A qualification standard is a statement that indicates how the purpose of the qualification, and the level on the NQF at which it is awarded, are represented in the learning domains, assessment contexts, and graduate attributes that are typical for the award of the qualification. Qualification standards are not the same, in either scope or effect, like other modalities used for the establishment of standards in higher education, for example, resource allocation standards, teaching and learning standards, or standards used for the grading of individual students. Matters such as actual curriculum design, tuition standards, and standards for resource allocation for a programme are the responsibility of the institution awarding the qualification. Nor does the standard prescribe the duration of study for the qualification. It establishes the level on the NQF on which it is awarded and confirms the minimum number of credits as set by the HEQSF. The standard relates to all programmes leading to the qualification, irrespective of the mode of delivery, the curriculum structure, and whether or not a prior qualification at a lower or the same level on the NQF is a prerequisite.

The process of development

The aim of the standards development process is to explore the extent to which the principles, procedures, content, and methodology of standards development meet the requirements of all relevant parties: the institutions awarding the qualifications, the CHE as quality assurer of the qualifications, the graduates of those qualifications; their prospective employers; and any relevant professional council or association. The standard is, therefore, cognisant of academic as well as professional interests, insofar as the latter apply.

The drafting of this standards statement is the work of a group of academic experts in the field of study, convened by the CHE. Members of the Standards Development Reference Group participate in their individual capacity, not as representatives of any institutions or organisations.

The Initial Teacher Education Reference Group met on several occasions during the period 2022-2023, and the standard statement has been through several iterations and revisions. A

draft version was disseminated to higher education institutions and other interested parties for public comment on the 10th of April 2024. Recommendations received were considered by the Reference Group and, where appropriate, were incorporated.

QUALIFICATION TITLE

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION

QUALIFICATION TYPE AND VARIANT

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education conforms to the specifications for an Advanced Diploma at NQF level 7, and the admission requirements, purpose, characteristics and progression opportunities for the PGCE are the same as those for the Advanced Diploma. However, due to the familiarity of the PGCE in international teacher circles, the qualification will continue to be denoted by this title.

(Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework, CHE, 2013, p. 78)

Advanced Diploma

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

This qualification has a number of different purposes, depending on a student's circumstances and the nature of the programme. It may provide entry-level vocational or professional preparation or specialisation for Bachelor's Degree graduates or diplomates by offering an intensive, focused and applied specialisation which meets the requirements of a specific niche in the labour market. For example, a BSocSci graduate might register for an Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management in order to enter the field of human resources; a BSc graduate might register for an Advanced Diploma in Education (or PGCE, see exceptions) in order to become a science teacher, or a BSc (Pharm) graduate might register for an Advanced Diploma in Marketing in order to become a marketing consultant in the pharmaceutical industry. Programmes offering this qualification are therefore particularly suitable for continuing professional development through the inculcation of a deep and systematic understanding of current thinking, practice, theory and methodology in an area of specialisation.

This qualification may also be designed to prepare students for postgraduate study through the deepening of their knowledge and understanding of theories, methodologies and practices in specific academic disciplines and fields, as well as the development of their ability to formulate, undertake and resolve more complex theoretical and practice-related problems and tasks through the selection and use of appropriate methods and techniques.

(Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework)

STANDARD FOR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION **QUALIFICATIONS**

PREAMBLE

Education is recognised as a fundamental human right entrenched in the South African constitution. Initial teacher education (ITE) qualifications are tasked with producing graduates for the teaching profession whose central role is providing quality education for *all* learners in the schooling sector (Grades R–12). Quality education equips learners with sustainable skills and competencies for the future, to enable transition effectively from school to work, higher education, and/ or entrepreneurial opportunities.

The quality of educators graduating from higher education institutions (HEIs) is increasingly scrutinized, prompting the establishment of standards aimed at setting benchmarks for the education sector to cultivate highly skilled and effective practitioners.

ITE graduates need to be prepared for a competitive global world, where they will be confronted by the latest technology and research. They will be expected to possess relevant knowledge and competences to educate their learners for a changing, complex, and demanding knowledge-intensive society. Knowledge and skills required to use digital tools effectively for teaching and learning is necessary, especially given the rise of artificial intelligence.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are confronted with demands for increasing the supply of highly knowledgeable and skilled teacher graduates. Thus, increasing the number of initial teacher education graduates must be twinned with ensuring the quality of ITE programmes across the sector.

Unlike many professional qualifications that are followed by an internship, ITE graduates are required to take immediate responsibility for teaching once graduated. This places particular emphasis on HEIs for the achievement of a set of complex and interrelated academic and professional requirements for the preparation of ITE graduates who are highly skilled and ready for practice.

Given the context of a fast-changing world which brings with it new ethical and psycho-social challenges, it is imperative to develop the social and emotional cognition of young professionals who will be able to cope with an increasingly fraught and demanding environment. The *Code of Professional Ethics* (2021) and the *Professional Teaching Standards* (2020) of the South African Council for Educators (SACE) emphasise teachers' ethical commitment to the learning and well-being of their learners. Teachers are required to take responsibility for their professional development by collaborating with others and supporting social justice imperatives and the redress of societal and educational inequalities.

Teachers should create safe learning environments and have the required subject matter knowledge and skills to make meaningful choices for promoting the success of all learners. Furthermore, they are expected to recognise the important role language plays in teaching and learning, plan coherent learning experiences, and monitor and assess learning. Graduates are encouraged to use their own varied linguistic repertoires to teach and to be able to promote the use of home languages in their classrooms.

The Standard considers the complexity of ITE qualifications and focuses on the academic and professional attributes expected of graduates and the flexibility of ITE programmes relevant for the complex world that ITE graduates will be required to negotiate in the future. Graduates should be able to work in diverse socio-economic circumstances in South Africa and beyond and have a good understanding of digital transformation, and computational thinking for facilitating meaningful learning and teaching in the classroom.

Notwithstanding challenges facing the profession, teaching remains and will continue to remain, a potentially rewarding career option for graduates committed to enabling the upliftment of the country's youth.

References

South African Council for Educators. 2021. *Code of Professional Ethics*. SACE.

South African Council for Educators. 2020. *Professional Teaching Standards*. SACE.

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015. *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications*. Government Gazette no. 38487. February 2015.

PURPOSE

Initial Teacher Education qualifications prepare the graduate for work as a teacher in diverse settings. Currently, Higher Education Institutions are able to offer two different routes with respect to ITE: a) a Bachelor of Education (B Ed) degree or b) a bachelor's degree that includes approved teaching subjects, capped with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Initial Teacher Education prepares graduates to:

- demonstrate disciplinary and pedagogical content knowledge through effective communication of concepts, ideas, and theories for meaningful teaching and learning;
- be responsible and engaged members of learning and teaching communities;
- adhere to the common values foundational to the South African Constitution, such as human dignity, equality, freedom, non-racialism and non-sexism in the context of education;

- be creative, innovative, critically reflexive, and self-directed life-long learners, able to link theory and practice and respond and adapt to a changing and challenging educational landscape.

To this end, the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualification has the purposes outlined below.

Postgraduate in Education (PGCE) purpose:

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education provides an opportunity for a holder of an approved initial qualification to acquire a capstone teacher education qualification. Undergraduate degree or diploma recipients are able to use the PGCE to obtain requisite pedagogical knowledge, skills and qualities, complementing subject content knowledge acquired in a previous qualification, in order to become a teacher in a specific phase and subject(s). The qualification provides applied teaching knowledge and explicit practical skills. The candidate is able to develop workplace competence and intellectual independence to facilitate entry into the profession as a beginner teacher. The qualification also entails the acquisition of competence that may render the graduate eligible for cognate post-graduate studies and equips the graduate with the capacity for continued professional development as a teacher. The graduate is eligible for registration as a teacher with the South African Council for Educators.

NQF LEVEL AND CREDITS

For the PGCE the minimum number of credits allocated to the qualification is 120 credits.² The qualification includes work-integrated learning (WIL) bearing a number of credits appropriate for the demonstration of all WIL-related graduate attributes. All 120 credits must be awarded at the exit level (NQF level 7), including an appropriate number allocated to WIL. Further specification relating to WIL is included below, in 'Contexts and Conditions for Assessment'.

STANDARD FOR THE AWARD OF THE QUALIFICATION

The qualification may be awarded when the qualification standard has been met or exceeded.

The graduate attributes for Initial Teacher Education are broadly framed by three domains: namely, professional knowledge and understanding, professional skills practices, and professional values, attributes, and commitment. Accordingly, the purpose and level of the

² Note that the Standard does not specify the duration of a programme leading to the qualification, which is informed by the delivery mode.

qualification will have been achieved when the following attributes are evident, regardless of the mode of delivery applied for the acquisition and demonstration of the attributes.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Understanding professional knowledge refers to the ability to grasp relevant academic concepts and content to facilitate learning at the appropriate phase and grade level. Graduates are able to acquire relevant subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curriculum knowledge, and to contextualise what they plan and teach to learners in their specific circumstances. Graduates are conversant with different types of learning, and are learning enablers in complex or unpredictable situations by understanding and making use of the different knowledge types that promote disciplinary, pedagogical, practical, fundamental, and situational learning.

The graduate knows and understands:

- education theory, the principles underpinning pedagogy as well as the holistic development of learners and how they learn, through critical engagement with relevant policies and literature, including principles underpinning pedagogy in the relevant historical, philosophical, psychological and sociological contexts, and contemporary interpretations;
- disciplinary foundations of the subject(s) taught, based on theoretical and research-based foundations, including subject content knowledge and curriculum knowledge relevant to specific phase(s) and grades, how to interpret specialised disciplinary knowledge, and how different phases, grades and subjects relate to each other;
- the important role of language in teaching and learning across the curriculum, in particular language learned from birth, bilingual pedagogies and in ways different languages can be used to enable learning through translanguaging, code-switching and/or multilingualism, and an appropriate use of subject-specific discourse and terminology in the subject(s) taught;
- the principles, policies and relevant strategies underpinning inclusive education, which includes barriers to learning, and learner diversity, including the identification, through critical reflection, of social issues relating to diverse linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and religious belief, thought and opinion; and

- constitutionally-confirmed principles of social justice, including knowledge of local and global issues related to the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental contexts of education, and knowledge of attitudes and practices that discriminate against, marginalise, or exclude learners as individuals or in groups.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND PRACTICES

Professional skills and practices comprise the capacity to plan and implement learning programmes, evaluate performance, provide feedback, work on the observations from evaluation, apply informed pedagogy, and create and maintain a learner-friendly and safe school/learning environment, underpinned by the principles of child protection and positive discipline, being informed by the relevant professional knowledge and policy frameworks on teaching and learning, and enable the graduates to learn from, and in practice.

The graduate is able to:

- identify, access, understand and apply education policies and procedures relevant to the phase, grade(s), subject(s) of practice and diverse contexts and conditions;
- make thoughtful choices about teaching practices to select and organise content into coherent, sequential learning programmes aligned with the prescribed curriculum, based on what learners already know to ensure the realisation of meaningful learning goals and experiences;
- be familiar with teaching methods and strategies that enhance cumulative knowledge building in the relevant discipline, as well as across disciplines;
- motivate and stimulate learners' curiosity to learn, to create equitable opportunities for all learners (including learners with special needs) to actively participate in class activities so that they are supported to acquire relevant subject content knowledge through appropriate interventions, if necessary, to deal with subject areas that learners appear to find challenging;
- reflect on their own and others' practices in theoretically-informed ways, to improve and adopt appropriate teaching practices in order to stay informed about the latest developments in the subject(s) taught, through enhancing subject content knowledge and relevant pedagogical approaches and strategies that enhance cumulative knowledge building in and across disciplines;
- select, design, adapt and use a variety of learning and teaching support materials to promote learning and to identify, evaluate, modify, and develop content- and grade-appropriate physical, graphic, digital, and text-based resources to enhance learning;
- apply appropriate requirements to effectively fulfil administrative duties within a school setting;

- establish conducive learning environments and manage classroom routines effectively across diverse contexts in order to prioritise learning and teaching;
- demonstrate effective communication skills in the language applied to a specific learning and teaching context, and conversational competence in at least one additional official language;
- integrate an appropriate variety of the rapidly-changing digital technologies into the classroom, identify the benefits and risks to teaching and learning through the use of these technologies, and keep informed of and skilled in changes in technology related to instructional and administrative functions;
- apply the principles and policies governing inclusive education and learner diversity, through the identification of social issues and problems, application of appropriate strategies, provision of support by way of motivation, raising of learners' self-esteem, and creation of opportunities for learners to overcome learning challenges;
- conscientise learners against social practices and beliefs that marginalise and/or otherwise prejudice members of the learning community by challenging and dismantling such practices in support of social justice, and actively use educationally informed methods to advocate against socially-unacceptable practices that disrupt teaching and learning, such as gender-based violence, bullying, substance abuse and unjust discrimination of any type;
- create opportunities for learners to practice and acquire transferrable skills (communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and metacognition) and characteristics and values (resilience, adaptability, growth mindset, accountability and curiosity) to prepare them to thrive in a rapidly changing environment;
- integrate cross-cutting themes of education for sustainable development, sustainable livelihoods and indigenous knowledge systems across all grades and subjects;
- select, design, adapt and use a variety of learning and teaching support materials to promote learning and to identify, evaluate, modify, and develop content- and grade-appropriate physical, graphic, digital, and text-based resources to enhance learning and assessment;
- apply reliable and varied ways to monitor and assess, in formative and summative modes, learning in the subjects taught, and to keep records of assessments and track learners' performance as well as provide detailed and appropriate feedback on assessment timeously to permissible stakeholders to inform action planning and decision making*.

*Permissible stakeholders would vary according to specific contexts. They include:

- individual learners, their parents, guardians or caregivers;
- school principals, heads of department and, where relevant, other teaching staff;

- medical and other health professionals, or authorised professionals within the education sector.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES

Professional Values entail upholding educationally- and ethically-acceptable attitudes, approaches and behaviour guided and informed by sound, critically-evaluated philosophies and principles of life, which underlie teachers' discharge of professional duties, being informed by the relevant professional knowledge and policy frameworks on teaching and learning, thus enabling the graduate to learn from, and in, practice.

The graduate:

- promotes mutual respect for all stakeholders by actively building on respectful practices and behaviours;
- displays a professional work ethic, enacts appropriate social and moral values, and behaves in a manner that befits, enhances, develops, and maintains the integrity of the teaching profession;
- knows who learners are and how they learn, can identify and respond to the learning strengths, challenges, and needs of learners from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, and shows an awareness of the implications and strategies for teaching across the full range of learner abilities, to uphold every learner's constitutional right to education;
- shows awareness of the importance of raising the learners' expectations of themselves and their learning, and can support the capacity of all learners to achieve and make progress academically, psychologically and socially, as part of whole learner development;
- embodies the South African constitutional values including democracy, social justice and equity, non-racism and non-sexism, Ubuntu, an open society, accountability, respect, the rule of law, and reconciliation;
- understands that learners' well-being should be considered an operational goal for educational systems in the same way that we develop strategies to harness academic growth, as it builds social capital and belongingness and equips learners with preventative skills, fortitude, and resilience for lifelong well-being;

- understands that the science of education is constantly evolving and acknowledge the need to continuously upskill themselves to stay abreast of changes in curricula and assessment and the advances in the use of technology in education;
- appreciates the importance of working as a community and fostering collaboration among colleagues within the school as well as with other schools and within the education fraternity at large.

CONTEXTS AND CONDITIONS FOR ASSESSMENT OF GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Assessment is integral to the programme design, teaching and learning strategies, to student and staff development, and to the improvement of the curriculum and learning materials. The range and levels of assessment adequately address all graduate attributes, considering the relevant NQF levels, the need for progression from one level to the next, and the official requirements for professional registration and employment. The planning and design of assessments are aimed at developing and assessing students' knowledge, skills, and applied competence including independent thinking, critical analysis, development of elementary research skills, problem-solving skills, application of knowledge to realistic contexts, and demonstration of subject-related skills, including language and numeracy skills.

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Institutions have a responsibility to provide a suitable and adequate learning environment to ensure effective assessment. This includes an adequate physical and information technology infrastructure in line with the mode of study, access to computers and the internet, learning resources and libraries (digital or/and physical) with access to adequate databases, journals and similar relevant material.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE OF STAFF

Design, delivery, assessment, and moderation (internally as well as externally) require adequate field-specific and appropriately qualified staff with relevant experience and opportunities for on-going professional development. Staff members have appropriate expertise to perform assessments in different modes of learning, including contact, blended and online modes, and offer assessment opportunities that are valid, rigorous, fair, and defensible. Staff-to-student ratio ensures assessment is fair to students and efficiently managed. There is an adequate number of academic, administrative, and support staff to ensure that appropriate monitoring of student progress is possible. There is effective and

integrated coordination, both academic and administrative, of all aspects of the programme leading to the qualification.

EXPLICIT AND APPROPRIATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The institution has clear assessment policies and procedures that are explicit and appropriate for the purpose of the qualification and the mode(s) of delivery. The policies and procedures ensure effective monitoring of student progress; validity and reliability of assessment practices; accurate recording of assessment results; the settling of disputes; and maintenance of the rigour and security of the assessment system, including that of the recognition of prior learning (RPL). These policies and procedures are made explicit, and are accessible to staff and students, with adequate induction regarding their requirements and consequences. There are clear, educationally-sound policies for internal formative and summative assessment, co-assessment of practical competence in schools or other learning sites, and the appointment and responsibilities of internal and external examiners and moderators. Policies for ensuring the integrity of certification processes for the qualification obtained through the programme are effectively implemented.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Range of appropriate assessment tasks (diagnostic, formative, continuous, summative)

Assessment is ongoing during the period of study and consists of a variety of assessments addressing a broad taxonomic range of demands, without excessive reliance on any one method. This approach is underscored by the careful consideration of what is fit for purpose, ensuring that assessments are diverse in nature and reflective of the range of diverse environments and the use of diverse models. There is a range of assessment types to ensure gradual assessment integration throughout the qualification, considering student diversity, intellectual and practical levels of demand commensurate with the relevant NQF levels, and capable of addressing the full extent of theoretical and school-based professional competencies.

The planning and design of assessments aim at developing and assessing generic student attributes, skills and applied competence including the requirement for independent thinking, critical analysis, development of elementary research skills, problem-solving skills, application of knowledge to realistic contexts, and demonstration of language and numeracy skills. This includes the ability to produce comprehensive, integrated responses to topics and tasks.

Alternative assessment options are available to accommodate the functional differences of some students or to minimise the impact of a range of barriers that could affect students' performance.

Adequate feedback and ongoing support for students

Learning and teaching environments ensure that adequate, regular and constructive feedback is given to students on both theoretical learning and practical application throughout the learning process within sufficient time to allow students to benefit from academic feedback. Feedback includes the monitoring of student performance, identification of at-risk students, and provision of academic and professional support to enhance students' capacity to achieve the aims of the qualification.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

It is the responsibility of the institution offering the qualification to formally arrange WIL opportunities for students. The institution, the student, and the site selected for WIL have entered into a formal agreement that includes clear guidelines on professional, ethical and educational considerations. Each party (the institution, the site, and the student) is informed through explicit guiding instructions of its role and responsibilities.

The institution ensures that the workplace-based component of WIL is effectively structured, monitored, supervised, integrated into the learning programme, spread across the learning programme, and formally assessed.

Students are placed in appropriate learning environments that will reflect different types, modes and forms of learning. Regular and effective communication takes place between the institution, the student, and the site of WIL. A mentoring system enables the student to experience a variety of well-structured teaching practices. Staff engage with the relevant persons at sites to generate a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all those who are involved with student teachers' experience and assessment of teaching competence in a way that promotes professionalism.

The learning-in-practice, workplace-based component of WIL for teacher education qualifications mostly takes place in classroom and school settings but could also include a small component of service learning in community settings. By offering WIL opportunities beyond the confines of the classroom, institutions can better equip students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to thrive in their studies. The placement and duration of work-integrated learning must comply with the provisions stipulated in the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (2015). WIL is credit-bearing; the number of credits allocated is commensurate with the proportion of graduate attributes that are demonstrated through WIL. An appropriate portion of WIL credits is achieved at the exit level of the qualification.

PROGRESSION

Completion of an Advanced Diploma may be presented for entry into a Postgraduate Diploma, a Bachelor Honours Degree or a Bachelor's Degree. Accumulated credits may also be presented for entry into a cognate Bachelor's degree. A qualification may not be awarded for early exit from an Advanced Diploma.

(Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework)

ANNEXURE A

NQF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

NQF Level Seven

- a. Scope of knowledge, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate integrated knowledge of the central areas of one or more fields, disciplines or practices, including an understanding of and the ability to apply and evaluate the key terms, concepts, facts, principles, rules and theories of that field, discipline or practice; and detailed knowledge of an area or areas of specialisation and how that knowledge relates to other fields, disciplines or practices.
- b. Knowledge literacy, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate an understanding of knowledge as contested and the ability to evaluate types of knowledge and explanations typical within the area of study or practice.
- c. Method and procedure, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate an understanding of a range of methods of enquiry in a field, discipline or practice, and their suitability to specific investigations; and the ability to select and apply a range of methods to resolve problems or introduce change within a practice.
- d. Problem-solving, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to identify, analyse, evaluate, critically reflect on and address complex problems, applying evidence-based solutions and theory-driven arguments.
- e. Ethics and professional practice, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to take decisions and act ethically and professionally, and the ability to justify those decisions and actions drawing on appropriate ethical values and approaches within a supported environment.
- f. Accessing, processing and managing information, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to develop appropriate processes of information gathering for a given context or use; and the ability to independently validate the sources of information and evaluate and manage the information.
- g. Producing and communicating information, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to develop and communicate his or her ideas and opinions in well-formed arguments, using appropriate academic, professional, or occupational discourse.
- h. Context and systems, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to manage processes in unfamiliar and variable contexts, recognising that problem solving is context and system-bound, and does not occur in isolation.
- i. Management of learning, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to identify, evaluate and address his or her learning needs in a self-directed manner, and to facilitate collaborative learning processes.
- j. Accountability, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to take full responsibility for his or her work, decision-making and use of resources, and limited accountability for the decisions and actions of others in varied or ill-defined contexts.