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Template 4: National Qualifications Framework

Organization (full legal name):	Escola Profissional do Alto Lima, CIPRL
Country:	Portugal (PT)

Developments concerning the National Qualifications Framework

Some aspects to take into account (if applicable):

- National Qualifications System;
- Structure of the NQF;
- Legislation regulating the NQF;
- Descriptors of the qualification levels in the NQF;
- Correspondence between national qualification levels and EQF levels.

In Portugal, the National Qualification System (NQS) was created in December 2007, with the publication of the Decree-Law no. 396/2007, of December 31 (amended by Decree-Law No. 14/2017), in line with the European Qualifications Framework, aiming at increasing the level of qualification of the active population. In Portugal, the National Qualification System (NQS) was created in December 2007, with the publication of the Decree-Law no. 396/2007, of December 31 (amended by Decree-Law No. 14/2017), in line with the European Qualifications Framework, aiming at increasing the level of qualification of the active population. Its development strategy is to ensure the relevance of the education and training for personal development and for the modernization of enterprises, as well as for the educational and professional development of citizens through dual certification programmes or through the recognition, validation and certification of competencies.

The Portuguese National Qualifications Framework (NQF), in force since October 1, 2010, was created by Decree-Law no. 396/2007, of December 31, and is regulated by ordinance no. 782/2009, of July 23, which repeals the application of the structure of the EQF levels.

The creation of the Portuguese National Qualifications Framework, carried out under the Vocational Education and Training reform and the creation of the National Qualifications System (DL No. 396/2007), was based on the following main objectives:

- To integrate and articulate, within a single framework, qualifications of the subsystems of education and training – basic education, secondary education, higher education;
- To value the skills acquired by citizens in non-formal and informal contexts;
- To promote the access, evolution and quality of qualifications;
- To improve the readability, flexibility and comparability of qualifications;
- To define learning outcomes for qualification levels;
- To link national qualifications with the European Qualifications Framework.

The Portuguese National Qualifications Framework is structured in 8 levels, each one defined by a set of indicators which specify the expected learning outcomes for each level, in terms of Knowledge, Aptitudes and Attitudes. Each level of the National Qualifications Framework has level descriptors, meaning that each level is based on general or abstract descriptions of learning outcomes, which have a guiding and non-normative character.

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Levels of Qualification and Descriptors of Learning Outcomes per Level in the National Qualifications Framework.

Level of Qualification	Knowledge	Aptitudes	Attitudes
Level 1	Basic general knowledge.	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks.	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context.
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study.	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools.	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy.
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information.	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems.
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study.	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study.	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities.
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems.	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others.
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles.	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study.	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.
Level 7	Highly specialized knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research. Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields.	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields.	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.
Level 8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields.	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice.	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research.

Source: Ordinance no. 782/2009, of 23 of July.

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The National Qualifications Framework covers basic, secondary and higher education, vocational training and the processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences whether acquired in a non-formal or informal way.

One of the essential elements for the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is the reference of the National Qualifications Framework to the EQF. The Portuguese reference process was completed in June 2011, after the presentation and approval of the Report on the National Qualifications Framework Reference to the European Qualifications Framework.

There is a clear and direct relationship between the levels and descriptors of the National Qualifications Framework and those of the European Qualifications Framework.

Structure of the National Qualifications Framework.

Level of Qualification	Qualifications
Level 1	2nd Cycle – Basic Education
Level 2	3rd Cycle – Basic Education
Level 3	Secondary Education
Level 4	Dual Certification (Secondary Education and Professional Certification)
Level 5	Post-secondary qualification not higher education with credits for continuing higher education
Level 6	Degree
Level 7	Master's Degree
Level 8	Doctorate

Source: Ordinance no.782 / 2009, of 23 of July.

National Coordination Point for the implementation of the EQF:	Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional – ANQEP
National Coordination Point for the implementation of the ECVET:	Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional – ANQEP
Related Links:	http://www.anqep.gov.pt/ http://www.dge.mec.pt/ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-qualifications-framework-60_en https://dre.pt/application/file/a/58089811 https://dre.pt/application/dir/pdf2sdip/2011/01/008000000/0213902140.pdf https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/628017 https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/105808927 https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/493227

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Developments concerning the National Catalog of Qualifications

Some aspects to take into account (if applicable):

- Organization and structure of the NCQ;
- VET modalities included in the NCQ (e.g. VET courses for Youths are included in the NCQ?);
- EQF levels of the qualifications integrated in the NCQ;
- Methodology used in the conception of the NCQ qualifications (e.g. Are the qualifications based in Learning Outcomes? Are the qualifications organized in Units of Learning Outcomes?).

The Portuguese National Qualifications Catalogue (NQC) is a tool for the strategic management of qualifications of non-superior level that integrates the National System of Qualifications (Decree-Law no. 396/2007, of December 31).

The National Qualifications Catalogue (NQC) is available at www.catalogo.anqep.gov.pt.

The main aims of the National Qualifications Catalogue (NQC) are:

- To contribute for the development of a flexible and readable qualifications framework to promote comparability of qualifications at national and European levels;
- To promote the acquisition of appropriate qualifications and competences for the competitiveness and modernization of the economy and personal and social development;
- To promote flexibility in obtaining qualifications and building individual lifelong learning pathways;
- To facilitate the recognition of qualifications;
- To promote the quality of the National Qualifications System;
- To improve the effectiveness of public funding for training;
- To contribute for the information and guidance on qualifications.

The National Qualifications Catalogue contains the qualifications benchmarks for vocational education and training processes and the qualifications benchmarks for the processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC).

The qualifications benchmarks for vocational education and training has three training components – socio-cultural component; scientific component; technological component – organized into capitalizable and certifiable autonomously units.

The RVCC's qualifications benchmarks consist on a set of assessment tools applicable to the recognition, validation and certification of professional competencies.

The National Qualifications Framework has a total of 274 qualifications integrated within 39 training fields:

- 114 qualifications of EQF level 2;
- 125 qualifications of EQF level 4;
- 5 qualifications of EQF level 5.

Related Links:

http://www.anqep.gov.pt/

http://www.dge.mec.pt/

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-qualifications-framework-60_en

https://dre.pt/application/file/a/58089811

https://dre.pt/application/dir/pdf2sdip/2011/01/008000000/0213902140.pdf

https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/628017

https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/105808927

https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/493227

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