

# Qualifications Framework ANQAHE Model

Arab Qualification Framework (AQF)

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# Qualifications Framework Aims

A National Qualifications Framework should:



# Qualifications Framework: What is it for?

In theory ..

QFs are essential tools for *everyone*  
with any interest in education and training

They *indicate* :

- the '*level*' of a qualification
- the *relationships between* qualifications
- *progression pathways* between qualifications

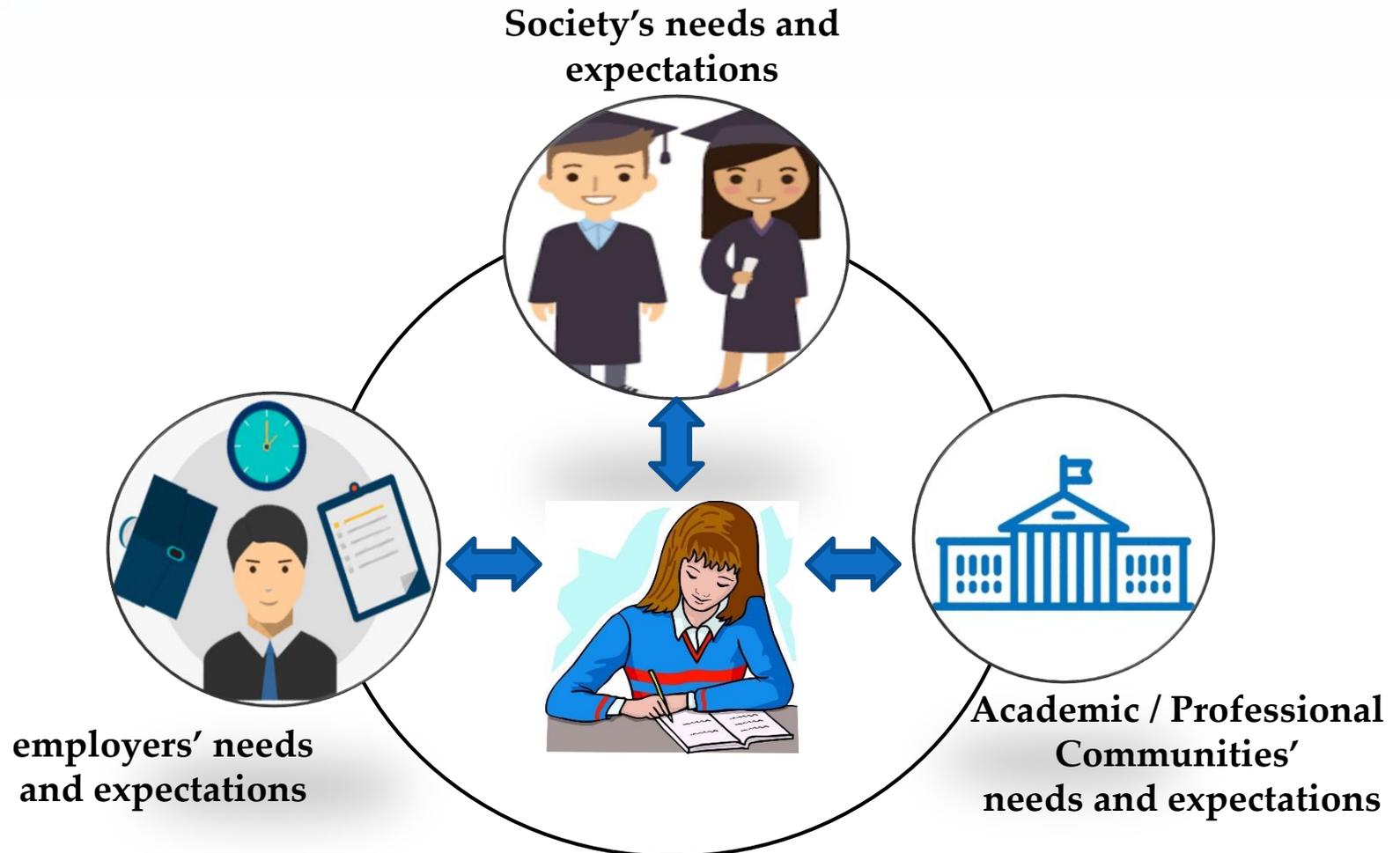
QFs appear to offer a lot to many different stakeholders,  
*'employers', 'students', education providers, QAA*  
all of whom seem to assume .. *their* expectations will be met,  
Though they have different needs

*Is it possible to 'keep all of the people happy all of the time'?!*

# Qualifications Framework: What is it for?

Back to basics:

**relationships, expectations and needs**



# Qualifications Framework: Changing Relationships

*“few decades ago”:*

HE (largely) provided **education for an ‘elite’**

- for the general good of society  
(and particularly its administration and leadership)
- to ‘replenish’ the academic community
- and *‘was trusted’*

*“today”:*

HE provides **knowledge and skills training to many**

- to enhance mobility and improve employability
- in the ‘globalised knowledge economy’

# Qualifications Framework: Changing Relationships

In practice ..

Most QFs have been introduced (imposed?) as a 'new' QA 'tool'

( *Some consider it as "yet another burden"*  )

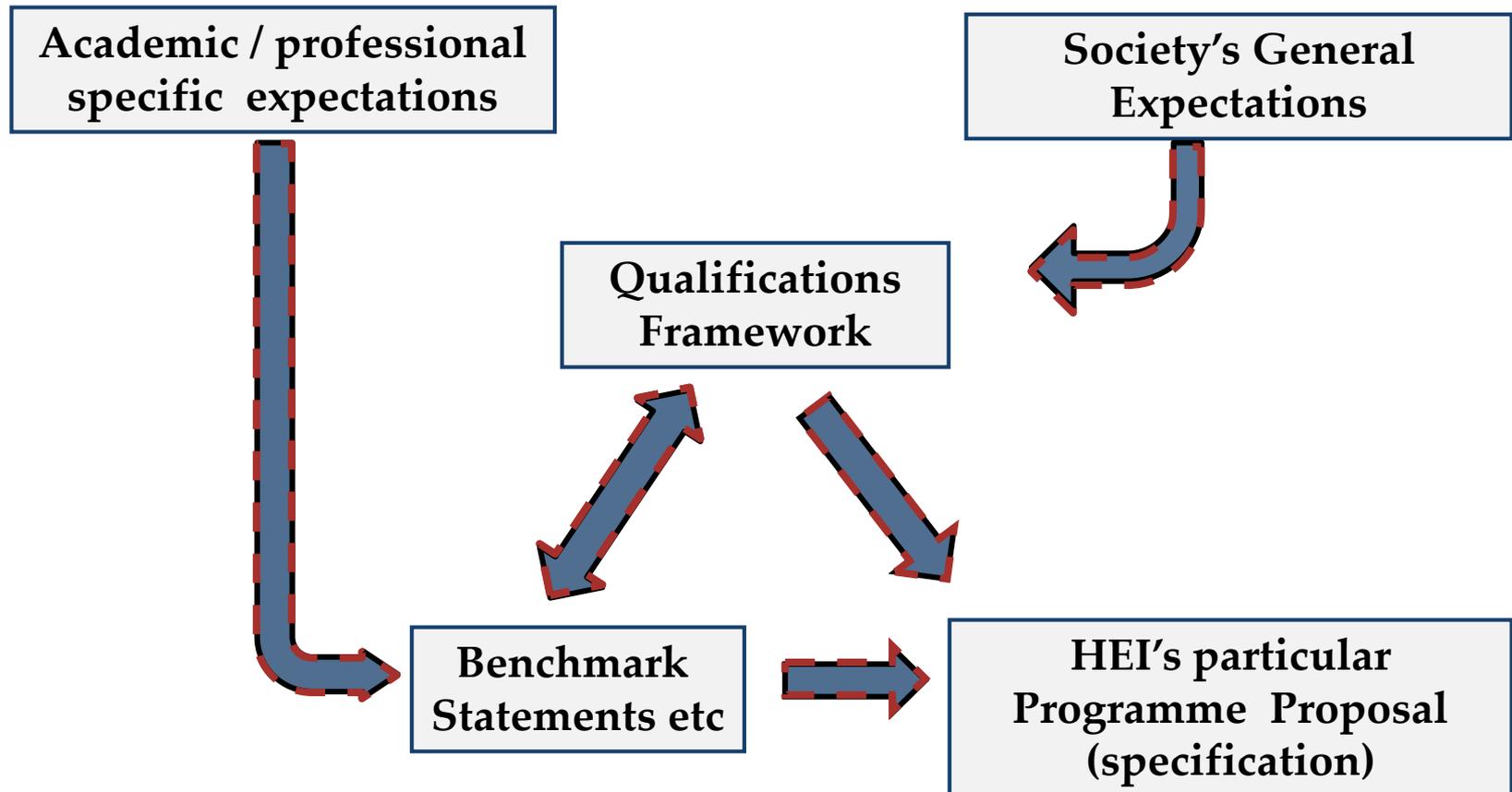
The immediate consequences - are often – seem to be 'providers' resent **'more bureaucracy'**

**'Stakeholder's are often confused**

**Awareness campaigns are essential**

# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

Integrating the 'information tools':  
*at the right level .. Qualifications Framework*  
*relevant and coherent .. 'benchmarks'*

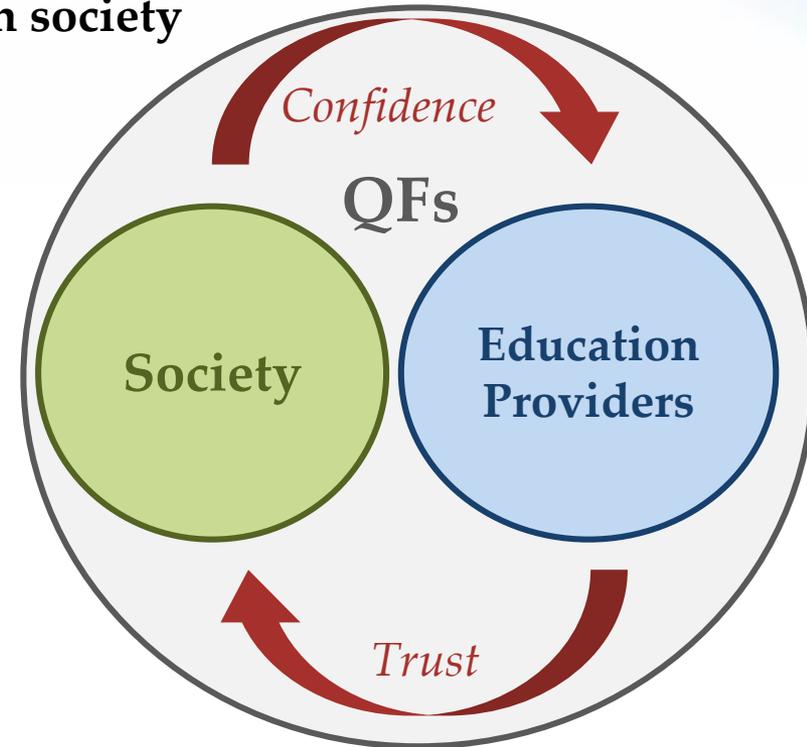


# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

QFs are at the very centre of 'the deal' between society and education providers ...

They can be :

- a valuable 'information tool' for non specialists.
- an essential tool for QA (whether 'internal' or 'external'), looking at the targeted program LOs in relation to QF level descriptor.



ALL of the (potential) benefits of QFs depend on .. **confidence** and **trust**

# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

**'consistency' or 'comparability' ?**

**QFs should be about *comparability* – not consistency !**

consistency *between* QFs is probably impossible  
and probably *within* frameworks too !!

... especially if VET/HE/LLL

**Comparability of learning outcomes – means**

**.. *NOT* .. focussing on where, how, or how long a learner studied**

**BUT**

**focussing on what the student knows and can do -**

***and whether the assessments are trustworthy***

# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

Joining it all up ..



# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

## Factors to be considered in developing QF

- **Integrated FW, covering all possible components and means of learning [schooling, HE (academic & professional), VET, RPL]**
- **Consider progression within various levels**
- **Clarity in description, for use by various stakeholders. Could it be really user-friendly?**
- **Balancing the distinction between different levels**

# Qualifications Framework & Quality Assurance

## Factors to be considered in developing QF (cont.)

- **Involve relevant stakeholders, have REAL consultations**
- **Be realistic in your expectations**
- **Be very CLEAR and HONEST about *purposes – and the limitations***

# Regional QF

## *Regional FW :*

- **Generic**
- **Used for referencing/ alignment**
- **Allow for differences in:**
  - Educational system**
  - Definitions & Terminology**
  - (in qualification titles & study units)**
- **Does NOT replace National QFs**

# Historical Background of ANQAHE



- ❑ Established in June 2007.
- ❑ Independent, nongovernmental and non for profit organization.
- ❑ Includes 18 QAA as full members 11 QA Centres as Associated members from 19 countries out of the 22 Arab Countries.



# Arab QF

- **Prescriptive to guide developing national QF.**
- **Benefited from other regional and national FWs.**

# Purpose of the AQF

The AQF is constructed in order to:

1. Provide a single translational reference point to compare qualifications nationally, regionally and internationally
2. Provide a **regional benchmark of qualified graduates**, defined in a common language
3. Address the **need for transparent mechanisms for assuring quality**, rigor and consistency of regional qualifications for the country, employers, community and students
4. Provide guidance in **designing and developing new qualifications**
5. Provide an instrument to **maintain parity in the demands and expectations of qualifications set at the same level**
6. Help **students make informed decisions** about their education and training progression, mobility between levels, institutions, and in relation to employment opportunities
7. Serve as an **indicator of occupational and employment relevance**
8. Provide an additional **tool for implementation of standards** through quality assurance agencies, ministries and other national authorities and regulators of higher education
9. Indicate **the outcomes required from programs/courses** set at equivalent levels in national frameworks within the region

# Structure of the AQF

Levels

Descriptors  
of Learning  
Outcomes

Descriptors  
of Learning  
Outcomes



## Knowledge

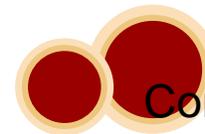
- The cognitive representation of ideas, facts, principles, events or happenings
- It can be learned from practical or professional experience as well as from formal instruction or study and can comprise description, understanding, thinking, analysis, synthesis, debate and research.



## Skills

The learned ability to perform a function that in some way responds to or manipulates the physical, informational or social environment of the individual

10-level structure can be referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Bologna Framework



## Competence

The effective and creative deployment of knowledge and skills, including general, social and civic, as well as specific occupational contexts.

Reflecting widespread international practice - Aiding mutual recognition of qualifications between nations

# Level Descriptors for AQF - Example

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competencies
8-10		.....	
7	<p>A <b>broad body of factual knowledge</b> and an <b>understanding of the underlying theories</b> and principles and boundaries in a field of work or learning; <b>an understanding of related knowledge and theories in other disciplines</b> and, in the case of professional programs, other allied professional fields; in programs preparing students for professional practice, knowledge of relevant conventions, regulations and codes, and how these may be modified over time with changing circumstances.</p>	<p><b>Cognitive skills</b> to critically review, analyze, consolidate and synthesize knowledge as a basis for life-long learning; skills to investigate relatively <b>complex problems</b> using a <b>range of information technologies, quantitative techniques, and sources of knowledge</b>, and to recommend creative and innovative solutions; initiative to <b>identify issues</b> requiring investigation and to address them on an <b>individual or team basis</b> with appropriate methods, procedures or techniques, leading to identified solutions; effective <b>communication and information technology skills</b> to present and <b>explain complex matters to a range of audiences</b>; interpersonal skills to deal with ethical and professional issues with tact, sensitivity and respect for the views of others.</p>	<p>Responsibility for developing <b>new approaches</b> to evaluating relatively <b>complex and unpredictable</b> work procedures and processes; management of technical, supervisory or design processes in <b>unpredictable contexts</b>; <b>self-evaluation and responsibility</b> for contributing to professional practice, and undertake <b>regular professional development</b> and/or further learning; autonomy in technical and supervisory contexts and adopt professional roles with <b>minimal guidance</b>; responsibility for the setting and achievement of <b>group or individual tasks and outcomes</b>, and for the management of the work of others or self in the context of study or supervised professional practice; participation in activities to keep up-to-date with developments in the academic or professional field; a sound level of <b>ethical and responsible behavior and provide leadership in academic, professional and community environments</b>.</p>
6	<p>A <b>broad and coherent theoretical and technical knowledge</b> with <b>some depth</b> in one or more specialist areas related to professional practice; <b>familiarity with current issues, trends, and recent applied research</b> and its impact on professional practice; a knowledge of principles, regulations, codes and operating procedures relevant to the professional field.</p>	<p><b>Technical, creative and conceptual skills</b> appropriate to solving a <b>range of problems</b> associated with a field of work or learning and evaluate alternative solutions; the skill to <b>identify relevant concepts and theories</b> from the subjects studied and apply them outside the context in which they were learned, in both <b>academic and professional contexts</b>; ability to use <b>appropriate investigative tools and strategies</b> associated with the field of work or learning; the relevant <b>mathematical and statistical skills</b> to investigate problems and propose solutions; effective <b>communication and technology skills</b> to present and <b>explain matters of relevance</b> to professional practice.</p>	<p>Responsibility for developing <b>appropriate approaches</b> for managing work procedures and processes, and resources or learning, within a technical or professional activity; within <b>broad parameters</b>, the ability to provide <b>specialist advice and functions</b>; management of technical, supervisory or design processes in <b>varied and unfamiliar contexts</b>; initiative to function independently and contribute constructively <b>within learning groups</b>; an ability to <b>evaluate own learning and identify learning needs in a familiar and unfamiliar environment</b>; adopt professional roles <b>under guidance</b>.</p>

# Level Descriptors for AQF - Example

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competencies
6	<p>A <b>broad and coherent theoretical and technical knowledge</b> with <b>some depth</b> in one or more specialist areas related to professional practice; <b>familiarity with current issues, trends, and recent applied research</b> and its impact on professional practice; a knowledge of principles, regulations, codes and operating procedures relevant to the professional field.</p>	<p><b>Technical, creative and conceptual skills</b> appropriate to solving a <b>range of problems</b> associated with a field of work or learning and evaluate alternative solutions; the skill to <b>identify relevant concepts and theories</b> from the subjects studied and apply them outside the context in which they were learned, in both <b>academic and professional contexts</b>; ability to use <b>appropriate investigative tools and strategies</b> associated with the field of work or learning; the relevant <b>mathematical and statistical skills</b> to investigate problems and propose solutions; effective <b>communication and technology skills</b> to present and <b>explain matters of relevance</b> to professional practice.</p>	<p>Responsibility for developing <b>appropriate approaches</b> for managing work procedures and processes, and resources or learning, within a technical or professional activity; within <b>broad parameters</b>, the ability to provide <b>specialist advice and functions</b>; management of technical, supervisory or design processes in <b>varied and unfamiliar contexts</b>; initiative to function independently and contribute constructively <b>within learning groups</b>; an ability to <b>evaluate own learning and identify learning needs in a familiar and unfamiliar environment</b>; adopt professional roles <b>under guidance</b>.</p>
5	<p><b>Knowledge of important facts, principles and theories</b> in a field of study and of regulations and operating procedures relevant to a professional field; <b>familiarity with central current developments in professional practice, and recent applied research</b>.</p>	<p><b>Technical, creative and conceptual skills</b>, and, with <b>some guidance</b>, be able to solve <b>routine problems</b> and evaluate alternative solutions; <b>a range of specialist cognitive and practical skills</b> to demonstrate <b>a broad understanding of knowledge</b> and ideas with <b>some depth</b> in the discipline; use of <b>appropriate information retrieval tools</b> and strategies <b>associated with the field of work or learning</b>; numeracy skills to apply in an <b>assortment of contexts</b>, which may be interrelated; <b>communication and information technology skills</b> to make a <b>clear and coherent presentation</b> of knowledge and ideas with <b>some intellectual independence</b>.</p>	<p>Responsibility for developing <b>appropriate approaches</b> for managing work procedures and processes, and resources or learning, within a technical or professional activity; within <b>broad parameters</b>, the ability to provide <b>specialist advice and functions</b>; management of technical, supervisory or design processes in <b>varied, unpredictable and unfamiliar contexts</b>; initiative to function independently and contribute constructively within <b>teams in pursuit of common objectives</b>; behavior in accordance with sound ethical standards in the context of learning and the work place; evaluation of own learning and identify learning needs in a familiar and unfamiliar environment; adoption of professional roles <b>under guidance</b>.</p>
1-4	<p><b>Secondary School Certificate</b></p>		

# The Concept of Credit Hours:



**1 semester credit = 1 hour** of time in class/week over a semester of **15 weeks or longer**

**1 hour** in class = **2 hour** outside class

**1 academic credit = 45 hour** over a semester

**1 semester credit = 2 hours** of laboratory/studio time / week over **15 week semester**

**1 credit = 10 learning hours**

**one-third** may be class contact time.

The **remainder** divided between directed and independent learning.

The normal workload for a semester is **30 credits**.

**In the following sections of this AQF presentation the US system of credit hours will be used as a reference figure to which other credit awarding systems can be equated**



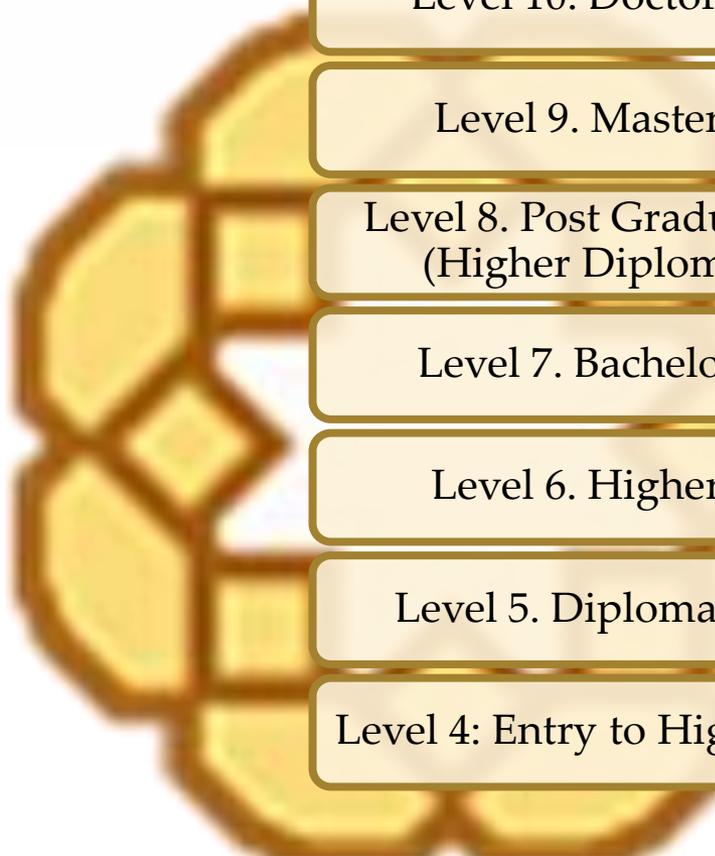
**60 credits** are allocated to the workload of a **full-time academic year**

**30 credits** are normally allocated to a **semester**

**20 credits** to a **trimester**

Qualifications that have **formal programs** lasting **three full-time academic years** in Europe are allocated **180 ECTS credits**

# Characteristics of Principal Qualifications



Level 10. Doctorate Degree

Level 9. Master's Degree

Level 8. Post Graduate Diploma  
(Higher Diploma in KSA)

Level 7. Bachelor's Degree

Level 6. Higher Diploma

Level 5. Diploma (Associate)

Level 4: Entry to Higher Education

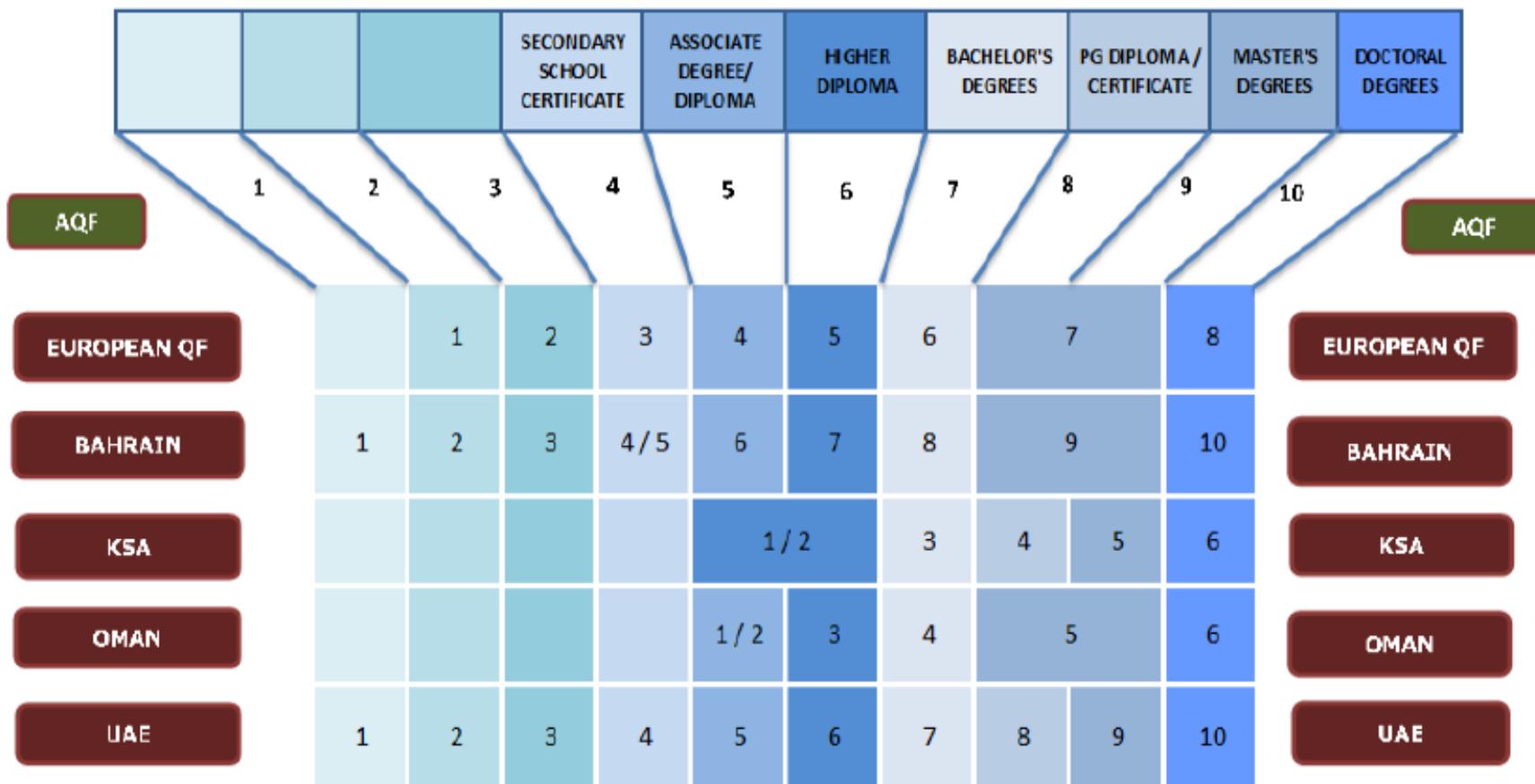
# Qualification Credit Matrix for Academic Higher Education

Level	Academic Qualification	US Credits (Minimum)	Minimum Duration of Post-Secondary Study (Year FT)
10	Doctorate Degree (PhD, DPhil)	30 – 60 Post Master	8 (2 years post Master degree)
9	Master's Degree (MSc/MA/MPhil/Master of...)	30 post Bachelor	6 (2 years post Bachelor degree)
8	Post Graduate Diploma (Higher Diploma in KSA)	24 post Bachelor (Dip)	5
	Post Graduate Certificate	12 post Bachelor (Cert)	4.5
7	Bachelor's Degree (BSc/BA/Bachelor of...)	120 post Secondary	4
6	Higher Diploma	90 post Secondary	3
5	Associate Degree/Diploma	60 post Secondary	2
4	K12 School Certificate (HE Entry Level)	N/A	-
3	-	-	-
2	-	-	-
1	-	-	-

# Qualification Credit Matrix Including Professional Training Stream

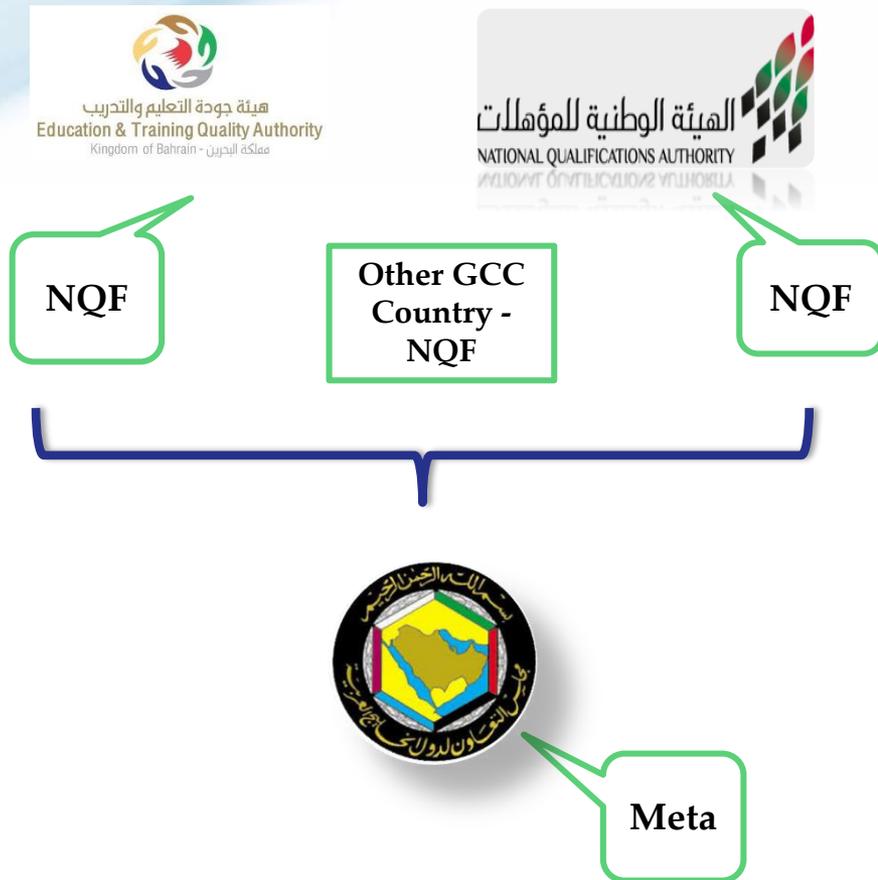
Level	Principal Qualification			US Credits (Minimum)	Minimum Duration of Post-Secondary Study (Years FT)
	Professional	Academic	General		
10	Doctorate Degree (Professional Doctorate e.g. EdD, DBA)	Doctorate Degree (PhD, DPhil)		30 – 60 post-Master	8 (2 years post-Master Degree)
9	Advanced Professional Diplomas and Certificates	Master's Degree (MSc/MA/MPhil/Master of...)		30 post-Bachelor	6 (2 years post-Bachelor Degree)
8	Vocational Post Graduate Diploma/ Certificate,	Post Graduate Diploma/		24 post-Bachelor (Dip)	5
		Certificate		12 post-Bachelor (Cert)	4.5
7	Applied/Vocational Bachelor Degree	Bachelor's Degree (BSc/BA/Bachelor of...)		120 post-Secondary	4
6	Higher Diploma (Vocational)	Higher Diploma		90 post-Secondary	3
5	Diploma (Vocational)	Associate Degree/Diploma		60 post-Secondary	2
4		K12 School Certificate (HE Entry Level)	K12 School Certificate	N/A	-
3					
2					
1					

# Alignment Across Regional Frameworks



QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK LEVELS

# Current regional project – Gulf Qualifications Framework (GQF)



Link NQF within GCC

Enabling **mobility** of learners by utilizing a **common** reference framework

**Encourages** the **establishment** of the NQFs in the GCC Member Countries

**Functions** as a regional reference for Qualifications Frameworks (e.g. EQF)

**Encourages** the values and principles of life long learning (**LLL**)

Reference **established** NQFs of the GCC Members Countries to the **GQF**

Promote **transparency** and synergy between Education and Training systems in GCC

# Challenges

- **Different education systems in the Arab region**
- **Different regulations that are sometimes conflicting with each others, affecting progression and mobility opportunities among countries**
- **Not all Arab countries have established qualifications frameworks, in fact some of them still do not have a national system for quality assurance.**
- **Implementation of the AQF requires intensive capacity building for all those involved**
- **Overcoming all these challenges require both human and financial considerations.**

THANK YOU