Distance Educator

O1A3 Adaptation to current local requirements and develop and translation of the curriculum

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Introduction

Integrated in the third phase of intellectual output 3 development, this document, prepared by TIHC summarises the information related to the Greek national qualification framework.
The aim of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) is to create a coherent and comprehensive system of classification of all qualifications obtained from formal, non-formal education and informal learning in Greece. This will be done gradually. In this first phase, the objective is the classification of qualifications within the formal educational system of the country. At a later stage a classification system will be developed for qualifications acquired through non-formal education and informal learning.
The HQF is a mechanism, which facilitates transparency and comparability in the Greek context. It will be a benefit for students, graduates and stakeholders of the Greek labour market. On the other hand, in accordance with the common European strategy "Europe 2020", which aims at smart, sustainable and inclusive growth the Hellenic Qualifications Framework and its referencing to the European Qualifications Framework provides a tool for "translating" and comparing qualifications and aims at becoming an opportunity to help promote the mobility of learners and employees.
The recent law 4763/2020 establishes the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which is based on the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2017 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for Lifelong Learning (2017/C189/03). According to the recommendation, the EQF aims at improving the transparency, comparability and transferability of qualifications.

The National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (E.O.P.P.E.P.) is responsible for developing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework and for referencing it to the European Qualifications Framework, under the supervision and coordination of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. The project is called "Development of the National Qualifications Framework" and falls under the Operational Programme "Human Resources Development", co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund - ESF) and National Resources. The Intermediate Management Body is the Specific Managing Authority of the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning" of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

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National Qualifications Framework – Specific requirements

The architecture of the HQF is simple and, above all, functional:
Levels - Learning Outcomes - Descriptors - Types of Qualifications
The current needs of the country as well as the relevant European and international developments were taken into account when designing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework.
• The 8 Levels of HQF cover the entire range of qualifications, from compulsory education to higher education. Each level is defined by descriptions of the knowledge, skills and competence which determine the learning outcomes for this particular level.
• Learning outcomes, i.e. what a person knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process, are classified into knowledge, skills and competence. The qualifications have the form of learning outcomes which are classified into levels.
• Level descriptors are the defining element of the structure and will provide the mechanism for the referencing of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework to the EQF. Learning outcomes corresponding to the qualifications of a specific level are defined by descriptors, which are determined by qualitative and quantitative grading of knowledge, skills and competencies.
• Types of Qualifications are the instrument that will allow the classification of Greek qualifications into the levels of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework, as well as enabling the comparison between them. Each qualification type will have a Type Specification that will describe the characteristics of qualifications of that type. Qualification types can constitute the basis for the subsequent development of new qualifications in the future.
Given that level descriptors and Types of Qualifications serve different functions, they also feature different characteristics:
• The level descriptors give a relatively short description, are general and totally independent of the field of learning.
• The Types of Qualifications are relatively extensive; they enrich the content of the level descriptors to provide descriptions of the learning outcomes for the type; in addition, they describe key characteristics of qualifications of the type, such as the purpose, the learning process, the transition arrangements, as well as the connection to employment
The Hellenic Qualifications Framework has at its disposal a number of specialized tools for the description and classification of Qualification Types.
Each Qualification Type is defined by a specification, which includes the following features:
• Title: Refers to a specific nomenclature to be adopted for each Type, e.g. Upper Secondary School Certificate.
• Level: Refers to the level of the Qualification Type in the Hellenic Qualifications Framework.

• Brief description: Refers to a brief description of the Type and is intended to facilitate its understanding and use.
• Volume: Considering that the main function of the frameworks is the description and comparison of qualifications, it is important to be able to describe the “amount” or “volume” of the

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learning outcomes associated with each Type of Qualifications. For the purposes of the HQF, a metric system that will facilitate an approximate calculation is being adopted. The proposed metric is based on the assignment of 60 credits as the "value" of a "learning year" of 1,500 hours. In this sense, one credit represents 25 hours of learning outcome. The adoption of this metric ensures that Greek titles can easily be referenced, then, to many national and international metrics, including the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which has been legislated and implemented in Greece since 2005.

- Purpose: The specification of types of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework includes, also, a classification by the purpose or application of the specific type refers using a categorisation of 'basic', 'supplementary' and 'special purpose':

- Educational Sector: Specification of the Type will also indicate which sector of the educational system is connected to the type of qualification using the following sectors: "Vocational Education and Training", "General Education", "Higher Education". A small number of Qualification Types fall into an intermediate category which combines "Vocational Education" and "General Education".

- Relation to Employment: Provides a brief outline of the nature and range of employment opportunities, which relate to qualifications of the Type. This outline will refer to professional rights, if any.

- Access / development potential: Each Type of qualifications will provide the necessary information on access to programs leading to the acquisition of qualifications of this Type (including monitoring of prior attainment, where required) and the development potential of the holders of qualifications through learning opportunities which either lead to qualifications at the same level or at a higher one.

The structural arrangement for the inclusion of qualifications in the HQF is that specific qualifications are related to define Qualification Types and the Types are placed at framework levels as appropriate. The following table illustrates the Qualification Types that are currently awarded and for which Type Specifications have been developed.

LEVEL	VET	GENERAL EDUCATION	HIGHER EDUCATION
1		PRIMARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE	
2		ER SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE	

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3	VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL (SEK) 'DEGREE' (***) (post lower secondary level) (granted to graduates of the apprenticeship year of vocational training schools following certification) *VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE (IEK) CERTIFICATE (post lower secondary level)		
4	VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (EPAS) CERTIFICATE (granted to graduates of the second class of EPAS-post lower secondary level) VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL (EPAL) CERTIFICATE (equivalent to the general upper secondary education leaving certificate, granted to graduates of the third year of EPAL following in-school exams) VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL (EPAL) 'DEGREE' (***) (granted to graduates of the third year of EPAL following in-school exams)	GENERAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (granted to graduates of general upper secondary education following in-school exams)	
5	VOCATIONAL POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL 'DEGREE' (***) for graduates of EPAL apprenticeship class, level 5 (post-secondary level) (granted to graduates of the apprenticeship year of EPAL following certification)		

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	VOCATIONAL TRAINING DIPLOMA (post-secondary level) (granted to graduates of vocational training institutes (IEKs) following certification) **VOCATIONAL TRAINING DIPLOMA (IEK) (post-secondary level) POST-SECONDARY AND NOT HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMA or 'DEGREE' (***)		
6			BACHELOR DEGREE (University /technological educational institute (TEI)
7			MASTER'S DEGREE (Universities/technological educational institutions (TEI)
8			DOCTORATE (Universities)

Source: EOPPEP www.eoppep.gr.
* and ** This qualification is no longer awarded. *** The word 'degree' used with quotation marks is a direct translation from the Greek terminology as it appears in the legislation (ptychio). In Greek, the word ptychio is used for titles of study from different education levels (higher, secondary, etc.). It is not to be confused with its usage in the English language, where degree refers to a higher education title of study, i.e. bachelor degree.

Links between the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualification Framework

There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications levels in the national qualifications framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.
The link between the qualifications levels of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) derives in the first instance from the use of the EQF descriptors as guidelines for the development of the HQF levels. The primary function of the HQF is to be an instrument for referencing to the EQF, and the HQF development process had, from the outset, the objective of developing a structure of eight levels corresponding to the levels of the EQF. The EQF descriptors were modified and elaborated to adapt them to the particular context of the Greek

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qualifications system, but the overall correspondence of the levels in the two frameworks is close. This can be demonstrated by a comparison of

• the structures of the two frameworks;
• the conceptual basis of the two frameworks;
• the HQF level descriptors and EQF level descriptors.

Having undertaken a comparative analysis on the basis of these three factors, it can be concluded that the HQF levels and the EQF levels correspond as follows:

HQF	EQF
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8

It is immediately evident from the table that there is a complete correspondence between the levels in the two frameworks

Comparing the structures of the HQF and the EQF. A general comparison of the HQF and the EQF establishes that there are clear similarities between the levels of the two qualifications frameworks, but that there are also some differences between them.

Similarities

- HQF is a structure of eight levels, defined by level descriptors.
- HQF is a comprehensive and integrated framework, designed to relate to qualifications awarded for all learning, whether acquired through formal, non-formal or informal processes, or through learning in general education, VET or higher education programmes.
- In the HQF, the statements that define the levels are completely neutral in terms of fields of learning. • In the HQF the level descriptors are designed to be read across all strands of learning outcomes, and aspects of each strand are sometimes elaborated or clarified in other strands; also, the outcomes for a given level build on and subsume the outcomes of the levels beneath.

• In the HQF, key words or phrases are introduced as 'threshold' or distinguishing factors in the description of learning outcomes at each level.

Taking all of the above into account, it can be concluded that the HQF and the EQF share core design criteria and this indicates that a direct comparison of the levels in the two frameworks is feasible.

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Comparing the concepts that underpin the HQF and the EQF. There is a very strong correlation between the core concepts of the HQF and those that underpin the EQF: both frameworks define levels in terms of the learning outcomes associated with qualifications at a level; both frameworks define learning outcomes in three domains - Knowledge, Skills and Competence. Moreover, the definitions of these terms - learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and competence - as developed for the EQF, have been adopted for the HQF, so that a direct comparison of the level descriptors of the two frameworks is greatly facilitated. In addition, definitions of other key terms developed for the EQF have also been adopted for use in the HQF; these are: 'qualification' and 'national qualifications framework'. The HQF adopts the concept of 'qualification types'. Qualification types are a feature of many national qualifications frameworks that have been successfully referenced to the EQF. It is now well established that this concept is in harmony with the general approach of the EQF and, indeed, is widely considered to be an effective vehicle for the transparent inclusion of qualifications in the HQF.

Procedure for Including Qualifications in the NQF

Qualifications are grouped into types. Qualification Types represent groups of qualifications with common characteristics. Using Qualification Types facilitates the process of categorizing qualifications of the same HQF Level.

The development of the HQF and its introduction into the qualifications system in Greece require that a range of organisations collaborate and interact. EOPPEP is the body responsible for the design and development of the HQF. It is also the body that represents Greece as the national coordination point for EQF and is responsible for undertaking the referencing of the HQF to the EQF. EOPPEP is also an awarding body in relation to two Qualification Types in the framework. The design of the architecture of the HQF and the development of the framework levels was led by EOPPEP, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. The development of specifications for Qualification Types is the joint responsibility of EOPPEP and the relevant awarding bodies. The task of identifying and describing the learning outcomes for specific qualifications of each type will be the responsibility of the relevant awarding bodies – in some cases, with the support of education providers.

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Figure 1 Source: Greece EQF Report 2016 https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-06/Greek%20Referencing%20Report%20.pdf

EOPPEP has established the Greek Qualifications Register online: http://proson.eoppep.gr under its responsibility for the creation and development of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework and its referencing to the EQF and under the supervision and coordination of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

It comprises the qualifications classified in the HQF and referenced to the EQF, coupled with information based on a unified description standard suggested by the European Commission, in order to allow for uniformity in the structure of information concerning qualifications among European countries. The Qualifications Register was linked to the European Portal "Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe" (http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus) in the section of "Qualifications". Clearly it is an application with the dynamics of constant updating and content enrichment. 674 qualifications are already included in the Register sent by the respective educational institutions and these are available on the website

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http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/en/search/site. Currently, EOPPEP is in the process of constant updating of the Register.

The Types represent groups of qualifications that are well-known in the Greek society. They reflect the state of play within the labour market. Together with the Levels, Qualification Types constitute a particularly flexible mechanism for the recognition/referencing of any learning achievement and will also facilitate decisively one of the basic principles of the Framework, the ability of learners to access, transfer and progress within the system. The identification of Qualification Types required, and the development of Type Specifications, was undertaken with the support of working groups appointed by the relevant awarding bodies
Methodology for the classification of Qualification Types to Levels in the HQF The classification of Greek qualification types to the HQF levels involved two related processes:
• the identification of an appropriate range of types; and
• the development of specifications for each type and the testing of each type to ensure its location at the correct level of the HQF.

The Structure of the HQF

The diagram illustrates the way specific, 'subject-based' qualifications relate to HQF levels via their primary classification into Qualification Types. The Types derive their specifications from the Level Descriptors, which are defined in terms of learning outcomes.

Figure 2 Source: Greece EQF Report 2016 https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-06/Greek%20Referencing%20Report%20.pdf

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