



PUBLIC SKILLS
AUSTRALIA
PUBLIC SAFETY SKILLS AUSTRALIA LTD



Research Report

Qualification Reform Demonstration Project

SEPTEMBER

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Executive Summary

In March 2024, the Qualification Reform Design Group (QRDG) delivered initial advice to Skills Ministers, with recommendations for a program of work related to Australia’s vocational education and training (VET) qualifications. Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) were requested to lead projects in support of *qualification reform for a stronger VET system*.¹ The JSC for Public Safety and Government, Public Skills Australia, elected to participate in this reform by delivering an international environmental scan captured in a Research Report (Report) as its Demonstration Project. This Report assesses the use of qualifications and units of competency equivalents in other countries based on National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs). It contributes to an understanding of the use of NQFs to support VET systems and how these countries design qualifications and units of competency.

Six countries were identified for this Report, they are Finland, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland and South Africa. Four of these countries (i.e., Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland and South Africa) were selected as they share economic and policy-based factors, such as gross domestic product, structure of VET systems, and alignment of public safety industries (i.e., public safety industries utilising a Vocational Education and Training system similar to Australia). Finland and India were considered outliers and were selected as they provide contrast to the Australian economy and VET system. All six countries had freely accessible VET system information.

Comparisons identified that each country’s qualifications and units of competency have varying levels of prescription. Some countries required their qualifications or units of competency to be designed against a rigid set of requirements, while other countries were more flexible as entries in template fields were broader and less defined in scope.

Comparisons also identified that each country had different approaches to qualification and unit of competency template fields, detailed below:

QUALIFICATION

At the qualification level, three template themes with notable differences across the six countries were identified with some containing graduate profiles, international comparability information and specified review timelines.

UNIT OF COMPETENCY

At the unit of competency level, three template themes with notable differences across the six countries were identified with some requiring engagement with core/generic skills, alignment of outcomes and assessments and graded competencies.

¹ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Qualification Reform Design Group initial advice to Skills Ministers](#), DEWR, 2024.

All six template themes were consulted on to understand what, if any, value they may bring to the Australian VET system. Consultations were undertaken with Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders across each state and territory. In total, more than 110 industry stakeholders were engaged as part of consultation.

Feedback identified that some of the six qualification and unit of competency template themes may have potential merit and usefulness in the Australian context. However, industry stakeholders identified that the current qualification and unit of competency templates are fit-for-purpose, and that there may be alternative avenues that better support the delivery of quality training in the Public Safety and Government industry. Three areas were identified as warranting further consideration by the QRDG.



Improving consistency in the drafting of qualifications and units of competency

There is considerable variability in the writing style, clarity and prescriptiveness of outcomes and assessment conditions, all of which contribute to challenges with the interpretation and implementation of training. As such, future work may look to refine the existing guidance and practices relating to the drafting of qualifications and units of competency.

Providing additional support for ERTOs and RTOs to design and implement quality training and assessment materials

Translating units of competency into training materials for delivery to learners is both time and resource intensive. Any reform should consider providing additional resources and support to ERTOs and RTOs when developing training resources and delivering the implementation of training.

Improving Companion Volume Implementation Guides (CVIG) to support the implementation of training by RTOs.

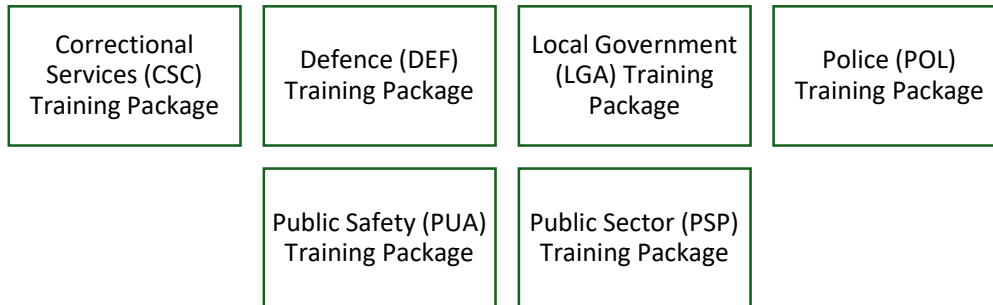
The CVIG is heavily underutilised by RTOs. There is opportunity for the redesign of existing CVIGs to better align with other industry-sector specific guidance materials and include relevant guidance that will provide stronger support for the implementation of training by ERTOs and RTOs.

Introduction

Public Skills Australia is the JSC responsible for the Public Safety and Government industry, which includes the following industry-sectors:



Public Skills Australia maintains the following VET Training Packages:



On 8 March 2024, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), through the QRDG, delivered initial advice to Skills Ministers, followed by guidance for JSCs to support demonstrating the utility of qualifications.² As part of this, Public Skills Australia is delivering a Demonstration Project (henceforth the Report) that examines qualifications and units of competency of six countries in relation to their design and templating, that could give rise to considerations of changes within the Australian context to improve skill outcomes.

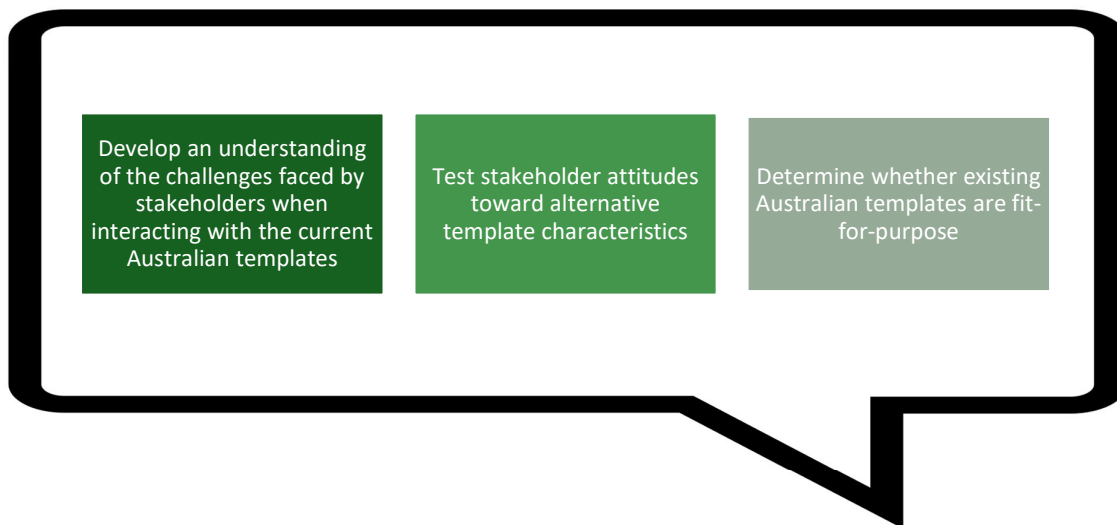
² 'Qualification' refers to a course undertaken by a learner who demonstrates proficiency in a set of compatible skills through assessment. In Australia, 'units of competency' are the multiple smaller subsets of skills upon which Qualifications are composed. 'Qualification' is a generally adopted term across national VET sectors, however 'Units of Competency' are named differently, (e.g., 'module', 'subject' and 'unit standard'). For the purposes of this report, the Australian term 'Unit of Competency' will be used unless referring specifically to another national VET system.

Purpose

The guidance provided by the QRDG to JSCs focused on ‘simplifying’ the current VET system to ensure qualifications are more accessible for learners and industry.³ This Report supports the intended outcome of this guidance by comparing whether the current Australian qualification and unit of competency templates may or may not be having an impact on the uptake, utility and effective delivery of Public Safety and Government related training packages. It compares six countries to identify differences in qualification and unit of competency templates. Identified differences were consulted with Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders to test the viability and suitability of potential changes to the Australian templates.

The underlying methodology of the Report involved desktop research, comparative analysis and consultations to test Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders’ views on the utility of identified differences within the Australian context.

Identified differences in templating were grouped by theme and subsequently consulted with Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders, including employers, employees, unions, and RTOs with the aim to:



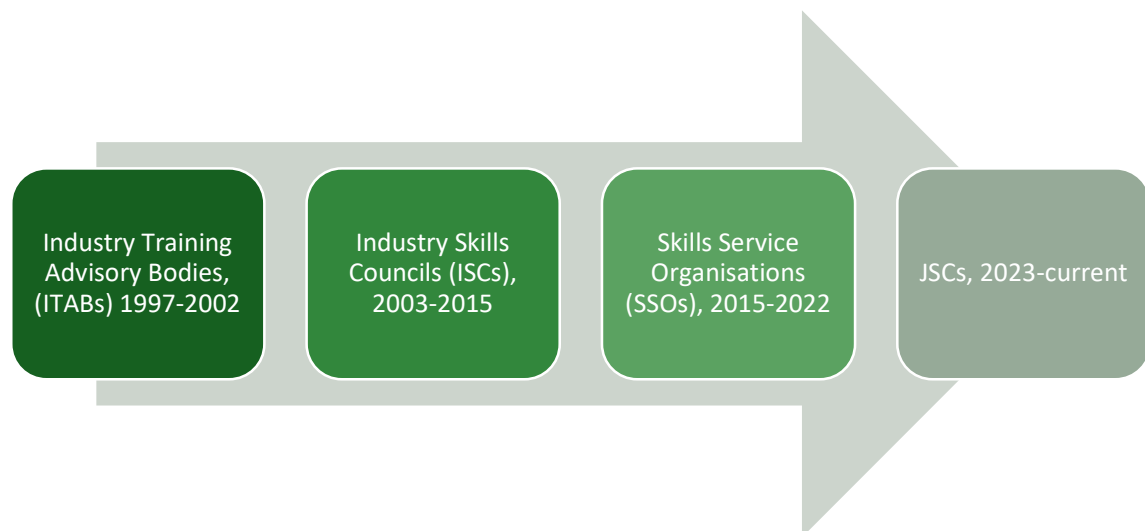
³ ‘Vocational Education and Training (or VET)’ refers to the system that houses education and training for practical skills and knowledge (typically delivered at the Certificate, Diploma or Advanced Diploma level), in the Australian context. However, different countries may refer to their system differently (e.g., Further Education and Training). For the purposes of this report, the Australian term ‘VET’ will be used unless referring specifically to another national system.

Background

VET Reform in Australia

The Australian VET sector has been progressively reformed since its inception.⁴ The history of the Australian VET system can be traced to the *TAFE in Australia: Report on Needs in Technical and Further Education*, also known as the ‘Kangan Report’, published in 1974. The Kangan Report prompted the establishment of a national system of publicly funded Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes.⁵ It was not until 1991 that the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Agreement coordinated a national policy for the VET sector, followed by the introduction of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) in 1995.

Since the establishment of the AQF, Australia has had several iterations of industry-led councils responsible for representing specific industry perspectives in matters relating to VET. These councils include:



There have been shifts to and from developing task-specific content in units of competency to including more generalised skill sets applicable in a wider range of areas in qualifications. For example, during the 2014 VET Reform with the introduction of ‘Foundation Skills’, which describe the language, literacy, numeracy, and employment skills that are essential for competent occupational performance.⁶

⁴ National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) 2018, [Milestones in the history of VET](#), VET Knowledge Bank, NCVER, Adelaide.

⁵ Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education (ACOTAFE), *TAFE in Australia: report on needs in technical and further education*, ACOTAFE, 1974.

⁶ Training Services Australia, [Information about changes to nationally recognised Training Packages](#), TSA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

As part of the 2014 reform, 'Assessment Requirements', which specify the forms of evidence a learner must demonstrate to attain a unit of competency, were relocated to a separate document to make identification of the standard for assessment clearer to RTOs.⁷ Indirectly, this simplified qualifications by making it easier to develop unit of competency assessment materials.

The *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System*, also known as the 'Joyce Report' published in 2019, called for the further simplification of qualification design.⁸ The Joyce Report asserts that simplification would improve the flexibility of training in relation to emerging skills needs and technological change.

The *Unlocking the Potential of VET: Improving the Relevance of Vocational Education and Training Qualifications* (The Unlocking Report) published in 2024 by the QRDG, supports the simplification of qualifications in the current round of reform⁹ The Unlocking Report asserts that units of competency are too focused on defining tasks linked to occupations, limiting their applicability. It further signals that adapting units of competency towards broad and flexible skill sets improves their applicability to a larger range of occupations. This aligns with the parallel goal of reducing the number of qualifications by amalgamating them with broader scope qualifications.¹⁰ However, it requires noting that in Public Safety qualifications, the level of detail specified in units of competency (skill standards) is a significant risk control measure, where training prepares members to operate in high-risk environments.

⁷ Training Services Australia, [Information about changes to nationally recognised Training Packages](#), TSA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

⁸ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System*, PM&C, 2019.

⁹ Qualification Reform Design Group, *Unlocking the Potential of VET: Improving the relevance of Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*, Qualification Reform Design Group, 2024.

¹⁰ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), *Vocational Education and Training VET Reform Roadmap A shared roadmap for vocational education and training system reform across the Commonwealth and states and territories*, DEWR, 2021; Qualification Reform Design Group, *Unlocking the Potential of VET: Improving the relevance of Vocational Education and Training Qualifications*, Qualification Reform Design Group, 2024.

Templates

Templates are the fundamental building blocks of the Australian VET system as information entered into each template field informs vocational training. The *National Course Document template* outlines the fields that make up VET qualifications and units of competency in Australia.¹¹ The Australian VET system has separate templates for qualifications and units of competency, described below. The *Standards for Training Packages: Training Package Organising Framework*¹² describes a more concise summary of the templates that more closely aligns with what appears on Training.gov.au.

Qualification template

The fields presented in Table 1 are taken from the Qualification requirements detailed in the *National Course Document template*.¹³ The template aims to ensure consistency across qualifications and contains fields that outline course specifications, supporting information and suggested formatting.

Table 1 Outline of the Australian qualification template and definitions of fields.¹⁴

Field	Definition
Name of Qualification (title)	Unique qualification title as per naming guidelines.
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Nominal total hours required to complete the course.
Qualification Type	Type of qualification e.g., Certificate, Diploma etc.
Field	Industry or industries the qualification relates to.
Qualification Level	National Qualification Framework (i.e., AQF) level assigned to the qualification.
Outcome(s) of the Course	Knowledge, skills and attitudes a learner should possess upon attainment of the qualification.
Course Description	Overview of the purpose of the course.

¹¹ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) [National course document template](#), ASQA, 2022, accessed 5 August 2024.

¹² Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for Training Packages](#), DEWR, 2022, accessed 19 June 2024.

¹³ ASQA [National course document template](#), ASQA, 2022, accessed 5 August 2024.

¹⁴ ASQA [National course document template](#), ASQA, 2022, accessed 5 August 2024. Definitions have been paraphrased.

Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Rationale for the creation of the course, i.e., 'Why is the course required?'
Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Process in place for reviewing and amending the qualification if necessary.
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	Acceptance of the qualification by industry, professional bodies, or associations.
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Whether or not there are any licensing or regulatory requirements to undertake the qualification, and/or whether the qualification itself is a regulatory or licensing requirement for an industry. I.e., the <i>TAE40122 - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment</i> , the attainment of which is a regulatory requirement for VET trainers and assessors.
Foundation Skills	Basic and general skills required to attain the qualification.
Course Structure	Breakdown of the qualification into its units, and the packaging rules for core/elective units of competency and specialisations.
Entry Requirements	Minimum requirements to enrol in the qualification.
Pathways and Articulation	Options for articulation into further qualifications at either a higher NQF level (vertical) or at the same NQF level (horizontal).
Assessment Strategy	Description of the intended assessment approach
Assessor Competencies	Criteria an assessor must meet to deliver the qualification.
Delivery Modes	Methods used to deliver the course, e.g., classroom-based learning, on-the-job training etc.
Resources	Specialised facilities or materials required to deliver the qualification.
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation	Process by which the qualification will be evaluated and updated based on industry needs or developments in current practice.

Unit of competency template

The fields presented in Table 2 are taken from the Qualification requirements detailed in the *National Course Document template*.¹⁵ The template aims to ensure consistency across qualifications and contains fields that outline course specifications, supporting information and suggested formatting.

Table 2 Outline of the Australian unit of competency template and definitions of the fields that comprise it.¹⁶

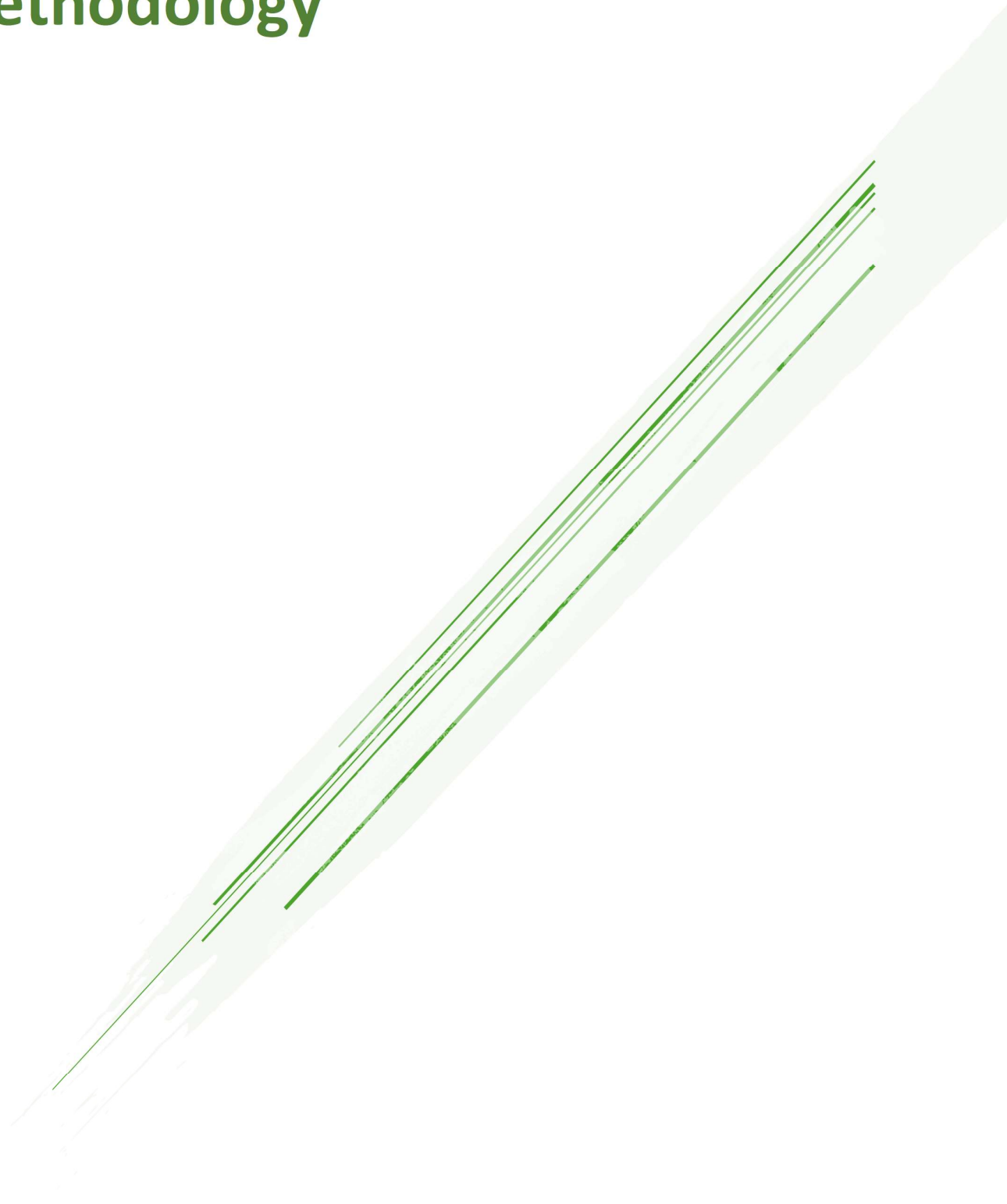
Field		Definition
Unit Code		Unique code for each unit of competency.
Unit Title		Unique title for the unit of competency.
Application		Describes how the unit of competency is practically applied in the industry and in what context(s) it may be applied.
Competency Field		Categorises a set of units of competency within a VET accredited course in relation to a type of work.
Unit Sector		Categorises a set of units of competency within a VET accredited course in relation to a particular industry sector.
Elements	Performance Criteria	Elements describe the essential outcomes of the unit of competency. Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.
Range of Conditions		Specifies different work environments and conditions that may affect performance.
Prerequisite Unit		Unit(s) of competency in which the candidate must be deemed competent prior to the determination of competency in this unit of competency.
Foundation Skills		Describes the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.
Unit Mapping Information		Specifies the code and title of any equivalent units of competency.

¹⁵ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) [National course document template](#), ASQA, 2022, accessed 5 August 2024.

¹⁶ ASQA [National course document template](#), ASQA, 2022, accessed 5 August 2024.

Assessment Requirements Template	Separate document that specifies the following: 'Performance Evidence', 'Knowledge Evidence', and 'Assessment Conditions'.
Performance Evidence	Specifies the evidence required to demonstrate that the skills outlined in the 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' have been completed in the context of the job role.
Knowledge Evidence	Specifies what an individual must know to safely and effectively perform the skills described in the units of competency.
Assessment Conditions	Stipulates mandatory conditions for assessment.

Methodology



The methodology used to develop this Report can be described in four phases. Figure 1 illustrates the four phases and the steps undertaken within each phase.

This four-phase method is described in further detail in the sections that follow.

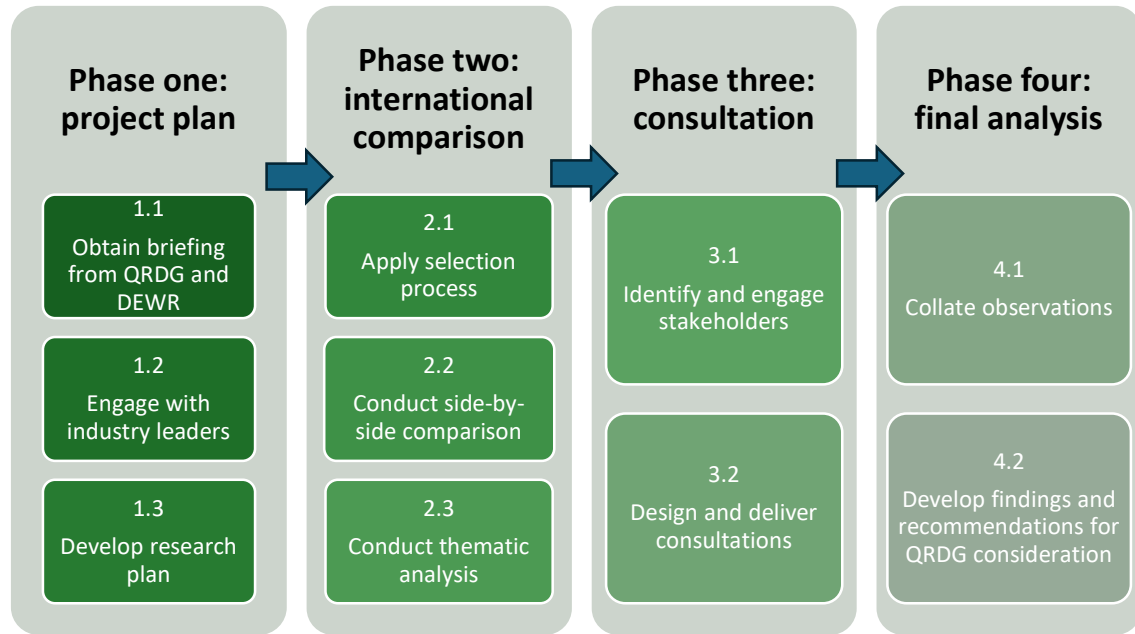


Figure 1 The Report’s methodology

Phase One: Project Plan

Project planning was supported by engagement with the QRDG, DEWR, and the Public Skills Australia Industry Advisory Group, to inform the project scope and objectives.

1.1 – Obtain briefing from QRDG and DEWR

At the IAG meeting held in April 2024, the agenda included discussion with the QRDG Chair and DEWR to develop an understanding of the objectives of Qualification Reform.

1.2 – Engage with industry

Five semi-structured interviews took place with IAG members. The aim of these interviews was to collect intelligence from the Public Safety and Government industry to provide important context on the current qualification and unit of competency design process.

1.3 – Develop research plan

A research plan was developed to outline the approach to international comparison, analysis, consultation, and the formulation of findings and recommendations.

Phase Two: International Comparison

International comparison was facilitated by selecting six VET systems and comparing qualification and unit of competency templates side-by-side with Australia's templates, and then thematically analysing the identified differences.

2.1 – Apply selection process

To identify a set of templates that would provide a useful comparison to Australia, six countries were selected. This included four countries that were largely considered similar to Australia, and two countries that were considered dissimilar (i.e., outliers) (Figure 2).

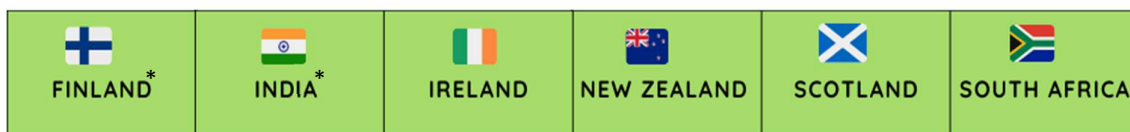


Figure 2 The six countries selected for international comparison (* indicates an outlier country).




For countries to be considered similar to Australia, selection was broadly based on economic factors and VET system structures, which was guided by previous international VET comparative research.¹⁷ It was important for selected countries to utilise the VET system similarly for Public Safety and Government industries (bar the outlier countries to demonstrate contrast).

For the outlier countries, selection was based on finding countries that exhibited alternative VET system structures, did not utilise VET similarly to Australia for Public Safety and Government industries or who possessed different economic and policy-based factors.

Table 3 presents an overview of the six countries and how they utilise the VET system for Public Safety and Government industries.

For the project to be feasible, consideration was given to the accessibility of qualification and unit of competency templates, along with associated supporting materials.¹⁸

Table 3 Overview of VET system utilisation for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors specific to each international system.

	 AUSTRALIA	 FINLAND	 INDIA	 IRELAND	 NEW ZEALAND	 SCOTLAND	 SOUTH AFRICA
Fire and Emergency Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Correctional Services	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Defence	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Police	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Government	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

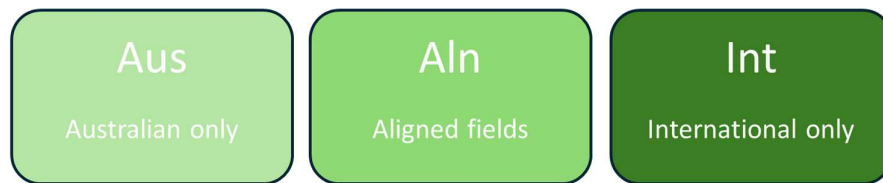
¹⁷ B Wibrow and J Waugh, *Vocational Qualification development: lessons from overseas*, NCVET website, 2021.

¹⁸ T Wyatt, *International benchmarking of vocational education and training*, NCVET website, 2004.

2.2 – Conduct side-by-side comparison

Each international qualification and unit of competency template was individually compared with the relevant Australian template. Side-by-side comparisons were conducted by evaluating each field of the Australian template for similarities with the relevant field in the international template. This comparison process aimed to identify differences in the functionality of fields as well as the total number of fields.

- If an international field was interpreted to require the same or very similar information to an Australian field, it was documented as an ‘aligned’ field (Aln), regardless of whether the name/title of the field was different.
- If no aligned Australian field was identified, the international field was documented as an ‘international-only’ field (Int).
- Any Australian field that was not aligned to an international field was documented as an ‘Australia-only’ field (Aus).



During the comparative process, international fields that were considered notably different to anything currently available in the Australian VET system were identified. In some instances, international template fields aligned with Australia in terms of purpose but approached the purpose in a different way. Descriptions of these differences are presented specific to each country later in this Report. Once the side-by-side comparison was finalised for the qualification and unit of competency template for a single country, the total number of fields that are different to the Australian templates was tallied.

2.3 – Conduct thematic analysis

At the conclusion of the side-by-side comparison process, a thematic analysis was conducted by collating fields that shared differences across any of the six international VET systems (see **Appendix A**). For a theme to be identified, there needed to be at least two similar fields from two countries. Once all themes were identified, they were ranked against each other based on their relevance to Qualification Reform priorities, noting:

- Guidance on Qualification Reform provided by the QRDG.
- Intelligence provided by Public Safety and Government industry leaders stakeholders during initial engagement.

The thematic analysis process is represented visually in Figure 3.

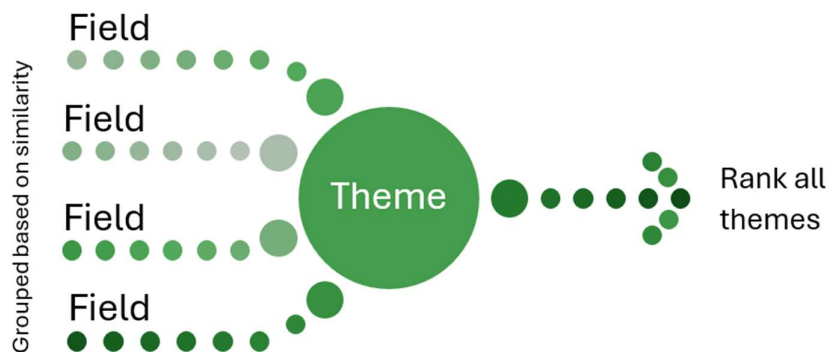


Figure 3 Visual representation of thematic analysis process

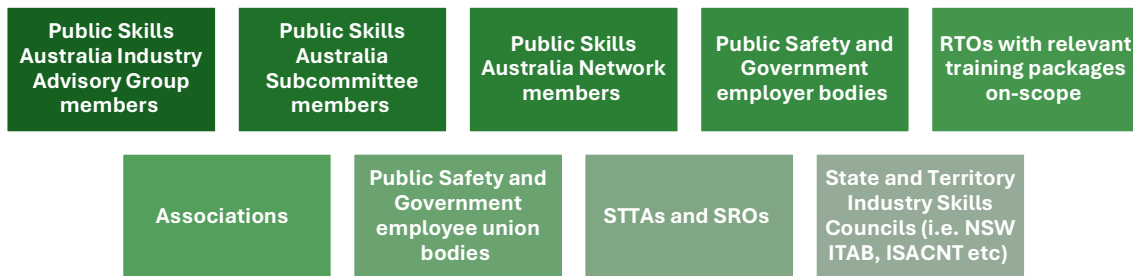
Based on this thematic analysis, three template themes at the qualification level and three template themes at the unit of competency level were selected to be further explored at consultation. These themes were selected based on how frequently the theme appeared in international templates and the potential impact of the theme on the implementation of training.

Phase Three: Consultation

Consultation with Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders provided important context on the identified template themes.

3.1 – Identify and engage stakeholders

All six template themes were consulted with Public Safety and Government industry stakeholders, including representatives participating in the Public Skills Australia governance groups,¹⁹ including:



Participation in consultation sessions was promoted by:



¹⁹ Public Skills Australia (PSA), [Our Governance](#), PSA Website, 2024, accessed 16 August 2024. It requires noting that the committee structure also includes an Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, however, this committee does not provide a review or consultative function.

Overall, 110 stakeholders were engaged as part of these consultation. Stakeholders participated either in-person or through online video conferencing. Table 4 outlines the consultation dates and locations held in each state and territory to maximise the diversity of participation and to continue to foster strong industry stewardship.

Table 4 Consultation dates and locations

Date	Location	Date	Location
8 July	Hobart	8 July	Canberra
9 July	Adelaide	9 July	Sydney
10 July	Perth	10 July	Brisbane
11 July	Darwin	16 July	Melbourne

3.2 – Design and deliver consultations

Consultations were designed to test the identified template themes by presenting them and inviting discussion on the viability and suitability of the themes within the Public Safety and Government industry-sector context. All six template themes were presented and then discussed in a focus group setting. Facilitators described each theme in detail and provided examples from the relevant international systems. This led to open-ended discussions prompted by pre-defined questions (see **Appendix B**). Stakeholders were able to discuss the suitability of each of the six themes regarding the current Qualification Reform work. Opportunity was afforded to stakeholders to provide alternate solutions to positively impact the uptake, utility and delivery of effective training.

For each of the eight consultations, Public Skills Australia provided:

One facilitator to guide discussion

One note-taker to record stakeholder observations

Phase Four: Final Analysis

The consultation observations were analysed and synthesised to inform the development of recommendations.

4.1 – Collate observations

Comprehensive stakeholder observations were collected throughout consultations. At the conclusion of each consultation session, an overall rating was applied to each template theme based on the scale in Figure 4.



Figure 4 Collective agreement scale

Following the final consultation, an aggregate rating that represented the overall level of stakeholder observations was applied to the six template themes.

4.2 – Develop findings and recommendations for QRDG consideration

On 23 July 2024, a workshop was held with the IAG where the template themes, the sentiment of Public Safety and Government stakeholders towards the themes, along with any alternate solutions from consultations, were presented. The IAG co-designed recommendations for the QRDG to consider.

International VET Systems and Templates

Finland



The Finnish National Framework for Qualifications (FiNQF) which encompasses general education, vocational education and Higher Education, comprises Finland's national framework.²⁰ The FiNQF describes qualifications, syllabi and extensive competence modules, each classified into eight levels based on the level of competence. It aligns levels using two factors; the

Government Decree (which competence is aligned to) and the EQF (which level descriptors are aligned to).²¹ The levels within the FiNQF describe the learner's ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and perform practical skills.

The FiNQF main function is to allow comparison of qualifications between countries encouraging mobility.²² Finland's alignment with the EQF further promotes movement across European Union countries. The FiNQF allows for validation and transfer of non-formal and informal learnings, creating a mobile workforce with multiple lateral and horizontal pathways.²³

The VET system in Finland is structured around the Department of Education, with the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) as the national quality assurance body. However, the content of the qualifications is drafted by expert groups from industry and RTOs, and training organisations.²⁴

The alignment between the Public Sector and Government industry-sectors in Finland and Australia is low. In Finland only the Fire and Emergency and Government industry-sectors implement training at a VET level. Police, Correctional Services and Defence training is delivered through formal education outside of the VET system.

²⁰ Finnish National Agency and Education, [Qualifications Frameworks: National Framework for Qualifications and other Competence Modules in Finland](#), Finnish National Agency and Education website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

²¹ Finnish National Agency and Education, [Qualifications Frameworks: National Framework for Qualifications and other Competence Modules in Finland](#), Finnish National Agency and Education website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

²² Finnish National Agency and Education, [Qualifications Frameworks: National Framework for Qualifications and other Competence Modules in Finland](#), Finnish National Agency and Education website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

²³ European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), European inventory of validation of informal and non-formal learning, CEDFOP, 2023

²⁴ European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), Vocational education and training in Finland Short description, CEDEFOP, 2019.

Key differences

Appendices C.1 and C.2 present the findings of the Australia-Finland template side-by-side comparisons, based on similarity of fields.

The Finnish qualification template shares descriptive and explanatory fields with the Australian template but is unique in the way these fields are structured, and in the way the template centres the values of the VET system and the primacy of the learner. The following sections describe relevant variations in the fields and template structure. Despite similarities in the way the Finnish template describes essential outcomes at a unit of competency level, their highly individualised VET system has a significant impact on the structure and content of the unit of competency. This is particularly evident in the 'Skills and Knowledge' and 'Assessment' fields.

Qualification template

Overview fields

The descriptive fields are broadly similar between the Finnish and Australian qualification templates. Slight differences include the addition of both a qualification creation date, and a date of qualification validity, which, while accessible in an Australian context through training.gov.au, does not appear in the template itself. Other fields unique to the Finnish template include a section on 'Underlying VET Values', which provides a generic description of the core values that underpin Finland's VET system, and 'Relevant Legislation'. In the Finnish context, 'Relevant Legislation' has a different meaning to similarly worded sections in the Australian template, such as 'Licensing or Regulatory Requirements' and 'Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs'. 'Relevant Legislation' does not refer to the legislation relating to the industry or occupation aligned to the qualification content, but rather to the legislation that dictates the design, approval and implementation of the qualification. Importantly, as per Finnish VET legislation, a proposed qualification must provide a justification as to why it has been placed at a particular NQF level.

Outcomes and explanations

Finland's qualification template structures their outcomes as a set of high-level competencies and key work tasks that summarise what a successful learner is able to do after completion of the qualification. This section essentially functions as a 'Graduate Profile' and is a synthesis of each of the 'Competence Requirements' that comprise individual units of competency within the qualification. This structure provides more explicit information on the practical applications at a qualification level than the Australian template, which provides an overview of the industry and work environments a learner will operate in but does not necessarily detail the specific work tasks that a successful learner will be able to complete.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

Finland's learner-centred approach to the development of qualifications has significant flow-on effects to how guidelines, entry criteria and study pathways are described. Unlike the Australian template, Finnish qualifications are rarely explicit regarding entry requirements or pre-requisites, and do not describe further educational pathways in their course documentation. Instead, Finnish training providers are expected to assess each individual applicant separately, and collaboratively find an appropriate qualification that suits the individual's previous experience, career expectations and educational needs. Similarly, articulation options are discussed on an individual basis if the applicant expresses a desire to continue their study after attainment.

Assessment

The learner-centred approach is best represented in how Finnish qualifications engage with assessment requirements. Both the Finnish and Australian templates request higher level information on assessment strategy. In the Australian context this information may be tailored to the specific qualification, and requires a description of assessor competencies. In Finland, the high-level information in this section is generic, and provides a brief overview on how VET qualifications are graded, which is typically in the form of a graded scale of competency (from 1 to 5) or not competent. There is no section relating to 'Assessor Competencies', as, similar to Australia, Finnish legislation details the minimum requirements for staff delivering training.

In Finland, as with the entry requirements and articulation pathways, specifics on assessment strategy, assessment methods and timings are not prescriptive, and are tailored on an individual basis to the needs of each learner in the course.

This process is conducted through a Personal Competence Development Plan (PCDP), which is a legislative requirement in the Finnish VET system, and requires each training provider to develop a document in collaboration with each learner that covers: *'...identification and recognition of prior learning; how and which missing skills are acquired based on the learner's current competence and the Qualification requirements; how competence demonstrations and other demonstrations of skills are organised; and what guidance and support may be needed.'*²⁵

Supplementary information

Supplementary and guidance information in the Finnish context is not found in the qualification template, but can be sourced in Finnish legislation, and through their VET quality assurance body.

²⁵ Cedefop (2019). *Vocational education and training in Finland: short description*. Luxembourg: Publications Office

Unit of competency template

Overview fields

Finland requests several additional fields in their unit of competency overview, including 'Scope of Competency' aligned to credit points, 'Estimated Number of Learners for the Unit', and 'Links' to supplementary resources that may support implementation of the unit of competency.

Outcomes and explanations

The Finnish 'Competence Areas' in each unit of competency are similar in structure and content to the 'Elements and Performance Criteria' as they appear in the Australian template, however they also contain the information that would be found in the 'Performance Evidence' and 'Knowledge Evidence' sections in the Australian context.

In the Finnish template, there is no high-level 'Application' section for each unit of competency, as the context in which each unit of competency applies is detailed in the Finnish 'Methods for Demonstrating Competence'.

Another key difference is that, while the units of competency are discrete in their content and assessment, the Finnish VET system does not typically deliver a unit of competency independently of a full qualification. Due to this, descriptive aspects that appear in the Australian template, such as 'Unit Sector' and 'Competency Field' do not appear at a unit of competency level in Finland.

Skills and knowledge

As a result of a 2018 Finnish VET reform, foundation skills (key competences) were no longer addressed as a separate set of criteria and were instead integrated into the specific competencies relating to each individual unit of competency. Due to the individual PCDP's developed for each VET learner in Finland, the units of competency do not contain information on 'Prerequisite Units' or 'Unit Mapping Information' as prior knowledge and any unit of competency equivalencies are assessed at an individual level.

Assessment

The key difference in the unit of competency-level assessment template is that Finland employs a graded competency system, whereby each unit of competency is assessed as pass/fail, with passing students then graded on a scale from 1-5. The learner PCDP's also remove the need to prescribe assessment conditions at a unit of competency level. Instead, there are broad guidelines in the 'Methods for Demonstrating Competency' section, and further details are only provided at an individual level.

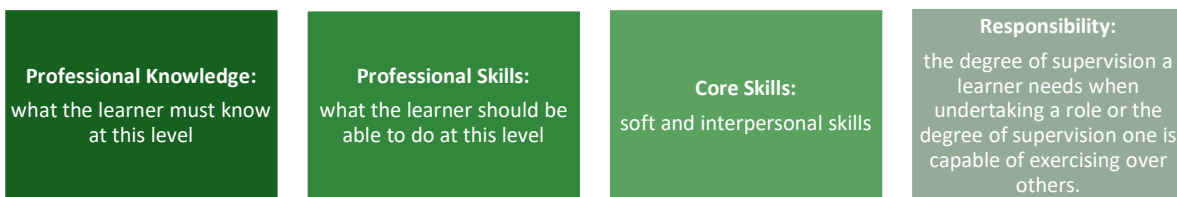
India



The Indian National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) was developed in 2013.²⁶ Under the NSQF, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) begins at an upper secondary level, either in the form of vocational programmes taught in senior secondary schools or Basic Diploma programmes taught in Polytechnics or Industrial Training Institutes (ITI).²⁷ Learners' progression through

India's TVET system results in the acquisition of National Certificates that directly relate to occupations in the India labour market.²⁸

The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) provide oversight and regulation of the NSQF and ensure that the qualifications that reside within the framework comply with its principles.²⁹ The National Skills Qualification Committee (NSQC) use National Occupational Standards (NOS) to determine the criteria a learner must meet to perform a certain role.³⁰ Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) develop Qualification Packs (QP) and control the accreditation norms to which training providers are held to.³¹ The NSQF is a competency-based framework comprised of 10 levels. NSQF levels, however, do not align to a qualification level (e.g., Certificate III). Rather, the NSQ levels align to degree of skill competency for following categories:³²



²⁶ National Institute of Electronics and Information technology (NIELIT), [NSQF Qualification File](#), NIELIT website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

²⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

²⁸ UNESCO, Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

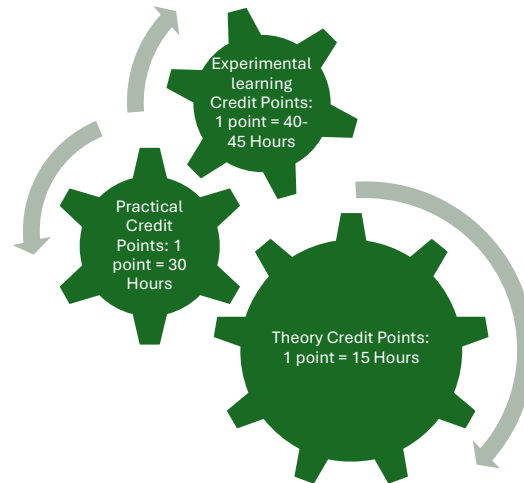
²⁹ UNESCO, Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

³⁰ University Grants Commission (UGC), [Guidelines for providing skill based education under National Skill Qualification Framework](#), UGC website, n.d.

³¹ University Grants Commission (UGC), [Guidelines for providing skill based education under National Skill Qualification Framework](#), UGC website, n.d.

³² Ministry of Finance India, [Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part 1, Section 2: Notification](#), Department of School Education & Literacy website, 2013, accessed 1 August 2024.

Although the NSQF levels do not directly align to a qualification, India uses the National Credit Framework (NCrF) to award qualifications in line with NSQF levels. This sets the national levels for qualifications which can also help when comparisons are made overseas. Nominal Hours are mapped to credit points using the below system.³³



India does not have a regional qualification framework, however, a proposed plan from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to have the SAARC Framework for Action (SFFA) in place by 2030 means India could soon have a regional template.³⁴ Note that India and Australia do have a mutual recognition of qualifications.³⁵ In India, only the Fire and Emergency and Government industry-sectors deliver training at a VET level. The Police, Correctional Services and Defence training are delivered through formal education outside of the VET system.

Key differences

Appendices C.3 and C.4 present the findings of the Australia-India template side-by-side comparisons. The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields. With the exception of some additional descriptive fields that appear in the overview and explanatory fields within the Indian template, the qualification structure is very similar to that of Australia, with the majority of fields mapping closely in terms of structure and content in each template. There are several additional fields within the Indian template that are discussed below. Key differences relating to Unit of Competency template are found in the 'Skills and Knowledge' and 'Assessment Strategies' sections.

³³ Ministry of Education India, [National Credit Framework: The Report of the High-Level Inter-Ministerial Committee on National Credit Accumulation & Transfer Framework](#), Ministry of Education India website, 2022, accessed 20 June 2024.

³⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), [Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies](#), UNESCO, 2022.

³⁵ Department of Education, [Mechanism for the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications between The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Australia](#), Department of Education, Australian Government, 2023.

Qualification template

Overview fields

A key addition in the Indian qualification template that does not appear in Australia is the 'Job Description' field. This field provides a high-level summary of the key tasks associated with the occupation mapped to a qualification. Providing this information at the beginning of the qualification template provides industry-sector specific context to what a successful learner will need to do to hold a particular occupation. This ensures that the qualification content is aligned to job requirements and functions very similarly to a graduate profile.

Outcomes and explanations

There are no key differences relating to outcomes and explanation fields between the Indian and Australian templates.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

There are two differences between the Indian and Australian templates regarding how they engage with course requirements and articulation processes.

The Australian template sets out potential pathways into (if applicable) and after completion of the qualification. It further provides detail on any specific articulation arrangements (if applicable). This section relates solely to academic pathways in Australia and does not appear in the qualification document itself but is included in the relevant Training Package *Companion Volume*. India's template contains a similar field titled 'Progression from the qualification'. In contrast to Australia, this field is not concerned with pathways into a qualification but details a broader explanation of both professional and academic pathways for learners. This requires the qualification to map closely with specific job roles in any given industry, as it is expected that a qualification will provide industry-specific career development. The linkage between qualification and industry is further strengthened in the Indian template through the section 'Evidence of Progression', which requires detail of the steps taken in the qualification design process to ensure there is a clear path to other qualifications as well as a 'career map' that reflects key progression points.

The second difference relates to how the templates engage with foundation skills. In the Australian template, foundation skills are only required to be listed if the essential skills of learning are not explicit in the performance criteria. As such, a standardised statement is often provided: *'Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency'*.³⁶ In contrast, the Indian template engages with foundation or 'Core Skills' through the section 'Evidence of Level'. In this field, qualification developers have the option to fill out one of two tables: Table A requires the qualification outcomes to be mapped against five key NSQF domains:



The developers must provide an explanation as to how outcomes in each of the five domains are mapped against a specific NSQF level. Table B uses the same process but allows developers to map the domains and NSQF levels against 'Key requirements of the job role', as opposed to qualification outcomes.

Assessment

The sections relating to assessment are broadly similar between the templates, with three minor differences. The Indian template includes two fields not found in the Australian template: 'Body/Bodies which will carry out assessment' and 'How will RPL assessment be managed and who will carry it out?'. The first is not included in the Australian template as RTOs are responsible for the assessment and awarding of qualifications and quality assurance of these assessment practices occurs through other processes. RPL guidance exists at a whole-of-VET level in Australia, but qualification-specific processes for RPL are not required, nor are they generally available.

Finally, 'Assessor Competencies', which appear in the Australian template, are not required in the Indian template.

³⁶ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024. It is noted that foundation skills in the Australian system are presented at the unit of competency level and not the qualification level.

Supplementary information

The difference in the supplementary fields is the inclusion of an 'International Comparability' section within the Indian template which is not included in the Australian template. The purpose of the field is to describe similarities and differences between qualifications relating to the same or similar occupations in different countries, and to provide research evidence to support this description.

Unit of competency template

Overview fields

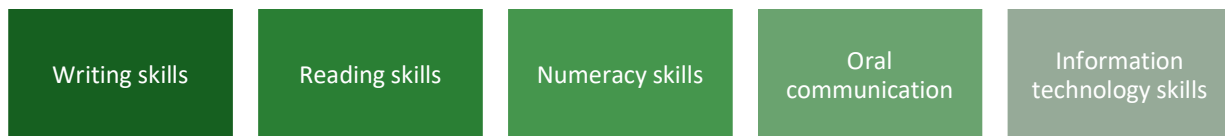
There are no substantial differences in the overview fields between the Indian and Australian templates.

Outcomes and explanations

The structure of elements and performance criteria are identical between the two templates. 'Essential outcomes' are structured as an overarching field, and then separated into a set of performance criteria against the relevant element. However, the Indian template provides additional context below each field and related performance criteria in a section titled 'Knowledge and Understanding'. This describes the knowledge requirements for each element in two fields; 'Organisational context', meaning the processes/policies or guidelines that a learner must understand, and 'Technical knowledge' which includes the information a learner must know to successfully complete the relevant task.

Skills and knowledge

The Indian template engages with foundation skills differently at the unit of competency level. As discussed previously, the Australian unit of competency template provides scope to include foundation skills requirements. However, typically the requirements are stated explicitly in the performance criteria. In the Indian unit of competency template, there is a 'Skills' field that lists both 'Core/Generic Skills' and 'Professional Skills' requirements. 'Core/Generic Skills' are further broken down into:



'Professional Skills' are further separated into:



These fields are optional, but the template strongly encourages the fields to be completed.

Assessment

The Indian template does not separate 'Performance and Knowledge Evidence' from 'Elements and Performance Criteria' as in the Australian template. Instead, the 'Elements and Performance Criteria' and 'Knowledge and Understanding' fields describe the key competencies a learner must demonstrate to pass the unit of competency.

'Assessment guidelines and criteria' are developed in a separate document listing the assessment criteria for each unit of competency and allocating the total available marks per performance criteria. These marks are further delineated between 'theory' and 'practical' assessment. This document further states that Performance Criteria 'will be assigned marks proportional to its importance in NOS (unit)'.³⁷

As units of competency are allocated marks, this creates further differences in assessing competency. The assessment document does not state a minimum required mark to complete the qualification, allowing it to be set by the Sector Skills Council (SSC) (equivalent to a Jobs and Skills Council). This means that a passing grade must be determined on a qualification-by-qualification basis. However, this structure does not allow for a learner to achieve an average passing grade, as the minimum requirements apply to each unit of competency in the qualification.

³⁷ Ministry of Finance India, [Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part 1, Section 2: Notification](#), Department of School Education & Literacy website, 2013, accessed 1 August 2024.

Ireland



Education and training in Ireland are described through the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).³⁸ The NFQ was developed in 1999 and is one of the earliest examples of a national qualification framework in Europe.³⁹ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was established in 2012 as the single national qualifications and external quality assurance body and is the custodian of the NFQ. The

QQI provides quality assurance and governance over the Further Education and Training (FET) industry, and also regulate Ireland's Higher Education sector.⁴⁰ There are two systems for FET qualifications in the Irish Register of qualifications:

<p>Common Award System (CAS): refers to qualifications and units of competency described and developed by QQI.⁴¹ In Australia, this is similar to qualifications and units of competency included within a Training Package, recorded within the national register of qualifications.⁴²</p>	<p>Non-Common Award System (non-CAS): refers to any other qualification or unit of competency that is not described by QQI.⁴³ In Australia this would be similar to accredited training that is not formally incorporated into a Training Package.⁴⁴</p>
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Training providers can submit proposals for new CAS and non-CAS qualifications and units of competency to QQI to be validated and subsequently delivered. Ireland's FET system is provider-led, where programmes of learning (i.e., qualifications) are submitted to QQI for validation. QQI's programme validation process ensures that any new programme proposed by a provider to lead to a QQI award has been fully evaluated and approved before it is delivered to learners. Highly detailed information is required, not just an outline, to fulfill validation criteria and submission guidelines. In Ireland, Fire and Emergency, Correctional Services and Defence industry-sectors all deliver training through the FET system. Training for Police and Government industry-sectors are offered through higher education. Due to the partial utilisation of FET for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors in Ireland, comparisons to the Australian VET are evident.

³⁸ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), [National Framework of Qualifications](#), QQI website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

³⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), [Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies](#), UNESCO, 2022.

⁴⁰ Further Education and Training in Ireland is synonymous with Vocational Education and Training in Australia.

⁴¹ QQI, [Policy for Determining Awards Standards](#), QQI, 2014; QQI, [I want to validate a new further education and training programme](#), QQI website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁴² Australian Quality Assurance Authority (ASQA), [What is an accredited course?](#), ASQA website, n.d.

⁴³ QQI, [Policy for Determining Awards Standards](#), QQI, 2014; QQI, [I want to validate a new further education and training programme](#), QQI website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁴⁴ Australian Quality Assurance Authority (ASQA), [What is an accredited course?](#), ASQA website, n.d.

Key differences

Appendices C.5 and C.6 present the findings of the Australia-Ireland template side-by-side comparisons. The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields. Ireland's provider-led approach to qualification development greatly impacts the structure and content of its templates. The Irish template has two distinct purposes (among others):⁴⁵

Develop a standardised system of nationally accredited training (Irish Register of Qualifications)

Combine the qualification development with the provision of quality assurance and the regulation of training product delivery

In effect, this means that the Irish templates require significantly more detail than other benchmarked countries, as potential training providers are required to submit a fully developed programme alongside a proposed qualification. Due to this, the QQI approval process applies both to the qualification itself, as well as to the training provider and their proposed delivery strategy.

Qualification template

Overview fields

Ireland employs a credit-based system within their vocational education and training system. This credit-based system enables alignment of duration and complexity of learning to the National Qualifications Framework. Credits do not appear in the Australian qualification template.

Outcomes and explanations

The Irish qualification template requires training providers to evidence the involvement of industry in the development of learning and assessment materials. At this level, training providers are required to prove that due diligence was undertaken to ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of qualifications and that there is specific demand for the qualification.

Although these requirements are not unique to Ireland, the inclusion of this information on the template presents an opportunity for quality assurance and increased responsibility of training providers to ensure the system remains as valuable as possible to the learner.

⁴⁵ Quality and Qualification Ireland (QQI), [Our Role](#), QQI website, n.d., accessed 16 August 2024.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

A unique inclusion in the Irish qualification template is the 'Alignment of the Programme with the Professional/Occupational Profile'. This requires training providers to detail where alignment of the training will directly link with skills and knowledge of the intended occupation. This explicit mapping to real-world outcomes presents an opportunity to clearly define the use-case of the qualification.

Assessment

Ireland's qualification template requires more granular detail than the Australian template. The Irish template contains a section 'Programme Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy' that requires providers to detail their teaching and assessment strategies and the pedagogical principles that underpin these strategies. The template contains the field 'Integrity of Assessment', which describes the techniques employed by qualification developers to ensure the programme is fairly assessed. Principles for the integrity of VET assessment are available in Australia, but it is not contextualised to the delivery of each qualification as in the Irish template.

Another major difference is the structure of a 'Programme Summative Assessment Strategy'. This is a detailed grid that aligns qualification outcomes to module outcomes.⁴⁶ It describes the assessment techniques employed for each learning outcome, and also describes how each assessment instrument is weighted for each qualification learning outcome. This template also lists the individual unit of competency that comprise the modules described. Planned assessment dates (e.g., Week 10) are required to be provided for each qualification, alongside a rationale for why these dates were chosen.

The level of detail required by the Irish template essentially combines the qualification development process, as it would be understood in Australia, with the development of learning materials and course timelines that would be left to RTOs to determine independently in the Australian context.

Supplementary information

There are no key differences in the supplementary fields between the Irish and Australian qualification templates.

⁴⁶ A 'module' refers to a group of units of competency and can be understood as akin to a 'Skill Set' in the Australian context.

Unit of competency template

Overview fields

Overview fields are structured similarly in both templates; however, Ireland units of competency contain some additional fields. These are 'Award Level' and 'Credit Value'.

Award level refers to the level the unit of competency is placed at, which is aligned to Ireland's National Qualifications Framework, the NFQ. The 'Credit Value' section assigns credits to each unit of competency.

Outcomes

There are differences in how outcomes are defined and contextualised in the Irish template. Outcomes and Performance Criteria are structured as 'Program Objectives' and 'Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs)'. 'Program Objectives' provide a high-level overview of the relevant aims of the unit of competency, while MIPLOs refer to the outcomes a learner must achieve upon successful completion. These learning outcomes are structured as a list of skills and knowledge a learner must be able to demonstrate to attain the unit of competency. They are not separated into further 'Performance Criteria', that differs from the Australian template. Instead, each learning outcome provides a greater level of specificity, and the sum of all learning outcomes is intended to produce the overall unit of competency outcome outlined at the beginning of the unit.

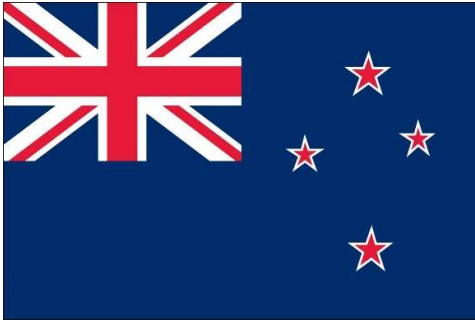
Skills and knowledge

There are no substantial differences between the 'Skills' and 'Knowledge' components of units between Ireland and Australia.

Assessment

Information relating to assessment for Irish units of competency is far more detailed and prescriptive than in the Australian template. The Irish template provides an overview of the relevant VET policies and criteria within each unit of competency under 'General Information'. Similar documentation exists in Australia but is not published in each unit of competency document. The Irish template further describes the weighting of assessment techniques and of each individual skill within the 'Assessment Techniques' and 'Description' section. For example, assessment may be described within the template as being comprised of 70% Skills Demonstration and 30% Written Examination. In the 'Description' section, these sections are further delineated: skills relevant to the learning outcomes are assigned a weighting within the 'Skills Demonstration' portion of the assessment, and guidelines are provided for the 'Written Examination' section. Following on from this weighting of skills and theory, learners are graded overall based on their percentage grade, categorised into Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction.

New Zealand



New Zealand first established a qualification framework in 1991 which was later updated to the New Zealand Qualification Framework (NZQF) in 2010. The 2010 update followed a review of the qualifications system in 2008.⁴⁷ The review identified that qualifications were not straightforward to understand nor aligned to industry needs. The review

recommended reducing the number of qualifications governed by the NZQF.⁴⁸

As part of reform, NZQF established six Working Development Councils (WDCs), responsible for creating and maintaining Vocational Education and Training qualifications for designated industries. The six WDCs include:



WDCs work with industry and training providers to develop Skills Standards, that form the basis for a National Curriculum to reflect the practical needs of industry and educators.⁴⁹ Skills Standards within a National Curriculum is not prescriptive for training providers but rather provides context, structure, and information to assist in the creation of programmes.

⁴⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

⁴⁸ UNESCO, Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

⁴⁹ UNESCO, Global Inventory of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks 2022. Volume II National and Regional case studies, UNESCO, 2022.

Training providers create programmes from any unique combination of the Skills Standards within the National Curriculum.⁵⁰ To maintain the quality and design of programmes, training providers must have programmes endorsed by WDCs before being approved by the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA).⁵¹

New Zealand has a Trans-Tasman mutual recognition agreement (TTMRA) with Australia that allows New Zealand qualifications to be recognised in Australia. The TMMRA *'covers all occupations for which some form of legislation-based registration, certification, licensing, approval, admission or any other form of authorisation is required by individuals in order to legally practice an occupation.'*⁵² New Zealand also allows for some use of Australian units of competency within the NZQF.⁵³

Key differences

Appendices C.7 and C.8 present the findings of the Australia-New Zealand template side-by-side comparisons. The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

New Zealand's qualification and unit of competency templates are structured similarly to those in Australia, as evidenced by the inclusion of certain Australian units of competency into courses within New Zealand. Minor differences can be found relating to the inclusion of additional overview fields, and assessment strategies, at both a qualification and unit of competency level.

Qualification template

Overview fields

The overview fields at the New Zealand qualification level are comparable with the Australian template. Two key fields included in the New Zealand template that do not appear in the Australian template are 'Total Qualification Credits' and 'Review Date'.

⁵⁰New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA), [Reform of New Zealand Qualifications \(sub-degree vocational Qualifications\) and other credentials](#), NZQA website, n.d. accessed 20 June 2024.

⁵¹New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA), [Reform of New Zealand Qualifications \(sub-degree vocational Qualifications\) and other credentials](#), NZQA website, n.d. accessed 20 June 2024.

⁵²Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Review of Australia-New Zealand Trade and Investment Relations, [Chapter 6: Mutual Recognition Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement](#), Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Parliament of Australia, n.d.

⁵³NZQA, [Australian Units of Competency on the National Qualifications framework: Guideline and Criteria for Standard Setting Bodies](#), NZQA website, 2005, accessed 20 June 2024.

In Australia, the qualification template requires nominal hours to be included, but this does not appear on publicly available qualification documentation. There are no mandatory review dates on the Australian template as it is expected that qualifications are closely monitored and updated when necessary. New Zealand qualifications are reviewed no longer than every five years.

Outcomes and explanations

The New Zealand qualification template structures the 'Outcomes' section as a 'Graduate Profile', listing the higher-level competencies that a successful learner will be able to demonstrate. In Australia, the 'Outcomes' are framed in a general occupational context and are not specific to the work tasks being completed.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

Both templates contain similar fields relating to 'Entry Requirements', 'Guidelines' and 'Articulation.' However, New Zealand does not have a separate field outlining 'Foundation Skills' requirements.

Assessment

There are two differences in the way qualification templates engage with assessment requirements. In the Australian context, the qualification template requires details of the 'Assessment Strategy' in terms of how it effectively judges learner achievement of outcomes. This field also requires a description of how course assessments will align with the relevant RTO standards. In New Zealand, there is no 'Assessment Strategy' filed. Instead, the field 'Evidence Requirements for Assuring Consistency' requires qualification developers to provide detail as to how evidence will be collected that successful learners have achieved the Graduate Profile to a standard accepted by the relevant industry. Due to this, the structure of this section in the New Zealand template is subtly differentiated from the Australian 'Assessment Strategy'. It does not specifically request details on the assessment processes of the course but rather focussed on what constitutes acceptable evidence of achievement. This may include graduate and/or stakeholder feedback on the application of graduate skills within a relevant industry.

The second difference relates to the 'graded assessment of competency' and the 'standards for endorsement'. In Australia, the structure of the units of competency that comprise qualifications and the corresponding lack of a system of graded assessment implies an outcome, whereby a learner either achieves or does not achieve a competency. Therefore, to attain a qualification, a learner must achieve competency in all constitutive units.

In the New Zealand system, competency is graded on a Not Achieved/Achieved/Merit/Excellence scale. In the template, the section 'Minimum Standard of Achievement and Standards for Grade Endorsements' allows a qualification developer to detail additional requirements for attaining a qualification that exceeds the minimum standard to demonstrate competency. This may include requirements such as meeting regulatory body certification or completing a qualification within a certain timeframe.

Supplementary information

The inclusion of a mandatory review date in the New Zealand qualification template removes the requirement for an 'Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation' section; this differs from the Australian template.

Unit of competency template

Overview fields

Differences in the descriptive fields in the unit of competency templates are the inclusion of 'Credits', 'Levels', 'Mandatory Review Date' and 'Review History' in the New Zealand template.

New Zealand's unit of competency template also contains a unique field 'Indicative Content'. This field provides a framework for how a provider may develop specific learning activities and assessment tasks that relate to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. In Australia, all guidance materials appear at a Training Package level within the relevant *Companion Volume*.

Outcomes and explanations

The structure of New Zealand's learning outcomes and assessment criteria are closely aligned with the 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' to the Australian template.

The New Zealand unit of competency template does not contain separate sections for the 'Unit Sector' or 'Competence Area' of an individual unit of competency, though units are classified in the Directory of Assessment and Skills Standards (DASS) according to industry. While units of competency exist independently of their qualifications, the 'Purpose' section of the unit of competency template details the specific qualification it can be used in. This aligns the unit of competency to the industry and competence area of the overall qualification and does not require it to be reiterated in the unit of competency template.

Skills and knowledge

In contrast to Australia, New Zealand does not describe 'Foundation Skills' at a qualification or unit of competency template level. 'Foundation Skills' required to achieve a certain competency are expected to be either explicitly listed or implicit in the 'Learning Outcomes' and 'Assessment Criteria'. This is usually the case in the Australian context, with many units of competency stating 'Foundation Skills' essential to performance are explicitly referenced in the performance criteria of the unit of competency.

Assessment

As referenced in the 'Assessment' section at the qualification level, the difference in assessment between the New Zealand and Australian templates is the 'grading scale' employed in the New Zealand VET sector. This 'grading scale' does not apply to all units of competency or qualifications, but 'Merit/Excellence' grades can be specified when there is a clear reason and stakeholder support to differentiate between performance levels of a certain skill or learning outcome.

Scotland



Developed in 2001 and updated in 2015, the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) is Scotland's education framework to promote lifelong learning.⁵⁴ The Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) is the responsible body for VET, and together with Credit Rating Bodies (CRBs), ensure the quality of Scottish qualifications.

The SCQF has 12 levels. Qualifications are aligned to these levels using two measures: level of difficulty and time taken (indicated through credit points). Qualifications can be grouped based on level:⁵⁵

Level 1-8	Level 4-12	Level 7-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Diplomas • Certificates • Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) • Apprenticeship-based training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Qualifications

The SQA develops national qualifications in collaboration with Sector Skills Councils (SSC), which function across the United Kingdom (UK) countries. SSCs are in place to provide an employer-led direction to qualification development. This is actioned through the use of National Occupation Standards (NOS) which SSCs are responsible for maintaining and updating in line with their industry.⁵⁶ Although Higher Education develops qualifications independently without the use of the SQA, the SCQF is still recognised and used by universities when students are entering Higher Education and/or transferring between programmes/institutions.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF), [About the framework: The SCQF is the national framework for Scotland](#), SCQF website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁵⁵ SCQF, [The SCQF Interactive Framework](#), SCQF website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁵⁶ Skills Development Scotland, [NOS finder](#), Skills Development Scotland website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁵⁷ Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF), [The SCQF: Scotland's framework for lifelong learning: A guide for learners, providers and employers](#), SCQF website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

The SCQF is aligned in partnership with other UK countries.⁵⁸ The *'Qualifications Can Cross Boundaries'* document, published in collaboration between the UK countries, highlights the compatibility of the qualification and apprenticeships between countries.⁵⁹ A comparison is also made between the UK countries' National Qualification Frameworks to the European Qualification Framework, further aligning UK qualifications with European qualifications.

In Scotland, the Police, Fire and Emergency, Correctional Services and Defence industry-sectors are aligned to a SVQ or Higher National Certificate level. Some specific Government qualifications are aligned to a, SVQ level, while others are aligned to a Higher Education level.

Scotland is currently undergoing an education and skills reform in 2024, which is looking to replace SQA as the governing body for national qualifications.⁶⁰

Key differences

Appendices C.9 and C.10 present the findings of the Australia-Scotland template side-by-side comparisons. The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented based on similarity of fields.

The Scottish qualification template is substantially shorter and less detailed in scope than the Australian template. Guidance for Vocational Qualifications is separated into multiple documents, some of which are qualification-specific, sector-specific or industry-specific, and many relate to legislative or regulatory provisions that apply to the entire Vocational Education system. The existence of these supporting documents eliminates the need for additional detail in the qualification template itself.

At the unit of competency level, Scotland's templates are structured similarly to that of Australia, with the exception of 'Assessment fields', which are outlined at an industry-level. There are additional points of difference relating to foundation skills and descriptive information.

Qualification template

Overview fields

The overview fields are very similar in both the Scottish and Australian qualification templates. Scotland includes two fields that do not appear in the Australian template: 'Awarding Body', which refers to the organisation accredited to deliver Scottish qualifications, and 'Accreditation Period' which refers to the initial accreditation date and the date the accreditation expires.

⁵⁸ In this report 'UK countries' refers to Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland due to the existing partnership. We recognise that the Republic of Ireland is a sovereign country and is not part of the United Kingdom.

⁵⁹ Qualification Assurance Agency (QAA), [Qualifications can cross boundaries a guide to comparing Qualifications in the UK and Ireland](#), QAA website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁶⁰ Scottish Government, [Education and skills reform](#), Scottish Government website, 2023, accessed 20 June 2024.

Outcomes

Fields relating to course outcomes are less detailed in the Scottish qualification template. A general course outcome is articulated in a similar fashion to Australia, alongside course packaging information, and details about the validity of the qualification. However, Scotland does not include specifics on legislative requirements, industry recognition, or evidence of community or industry need in this template. Instead, the requirement to consult with industry, identify specific skills needs and prevent duplication is built into their qualification development process and the associated guidance materials.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

Fields relating to guidelines, requirements and articulation are similar to the Australian context. While the Australian template has a section for 'Foundation Skills', Scotland's template has a comparable section for 'Core Skills Signposting', which provides a broad overview of the general skills required to complete the qualification. The difference is that, at the qualification level, a grid is provided that summarises the key skills required for each comprising unit of competency, with core skills graded on the SCQF framework. This will be explained further in the unit of competency template comparison.

Assessment

Information on assessment is not provided at the qualification level in Scotland. Rather, the qualification section on 'Assessment' links to a sector-level (equivalent to Training Package) assessment strategy document that provides the requirements and guidance material for training providers to deliver assessments. This document is maintained by the Scottish Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

Supplementary information

As the Scottish qualification template contains an 'Accreditation End Date', there is no section relating to 'Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation' of the course. It is expected that this is completed prior to the end date.

Unit of competency template

Overview fields

The Scottish unit of competency template contains additional fields not found in the Australian template.

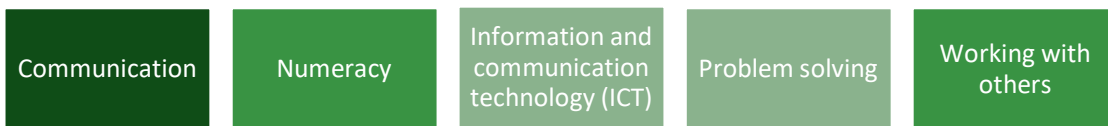
Fields included in the Scottish template include: 'Review Date', 'Relevant Occupations' and 'Keywords'. While relevant occupations are captured in the classification information available on *Training.gov.au*, Australian units do not have review date and are updated based on industry needs. Keywords are included in the Scottish template to improve search functionality when searching for individual units of competencies. This does not appear in the Australian template.

Outcomes and explanations

The structure of 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' are very similar in the Scottish and Australian unit of competency templates. In the Australian template, the 'Range of Conditions' section provides context for the operating environments in which the elements will be demonstrated. This contrasts with the Scottish 'Scope/Range' field, which provides a list of documents that may provide this context, such as 'Organisational Codes of Conduct' or 'Operating Guidelines'.

Skills and knowledge

Scotland is unique in having a 'Core Skills Signposting' section on the unit of competency template. This field functions similarly to 'Foundation Skills' in the Australian context, in that it identifies the general skills required to successfully complete the qualification. However, rather than detailing these skills explicitly in the 'Performance Criteria', this field maps the five core skills to the specific requirements of each unit of competency:



These core skills are then assessed holistically as part of the unit of competency.

Assessment

In the Scottish system, 'assessment strategies' and 'assessor competencies' do not reside within the unit of competency template but are referred to in the guidance material for each industry. The guidance documents function similarly to a *Companion Volume Implementation Guide* but offer more specific detail on how the assessments should be structured, delivered and quality assured.

Scotland does not separate its 'Performance' and 'Knowledge Criteria' from 'Performance' and 'Knowledge Evidence', as in the Australian template.

South Africa



The South African Qualifications Authority Act was established in 1995 to create the South Africa Qualification Authority (SAQA). The primary function of SAQA was to establish the National Qualification Framework (NQF), founded in 1998.⁶¹ Three Sub-Frameworks to the NQF were founded along with three Quality Councils (QC) to maintain each Sub-Framework.

Each Sub-Framework and QC have a defined set of qualifications and Unit Standards that they are accountable for. These qualifications sit within a range of NQF levels that defines a learner's level of achievement upon graduation (Table 5).

Table 5 National Qualification Framework (NQF), responsible Quality Council (QC), associated qualifications and NQF levels

NFQ Framework	Quality Council	Qualifications	NQF level
The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework ⁶²	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi) for general and further education and training qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Certificate • Elementary Certificate • Intermediate Certificate • National Certificate 	1-4
The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework ⁶³	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) for work-based qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Certificate 	1-8
The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework ⁶⁴	Council on Higher Education (CHE) for Higher Education qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Certificate • Diploma • Advanced Certificate • Bachelor's Degree • Advanced Diploma • Bachelor's Honours Degree • Post Graduate Diploma • Master's Degree • Doctoral Degree 	5-10

⁶¹ South Africa Qualification Framework (SAQA), [National Qualification Framework](#), SAQA website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁶² Umalusi, [The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework](#), Umalusi website, 2021, accessed 20 June 2024.

⁶³ Quality Council for Trade and Occupations (QCTO), [Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework Policy](#), Future Perfect Skills Development website, n.d.

⁶⁴ Council on Higher Education (CHE), [The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework](#), CHE, 2013, accessed 20 June 2024.

For qualifications to be registered on the NQF, SAQA must approve recommendations received from QCs. For training providers to deliver a qualification they must also be accredited to offer registered qualifications and skills programmes by the relevant QCs.

In South Africa, all VET for the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors are allocated to the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework administered by the QCTO. The qualifications obtained for Public Safety and Government occupations are classified as ‘occupational certificates’.

Key differences

Appendices C.11 and C.12 present the findings of the Australia-South Africa template side-by-side comparisons. The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

QUALIFICATIONS	UNIT OF COMPETENCY
<p>There are several structural differences between the Australian and South African qualification templates. This is evidenced by the greater number of fields present in the South African template. The following sections will describe the differences considered to be the most relevant to improving functionality, clarity and consistency of the Australian qualification template.</p>	<p>Similar to the qualification template comparison, there are far more fields present in the South African unit of competency template compared to the Australian unit of competency template. The following sections will describe the differences considered to be the most relevant to improving functionality, clarity and consistency of the Australian unit of competency template.</p>

Qualification template

Overview fields

Despite the breadth of fields in the South African template, there two fields of note that are not present in the Australian template. The ‘Minimum Credits’ field in the South African template identifies the lowest number of credits required to successfully complete a Qualification. Currently, there is no alignment of qualifications to number of units in the Australian VET system.

The ‘Registration’ dates that appear in the South African template are also not present in Australia. In South Africa, the registration period of a qualification is either 3 or 5 years, depending on Qualification type. At that point, the qualification must be reviewed before being re-registered. In Australia, qualifications have no registration dates, and are reviewed and updated based on industry requirements.

Outcomes

Five of the six fields in the Outcomes category are aligned between Australia and South Africa. It requires noting that the South African template uses slightly different terminology. Within the 'Outcomes of the Course' field, the South African example approaches outcomes in a manner that could be considered similar to that of a 'Graduate Profile'. This includes defining 'Exit Level Outcomes' and 'Critical Cross-Field Outcomes'.

Each South African Qualification must have a minimum of four 'Exit Level Outcomes', which must be designed for the entire qualification and not individual unit of competency.⁶⁵ 'Critical Cross-Field Outcomes' (CCFOs) describe a set of skills a successful learner will possess that can be applied across industries, not just the industry the training is relevant to.⁶⁶ For example, 'CCFOs' can include skills such as identifying and solving problems, working effectively in a team, and communicating effectively.⁶⁷

Both the 'Exit Level Outcomes' and 'CCFOs' represent a much greater level of detail when compared to the equivalent field in the Australian template. This level of detail provides increased clarity on the skills and knowledge a learner can expect to possess when successfully completing a qualification.

Course guidelines, requirements and articulation

Most fields within the 'Course Guidelines', 'Requirements', and 'Articulation' category were similar. However, differences exist regarding the language used to describe the. Despite this, the information required by the fields are well aligned between the countries.

One field in the South African example that is not present in the Australian template is the 'International Comparability' section. The statement of international comparability must include a comparison of best practices with at least two other parts of the world. The comparison must include an overview of the 'Learning Outcomes', 'Learning Materials', 'Credits', 'Assessments', 'Duration' and 'Articulation'. This presents an opportunity to provide an indication of how the qualification compares to similar qualifications across world. Although this comparison does not necessarily imply the qualification is considered equivalent across international contexts, it allows a prospective learner to assess the equivalency with other international qualifications.

⁶⁵ South Africa Qualification Authority (SAQA), [Guidelines for the development and evaluation of Qualifications and part-Qualifications for registration on the national Qualifications framework](#), SAQA, 2023.

⁶⁶ M King, [the impact of the Critical Outcomes on curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in ABET](#), 2007.

⁶⁷ M King, [the impact of the Critical Outcomes on curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in ABET](#), 2007.

Assessment

A difference in the Assessment category is the detail required in the 'Assessment Strategy' field of the South African template. Within this field, the South African template requires all 'Exit Level Outcomes' to be aligned to an 'Associated Assessment Criteria'. In contrast, the Australian template does not mandate explicit linkage between 'Learning Outcomes' and 'Assessment Requirements'. Further, the South African template allows the inclusion of the type of assessments each Qualification will comprise. This includes 'Formative Assessments', 'Summative Assessments' and 'Integrated Assessments'. There is currently no requirement for this in the Australian template.

Supplementary information

Of the five fields in the Supplementary Information category, Australia only presents one, 'Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation', in the template. Three of the four remaining fields presented in the South African example represent overarching qualification linkage opportunities and are only required 'if applicable'. Overall, this field does not present a great deal of difference to Australia.

*Unit of competency template***Overview fields**

The primary points of difference between the South Africa Unit Standard template and the Australian unit of competency template are that the South African template includes the field 'Minimum Credits' required to complete the unit of competency, and a 'Registration Start' and 'End' date for each unit. South Africa also provides the NQF level in their unit of competency template.

Outcomes and explanations

The unit of competency template is similar in relation to outcomes and explanations, with both the South Africa and Australia template using the following fields: 'Range of Conditions', 'Unit Sector', 'Competency Field' and 'Application'. However, Australia has an additional field 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' which South Africa does not have. Australia's inclusion of 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' within the outcomes and explanation section is due to the fields' broad nature. 'Elements' refers to the broad outcomes while 'Performance Criteria' describes the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. South Africa has similar fields within the template which explicitly maps assessment criteria, however this sits within the assessment section of the template. Australia's placement of 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' within the outcomes and explanation section is due to the template including separate sections, 'Performance Evidence' and 'Knowledge Evidence' in the assessment section, which the South African template does not include.

Skills and knowledge

The South Africa unit of competency template structures the skills and knowledge that are acquired through completing a unit of competency differently to the Australian template. The Australian unit of competency template includes the field 'Foundation Skills'; however, this field is frequently populated with a default entry that reads, '*...foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency*'.⁶⁸ In other circumstances, the field identifies the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance but are not explicit referenced in the 'Performance Criteria'.

The South Africa unit of competency template includes two fields that equate to foundation skills in a consistent manner. This includes the field 'Essential Embedded Knowledge', which specifies the additional generalised knowledge a learner acquires through completing the unit of competency that is not explicit in the 'Outcomes'. In addition to this, the South African template also includes 'Critical Cross-Field Outcomes' (CCFOs), which are skills a learner acquires that are not specific to the intended occupation and that can be applied across multiple disciplines.

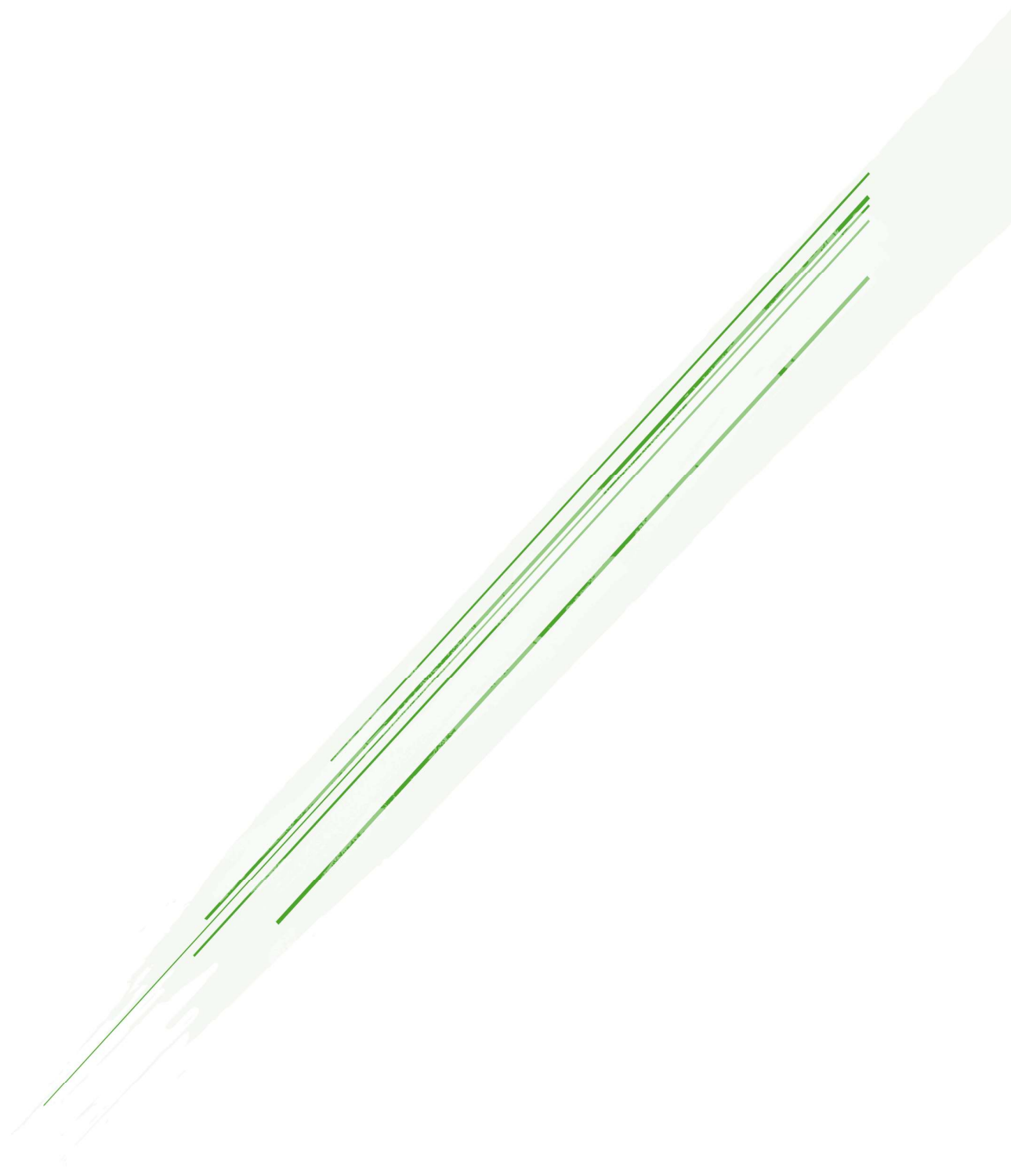
The South Africa unit of competency template also includes the field 'Learning Assumed to be in Place and Recognition of Prior Learning' which specifies the prerequisite knowledge required to undertake the unit of competency.

Assessment

South Africa does not differentiate between 'Outcomes' and 'Performance Criteria', which are comparable to 'Elements' and 'Performance Criteria' in Australia, and 'Performance' and 'Knowledge Evidence'. This implies that the South African unit of competency Outcomes are also the basis on which a learner is assessed. This provides additional scope to training providers to determine what evidence will be collected to appropriately demonstrate achievement of the stated 'Performance Criteria'. This contrasts with the Australian template, which clearly lists what evidence an RTO must collect to show that a learner has achieved the unit of competency 'Performance Criteria'.

⁶⁸ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [National course document template](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 August 2024.

Analysis



In this chapter, findings from the international comparisons are summarised at the whole-of-system level in the *Systemic overview* section. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the template themes in the *Thematic analysis* section. Public Safety and Government stakeholder observations on the template themes gathered during consultation are detailed in the *Collation and analysis of stakeholder observations* section of this Report.

Systemic overview

The Report has identified that the VET systems of countries outside of Australia structure their qualification and unit of competency (or equivalent) templates differently. Some countries require their qualifications or units of competency to fulfill a very rigid set of requirements, while others are more flexible as entries in template fields are broader and less defined in scope. (Figure 5). Further, it was identified that international VET systems have a different number of template fields.

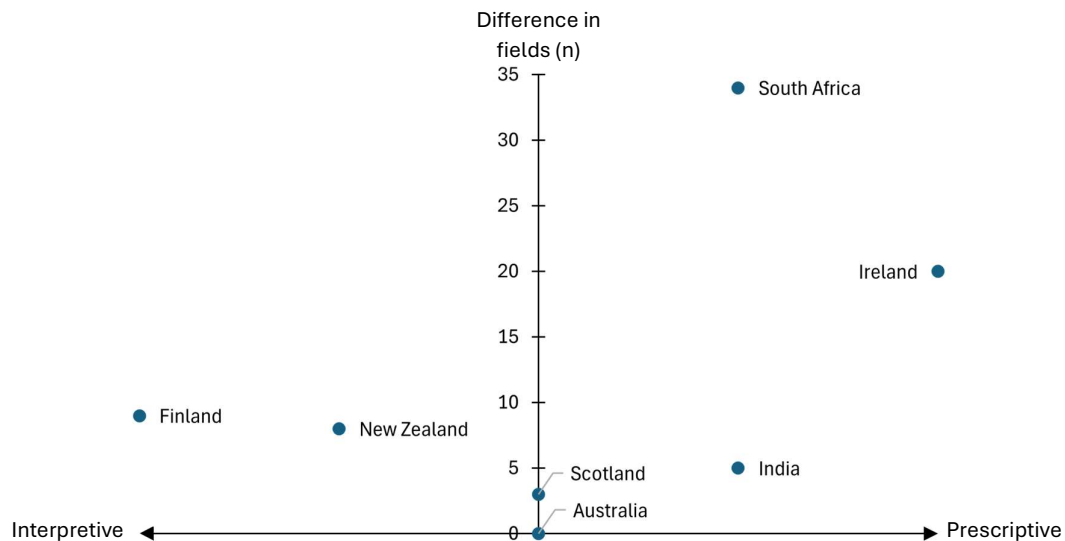


Figure 5 Conceptual overview of international VET systems when compared to Australia. Countries are placed on the horizontal axis based on their template approach, and on the vertical axis based on the total number of template fields different to Australia.

The VET systems of South Africa, Ireland and India are more prescriptive, as template fields require highly specific and detailed information while Finland and New Zealand are more interpretive, as entries in template fields are broader in scope. Scotland has a level of prescription similar to Australia. All countries referenced in this Report possess a greater number of template fields than Australia.

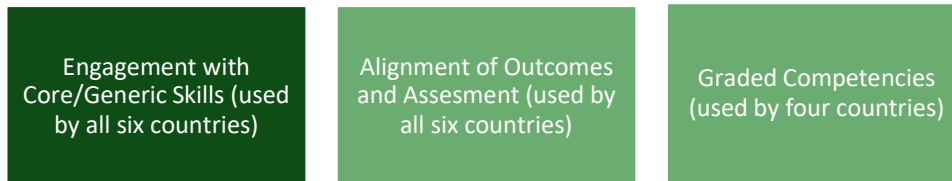
Thematic analysis

At the conclusion of the international comparison process, a thematic analysis grouped key differences into themes that were shared across any two or more of the six international VET systems. Once themes were identified, they were rated and ranked according to their uniqueness when compared to the Australian system. Six template themes were identified– three at the qualification level and three at the unit of competency level.

For qualifications, the themes identified were:



The themes identified for unit of competency templates were:



These template themes and the countries that they were observed in are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 List of template themes aligned to the relevant international system

	 AUSTRALIA	 FINLAND	 INDIA	 IRELAND	 NEW ZEALAND	 SCOTLAND	 SOUTH AFRICA
Qualification	Graduate Profiles	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
	International Comparability	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
	Review Timelines & Approaches	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unit of Competency	Engagement with Core/Generic Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Alignment of Outcomes and Assessment	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Graded Competencies	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗

Qualification template themes

The three qualification template themes are described in detail below.

1) Graduate Profiles

Graduate Profiles describe a set of skills that a successful learner will possess that are explicitly linked to an occupation associated with a qualification (Figure 6). Five countries provide a Graduate Profile or similar within their qualifications. New Zealand, South Africa and Finland detail the course outcomes in a manner that clearly describes a set of skills a successful learner will possess that are explicitly linked to the occupation associated with the qualification. Similarly, Ireland and India provide a high-level summary of the key tasks associated with the occupation mapped to the skills and knowledge of the qualification.

Graduate Profile
<p>Graduates of this qualification will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply basic health and safety requirements for operating safely within a team in a fire and rescue environment. - Work as a member of a fire fighting team within an incident control structure. - Perform first aid. - Communicate appropriately with crew members during a fire and rescue incident. <p>Graduates of the Airport strand will also be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up and use appropriate equipment and techniques to assist the operational requirements of airport fire and rescue incidents, or aid incident reduction. - Drive a fire and rescue vehicle safely within an airport environment. - Apply specific knowledge of operating systems to carry out emergency aircraft shutdown procedures. <p>Graduates of the Urban Fire and Rescue Operations strand will also be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up and use appropriate equipment and techniques to assist the operational requirements of urban fire and rescue incidents, or aid incident reduction. - Safely operate breathing apparatus at an urban fire and rescue incident. <p>Graduates of the Vegetation strand will also be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up and use appropriate equipment and techniques to assist the operational requirements of vegetation fire and rescue incidents, or aid incident reduction. - Safely suppress fire at vegetation fire and rescue incidents using wet and dry firefighting methods.

Figure 6 Graduate profile example from New Zealand *Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Level 2)* with strands in *Airport, Urban Fire and Rescue Operations and Vegetation*⁶⁹

2) International Comparability

Providing an international comparison field in qualification templates presents an opportunity to describe similarities in qualifications for similar occupations abroad. It is used for comparison purposes only and does not mean that qualifications are considered equivalent. The international comparison field generally considers the country, institution, and qualification title. The process of adding or assessing international comparability to a qualification template is conducted during the qualification development process.

⁶⁹ New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), [Fire and Rescue Services](#), NZQA website, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024.

The inclusion of the international comparability field in the South African template is utilised as an opportunity for benchmarking, comparing the qualification to similar qualifications in at least two other countries (Figure 7). In the Indian context, international comparability is used as an ongoing qualification monitoring and evaluation tool to outline similar qualifications provided around the world.

Mandated consideration of the similarities and differences in qualifications for similar occupations is useful to these countries in supporting industry consideration of best practice. Although this exercise does not necessitate equivalency across international contexts, it may allow prospective users to make this assessment. Where differences are identified between countries, this field presents an opportunity to explain why and to justify differences in training approaches that may provide country-specific context.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY

This qualification compared to international best practice

- Comparability with leaders in the field:

The leaders in the field within this industry in terms of qualifications and provision have been considered to be the USA and the UK. Our industry has developed practice that blends these two approaches. However, because the US approach effectively integrates theory and practice and facilitates more open access to learners, which is more appropriate to the demands of users in our sector, our model leans more towards the US approach.

- Internationally recognised standards:

This qualification has been developed in compliance with the relevant parts of relevant South African National Standards, particularly 'Community Protection against Fire' (SANS 10090:2003). This SANS standard, in turn, gives as normative references seven National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards that are registered by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The most relevant NFPA standards for this qualification are NFPA 1001 and 472.

- Comparability with USA standards:

The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) is an international organisation that accredits over 100 Fire Service Providers internationally as a custodian of certification and quality assurance, basing its accreditation on NFPA standards. IFSAC (see also moderation options) was founded in the USA in 1980 to further standards and qualifications in fire fighting. It applies standards generated by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to measure competence. IFSAC attempts to keep fire fighting education and training at the cutting edge of knowledge, science and technology. Current membership includes the USA, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait and Qatar, as well as South Africa. Other countries that are not now members of IFSAC still benchmark their qualifications against the NFPA and recognise each other's qualifications. The National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications, based in the USA, facilitates recognition of qualifications from any country using NFPA standards as a base for their qualifications. Countries attempting to recruit fire fighters into trouble-spots in various parts of the world including Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC) in recent years have looked for people trained against the NFPA standards, which are widely recognised. This qualification 'Further Education and Training Certificate: Fire and Rescue Operations' has been benchmarked against, and includes, four NFPA certificates which deal with entry-level fire-fighter requirements, namely:

- Firefighter 1.
- Firefighter 2.
- Hazardous materials awareness.
- Hazardous materials operations.

These are based on NFPA standards 1001 and 472

This qualification's link to the NFPA standards:

After analysing the Southern African situation in the context of the SAQA regulations regarding qualifications, it was decided that the four international basic entry level certificates should be combined into minimum competence standards for all South African fire fighters, as a part of the entry level South African qualification. The accrediting body for IFSAC in Southern Africa is the Southern African Emergency Services Institute (SAESI). SAESI has given input into the scoping and development of the qualification and, as a result, IFSAC recognises the fact that this qualification includes the above-mentioned competencies.

Figure 6 South African international comparability excerpt from: *Further Education and Training Certificate: Fire and Rescue Operations (NQF Level 4)*⁷⁰

3) Review Timelines and Approaches

Five of the six benchmarked countries employ mandatory qualification review timeframes. In South Africa, for qualifications to be registered under the NQF, recommendations must be made by a specific Quality Council. Under this structure, the registration period of a qualification is either 3 or 5 years, depending on qualification type. At that point, the qualification must be reviewed before being re-registered. South Africa's differentiated qualification regulation system allows for different review timelines depending on the purpose of a qualification, which is a feature that may be of interest to the Public Safety and Government industry (example provided in Figure 7 below).

REGISTRATION START DATE	REGISTRATION END DATE
2018-07-01	2023-06-30

Figure 7 example of South Africa registration dates from the *Further Education and Training Certificate: Fire and Rescue Operations (NQF Level 4)*.⁷¹

⁷⁰ South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), [Fire and Rescue Operations](#), SAQA website, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024.

⁷¹ South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), [Fire and Rescue Operations](#), SAQA website, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024.

Remaining countries review:

New Zealand and Ireland:	Finland:	Scotland:
Every five years	When need is identified	Upon end of accreditation period (not specified)

Unit of competency template themes

The three unit of competency template themes are described in detail below.

1) Engagement with Core/Generic Skills

Core skills (also known as foundation skills) are predetermined skills essential for learner performance, such as reading and writing.⁷² All six countries engage in some way with core skills in their VET sector, whether that be through their templates, guidance material or relevant legislation. However, the way in which units of competency describe these skills varies considerably. On one end of the spectrum, countries such as Finland and South Africa include highly detailed and formally assessed performance criteria within each unit of competency. At the other end, New Zealand do not include core skills in their template. The foundation skills fields in the template for Scotland and India (Figure 8) is meant to provide additional context for both learners and training providers about the requirements to complete the course.

Skills (S) [Optional]	This field is optional however SSCs are strongly encouraged to define these fields
A. Core Skills/ Generic Skills	Writing Skills
	The user/ individual on the job needs to demonstrate: SA1. These must specifically relate to the NOS and the level of the QP SA2.
	Reading Skills
	The user/individual on the job needs to demonstrate: SA3. These must specifically relate to the NOS and the level of the QP SA4.
	Numeracy Skills
	The user/individual on the job needs to demonstrate: SA5. These must specifically relate to the NOS and the level of the QP SA6.
	Oral Communication (Listening and Speaking skills)
	The user/individual on the job needs to demonstrate: SA7. These must specifically relate to the NOS and the level of the QP SA8.
	Information Technology Skills
	The user/individual on the job needs to demonstrate: SA9. These must specifically relate to the NOS and the level of the QP SA10.

Figure 8 Indian example of core skills in the *National Occupational Standard Template*⁷³

⁷² Foundation skills are described in different ways in most international systems. This theme has been labelled Core/Generic Skills to account for the variety of labels utilised.

⁷³ National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), '[Manual for the development of National Occupation Standards](#)', NSDC, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024.

2) Alignment of Outcomes and Assessment

Alignment of outcomes and assessment means that an overall competency, outcome or element is broken down into its constituent parts, explaining exactly what skills and knowledge a learner must demonstrate to successfully complete a unit of competency.

Each of the countries researched utilise a competency-based template resembling the Australian unit of competency template. In all cases, an overall competency, outcome or element is broken down to explain exactly what skills and knowledge a learner must demonstrate to successfully complete the unit of competency. However, the countries structure their competencies differently:

- Australia, Scotland and New Zealand (Figure 9) list competencies (elements and performance criteria) in its own discrete section.
- South Africa and India provide additional context for each individual performance criteria, including a 'Range Statement' (similar to previous Range Statements in the Australian context), and a directly aligned assessment criterion.

This provides additional clarity as to how, and in what conditions, each unit of competency is to be assessed.

Hua o te ako Learning outcomes	Paearu aromatawai Assessment criteria
1. Plan material requirements for timber garden furniture.	a. Identify project components from documentation. b. Prepare cutting lists for projects.
2. Prepare components for timber garden furniture.	a. Mark out and cut components to size as outlined in cutting lists b. Machine components as outlined in project documentation.
3. Assemble and finish timber garden furniture.	a. Assemble project components as specified in documentation. b. Complete projects and work operations in accordance with workplace safety practices.

Figure 9 New Zealand example of assessment requirements aligned directly to the relevant learning outcome. Example taken from the 'Construct timber garden furniture as a BCATS project' unit within the 'Guidelines for approval and listing of skill standards'.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), [Sample Skill Standards](#), NZQA website, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024

3) Graded Competencies

Several countries use a graded system of assessment for units of competency. The grading mechanism varies between countries, but can be grouped as follows:

<p>Numerically: Assessed on a rubric (Finland) or based on weighted assessment marks (India). Example provided below in Figure 10.</p>	<p>Nominally: Assessed on a nominal scale, such as 'Pass', 'Merit' and 'Distinction'. May additionally be mapped to numerical grades. (Ireland, New Zealand).</p>	<p>Optionally: Graded assessments exist only for specific qualifications, and only with endorsement from industry-sector stakeholders in the qualification development process (New Zealand)</p>
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In Australia, the structure of the units of competency that comprise qualifications and the corresponding lack of a system of graded assessment implies an outcome, whereby a learner either achieves or does not achieve a competency. Therefore, to attain a qualification, a learner must achieve competency in all constitutive units of competency. Uniquely, in the New Zealand system, competency is graded on a *Not Achieved/Achieved/Merit/Excellence* scale. In the template, the section '*Minimum Standard of Achievement and Standards for Grade Endorsement*' allows a qualification developer to detail additional requirements for attaining a qualification beyond achievement of the competencies. This is another feature that may be of interest to the Public Safety and Government industry in alignment to the proposed qualification Purpose Models.

Assessment	
The student	
Satisfactory 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs help in routine situations from time to time acts appropriately in familiar interactive situations knows some basic concepts and information of the subfield uses basic knowledge in an inflexible way assesses their performance
Satisfactory 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainly acts independently in routine situations acts collaboratively in familiar interactive situations knows the key concepts and information of the subfield uses basic knowledge appropriately assesses their performance and recognises their strengths and development areas
Good 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acts independently in routine situations acts collaboratively in usual interactive situations solves usual problem situations masters the key concepts and information of the subfield uses knowledge diversely assesses their performance and suggests ways to develop their activities
Good 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acts independently in routine and varying situations acts collaboratively and constructively in usual interactive situations solves problem situations using diverse methods masters the concepts and information of the subfield and recognises special features related to it applies knowledge diversely and with justifications assesses their performance realistically and recognises their strengths and development areas
Excellent 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acts independently and systematically in routine and varying situations acts collaboratively and constructively in varying interactive situations solves problem situations in diverse ways and makes development proposals masters the concepts and information of the subfield broadly and in depth applies knowledge diversely, in a justified and critical manner assesses their performance realistically and suggests justified solutions to develop their competence

Figure 10 Example of a graded competency scale from Finland. Example taken from the *Citizenship and working life unit*⁷⁵

⁷⁵ eRequirements, [Vocational qualification in Horticulture](#), website, n.d., accessed 1 August 2024

Collation and analysis of stakeholder observations

All six qualification and unit of competency template themes were tested in stakeholder consultation with the Public Safety and Government industry.

Stakeholder consultation sessions were designed to present the template themes, test acceptance and suitability of alternative template characteristics. They were further used to discuss how the Purpose Model classification approach proposed by the QRDG may support alternative templating and gather intelligence on the current suitability of Australian templating.

At each consultation session the three qualification template themes and three unit of competency template themes were presented for discussion in a focus group setting.

The collective observations towards the themes were assessed using the collective agreement scale (Figure 11).



Figure 11 Collective Agreement Scale

Overall, there was no theme that was rated as 'generally favourable.' Four of the six themes were rated as 'Mixed (divided opinion)', highlighting themes that could be an area of focus for future reforms. Two of the six themes were rated as 'Generally unfavourable'. A collective summary of stakeholder observations towards each of the six template themes is presented in the following two sections.

Qualification template themes

1) Consultation observations: *Graduate Profiles*

Stakeholders highlighted that Graduate Profiles are already implicit in unit of competency titles and learning outcomes. It was identified that Graduate Profiles could aid in the transition of employees into other industries by clearly summarising graduate outcomes in a way that is easily understood by prospective employers. Stakeholders generally recognised the usefulness of Graduate Profiles within Public Safety and Government, though it was agreed they would be of limited value to trainers and assessors.

There were two prevailing use-cases identified for graduate profiles:

- To develop industry consensus on expected graduate outcomes and ensure consistency both internally and between training providers.
- To better facilitate the transition of employees into other industries, by clearly summarising the key graduate outcomes in a way that is easily understood by other employers.

2) Consultation observations: *International Comparability*

Stakeholders observed the value for learners in understanding where a completed qualification might map in comparison to other countries, especially in inspiring international mobility to pursue employment. For employers, it may provide support to a more streamlined international mapping system when employing persons with overseas qualifications. Stakeholders raised uncertainty regarding implementation, governance roles and responsibilities, and maintenance of international comparisons within qualification templates.

3) Consultation observations: *Review Timelines and Approaches*

Stakeholders noted that, within Public Safety and Government sectors, review of qualifications are largely already subject to robust risk-based review frameworks. Stakeholders discussed that, in future, the requirement to review qualifications could correspond to the proposed Purpose Model classification of a particular qualification. There was general agreement amongst stakeholders that the current approach to qualification review is fit for purpose in the Public Safety and Government industry.

Unit of competency template themes

1) Consultation observations: Engagement with Core/Generic Skills

Stakeholders expressed mixed observations on the usefulness of standardisation and explicit detail in articulating foundation skills. There was discussion that any upheaval of the field would increase assessment requirements and the burden on RTOs. Fire and Emergency Services stakeholders noted that increased assessment requirements could be counterproductive for volunteer participation in the workforce. From a holistic learner perspective, stakeholders observed that improved clarity on foundation skills could assist in identifying language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills shortfalls in learners.

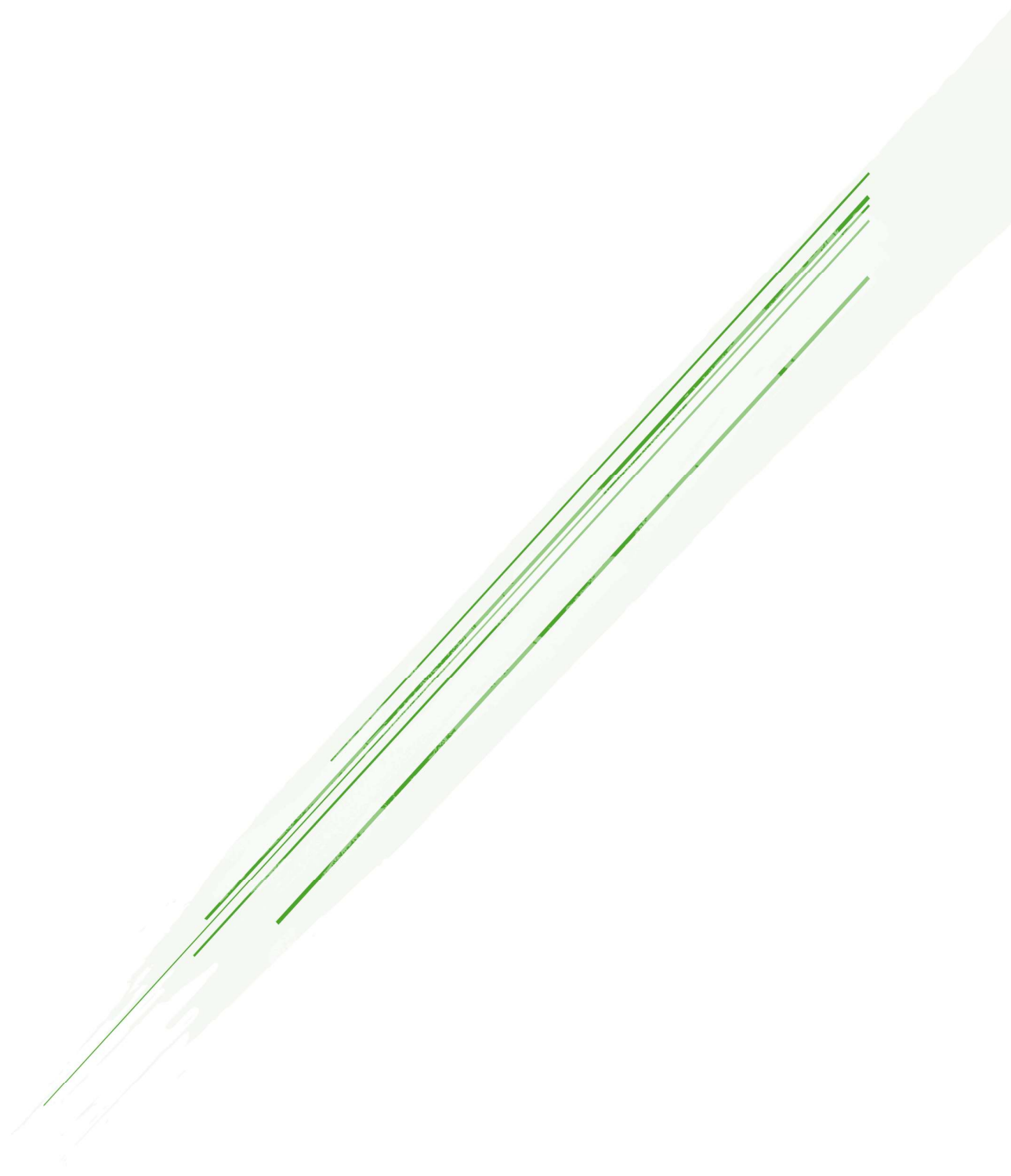
2) Consultation observations: Alignment of Outcomes and Assessment

Stakeholders generally agreed that unit of competency templates could be strengthened by a clearer connection between performance criteria and assessment evidence. Industry-sector RTOs identified that this would be helpful for ensuring learners weren't over-assessed, and in reducing the amount of work required to appropriately develop assessment guidance and materials. Whilst improvements in synergising performance criteria and assessment were seen as viable, stakeholders did not express an overwhelming desire for such changes.

3) Consultation observations: Graded Competencies

Stakeholders identified challenges relating to operational health and safety and public perception in this approach, particularly for high-risk occupations within industries such as Police, Defence, and Fire and Emergency Services. Stakeholders representing employee bodies noted that a graded system may have undesirable, and potentially unfair, effects on industrial instruments for specific industry-sectors. However, it was noted that the inclusion of graded competencies may be more appropriate for certain Purpose Model classifications, particularly those designated as skills transferrable, as these qualifications are not tied to specific occupations or industrial instruments.

Findings



As a result of research and consultation efforts, the key finding regarding the viability of templates as a mechanism for improving the delivery of training in the Public Safety and Government industry is that current templates are fit-for-purpose.

Templates are fit-for-purpose: The Qualification Reform work seeks to streamline the current VET system and ensure qualifications are more flexible. Templates may not be the appropriate lever to meet these objectives.

Templates are fit-for-purpose

It was observed through consultation that the Australian qualification and unit of competency templates are generally considered fit-for-purpose. While there were suggestions for improvements, as discussed above, these proposed changes are not likely to significantly improve the uptake, utility or delivery of training in the Public Safety and Government industry. As such, templates may not be the appropriate target to achieve the stated objectives of Qualification Reform.

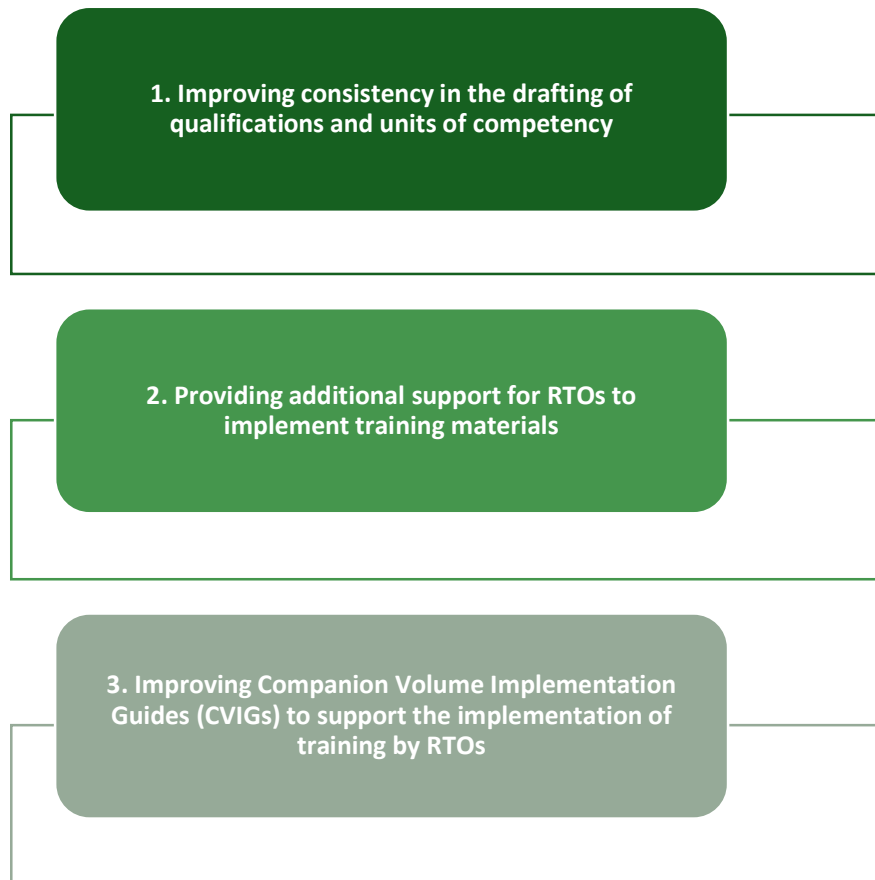
By taking a first-principles approach and examining the framework for the development of qualifications within the Australian VET system, it was noted that templates are the fundamental building blocks of training design and delivery. During consultations it was discussed that, historically, templates are considered the most tangible aspect of training design and delivery and, as such, tend to be consistently earmarked as the focus area for VET changes. However, the templates are broadly suitable in their level of prescriptiveness, are well understood by industry, and are effectively implemented by the RTOs that deliver the training.

Stakeholders also noted the significant impost on time and resources that would be caused by any amendments to the templates. References were made to the introduction of the new templates within the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021*,⁷⁶ which impacted training development and delivery staff who were required to rapidly update relevant units of competency within tight timeframes. Based on this, stakeholders reiterated that it was crucial to consider any potential benefits of modifications to templates against the added burden on time and resources. Given the lack of unanimity in stakeholder responses during consultation, templates are not likely to be an appropriate mechanism to affect positive change for the Public Safety and Government industry.

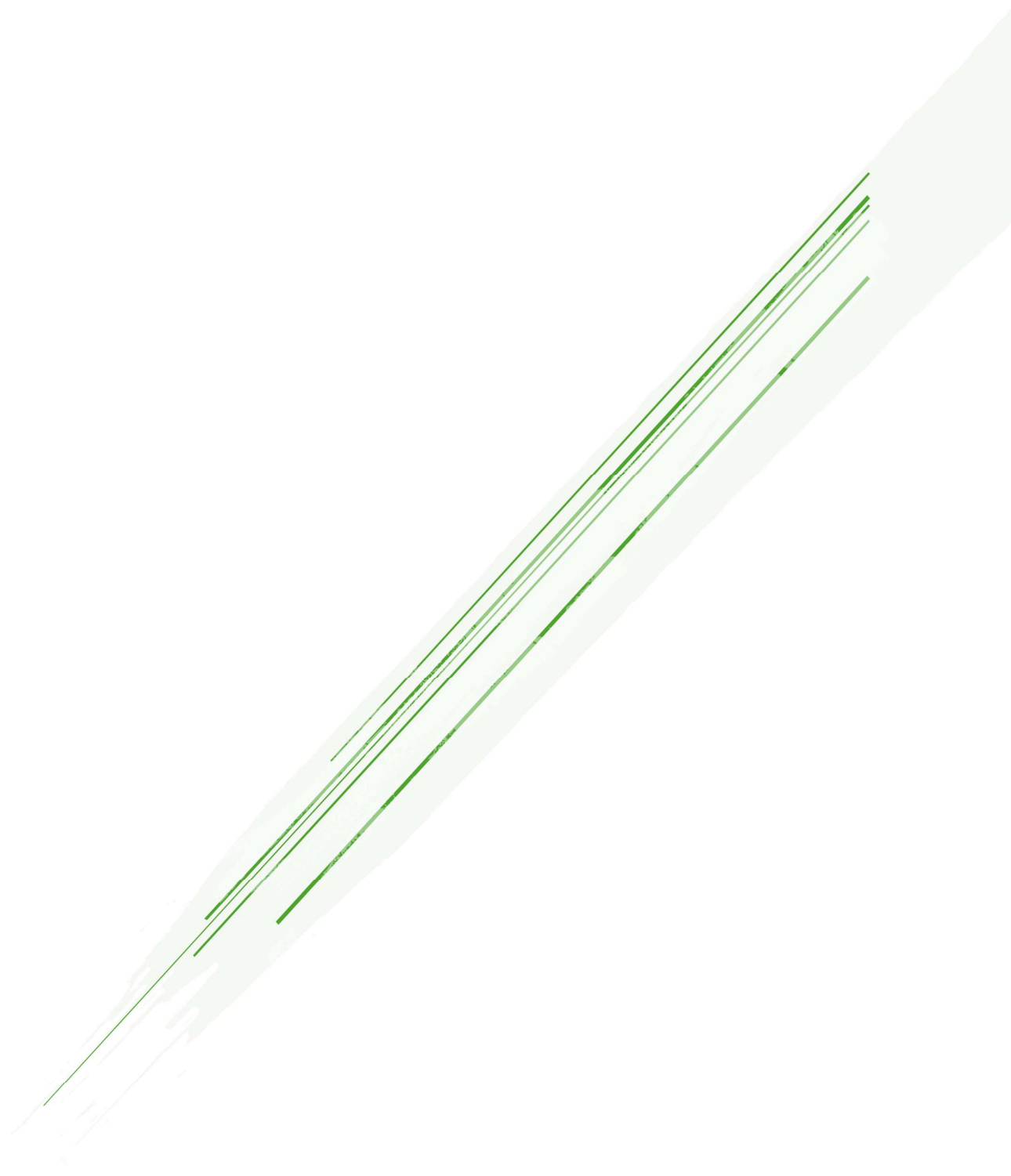
⁷⁶ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

Alternative levers to better support the delivery of training

Through consultation it was identified that there may be alternative ways to better support the delivery of quality training. Discussions with stakeholders highlighted three key actions that will result in better support for the delivery and uptake of training:



Actions





Improving consistency in the drafting of qualifications and units of competency

It was identified that the key challenge with the design and implementation of training based on qualification and unit of competency templates is with the consistency of drafting, not the structure of templates. The fields embedded in the templates were considered fit-for-purpose, however, it was noted that there is considerable variability in the writing style, clarity and prescriptiveness of outcomes and assessment conditions, all of which contribute to challenges with the interpretation and implementation of training.

An example raised by industry-sector stakeholders during consultation was the variance in how assessment conditions are articulated in units of competency, particularly that the level of specificity in certain units of competency makes training delivery difficult. This is often the case when reference is made to specific tools, technologies, or systems that are not universally available, or that are not approved for use by some organisations. Instead of delivering such a unit of competency, RTOs may instead look toward similar units within the VET system that are drafted in a more accessible way. This has downstream impacts on uptake, as units of competency that may otherwise satisfy a distinct industry need may be under-utilised if they are deemed to be over-prescriptive.

In a similar vein, another complexity referenced during consultation was the large discrepancy in the number of elements, performance criteria and evidence requirements between units of competency. While it was not suggested that a unit of competency should be constrained to a certain number of elements, performance criteria or pieces of knowledge and performance evidence, stakeholders voiced that the training development process encouraged the addition of new criteria and evidence requirements, with limited reflection on whether existing criteria were still relevant or necessary. This additive process was perceived to be inefficient, disadvantageous for the flexibility and transferability of units, and onerous on trainers and assessors.

Stakeholders also noted that, were the Australian VET system to proceed with the purpose-based classification of qualifications, consideration should be given to the development of resources and guidance documents relevant to each distinct purpose.

It was suggested that there may be distinct drafting requirements for qualifications and units of competency based on the Purpose Model classification of a qualification, as the level of detail and rigidity would depend on the desired qualification outcomes. For example, an occupation-specific qualification containing units of competency with licensing requirements may require the drafting of multiple, highly specific performance criteria and prescriptive assessment conditions, whereas a skills transferrable qualification may be drafted with more flexibility.

Achieving standardisation in the drafting of qualifications and units of competency may improve the design and implementation of training and ensure that unit enrolment figures better reflect industry needs, as opposed to reflecting challenges with training delivery.

Future reforms may look to refine the existing guidance and practices relating to the drafting of qualifications and units of competency. This may involve collaboration across JSCs, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, ASQA and RTOs to develop additional resources, guidance or assurance processes to ensure that unit of competency and qualification content is standardised both within and across training packages. Similarly, there may be scope for this guidance to be developed specific to qualifications that falls within one of the three Purpose Models. For example, it may be more suitable to provide increased guidance on how assessments are to be developed for qualifications that are considered occupation-specific. Additionally, it may be useful to develop resources that inform RTOs of how training development and reviews are undertaken, to better inform them of the process and policy framework under which this is done, and ways in which they can engage in this work in the future.



Providing additional support for RTOs to implement training materials

The majority of feedback collected from RTOs indicated that translating units of competency into training materials for delivery to learners is both time and resource intensive. Any reform should consider providing additional resources and support to RTOs when developing training resources and delivering the implementation of training.



Improving Companion Volume Implementation Guides (CVIGs) to support the implementation of training by RTOs

It was consistently reported during consultation that the CVIG is heavily underutilised by RTOs. The reasons identified by stakeholders included:

- Difficulty finding the relevant CVIG online
- Inclusion of superfluous and irrelevant information
- Lack of specific information for delivering qualifications within a training package, or when delivering individual units of competency.

The stated purpose of CVIGs is to assist assessors, trainers and RTOs to deliver nationally endorsed training packages. Ideally, this is done by bridging the gap between the material provided in qualification and unit of competency documentation, and the development and implementation of training materials by RTOs. Practically, as CVIGs are developed at the training package level, they often lack the contextual information that is relevant to the delivery of each individual unit of competency. Often, the CVIGs reiterate the *Standards for RTOs*, and provide a high-level regulatory overview, as opposed to direct guidance that may support the construction of course materials.

Overall, the fragmented structure of the CVIGs, coupled with the lack of relevant and practical information, has resulted in low levels of CVIG usage within the Public Safety and Government industry. Future reforms may consider the redesign of existing CVIGs, their alignment with other industry-sector specific guidance materials, and the inclusion of relevant and specific guidance that will provide stronger support for the implementation of training by RTOs.

Appendices

Appendix A

Tables A1 and A2 below present abridged versions of the thematic analysis outcomes. These outcomes informed the template themes that were taken to consultation.

Table A1 Qualification fields arranged into themes with specific number of appearances (count) across all six international systems. Shaded green rows represent the themes chosen

Theme	Field	Count	International observations
Graduate Profiles	Graduate Profile	3	Finland, New Zealand, South Africa,
	Occupational Profile Mapping	1	Ireland
	Job Description field (similar to graduate profile or occupation mapping)	1	India
International comparability	International Comparability	2	South Africa, India
Review timeline and approaches	Mandatory review date	1	New Zealand
	Accreditation end date	1	Scotland
	Registration dates (varies depending on qual type)	1	South Africa
	Date of validity (review date)	1	Finland
	Accreditation period	1	Scotland
Use of credits	Credits	2	Ireland, New Zealand
	Minimum Credits	1	South Africa
Industry involvement	Stakeholder Involvement in Programme Development	1	Ireland
	Evidence of Demand for the Programme	1	Ireland
	Comparison with Similar Programmes (National Comparability)	1	Ireland
Assessment detail	Assessment Techniques	1	Ireland
	Programme Summative Assessment Strategy	1	Ireland
	Assessment Strategy	1	South Africa
	Graded competency	1	New Zealand
	Additional Alignment of outcomes to assessment criteria	1	South Africa
Skilling/outcome details	Core Skills Signposting	1	Scotland

	Exit Level Outcomes	1	South Africa
	Critical Cross-field outcomes	1	South Africa
	'Progression from the qualification' section outlines professional and academic pathways for learners	1	India
	Core Skills template is encouraged (Foundation Skills)	1	India
Qualification detail	Qualification specifications	1	New Zealand
	NQF level	1	Finland
	Underlying VET values	1	Finland
	Interpretive qualification structure with limited guidance on entry requirements pre-requisites and articulation pathways.	1	Finland

Table A2 Unit of competency fields arranged into themes with specific number of appearances (count) across all six international systems. Highlighted rows represent the themes chosen

Theme	Field	Count	International observations
Graded competencies	Graded competency	4	Finland, India, Ireland, New Zealand
Alignment of outcomes and assessment	Assessment Description and weighting	1	Ireland
	No Performance or knowledge evidence requirements	1	New Zealand
	Assessment is not within units of competency documentation.	1	Scotland
	There is no separate Performance and Knowledge evidence	1	Scotland
	Assessments aligned to outcomes	1	South Africa
	No differentiation between outcomes and performance criteria.	1	South Africa
	'Knowledge and Understanding' requirements are aligned to Outcomes and Performance Criteria	1	India
Engagement with core/generic skills	No explicit foundation skills	1	New Zealand
	Critical Cross-field Outcomes	1	South Africa
	Essential Embedded Knowledge (Foundation Skills)	1	South Africa
	Learning Assumed to be in Place and Recognition of Prior Learning (Foundation Skills)	1	South Africa
	Core Skills Signposting	1	Scotland
	Foundation Skills are assessed as a discrete unit within a qualification.	1	Finland
Governance detail	Registration start and end date	1	South Africa
Use of credits	Use of credits	3	Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa
Unit of competency detail	Learning Outcomes (Additional detail required in Irish template)	1	Ireland
	Indicative Content (optional)	1	New Zealand
	NQF level	2	New Zealand, South Africa
	Relevant Occupations	1	Scotland
	Keywords	1	Scotland

Appendix B

Questions prepared for prompting discussion during consultations.

<u>Qualification template themes</u>	<u>Unit of competency template themes</u>
<p>Graduate Profiles</p> <p>Is there general consensus, in YOUR specific industry, for what high-level skills, knowledge and tasks a graduate should be capable of demonstrating at the qualification level? If not, what are the key points of difference?</p> <p>Would the inclusion of a qualification-level graduate profile make employee mobility between areas/jurisdictions easier?</p>	<p>Engagement with Core/Generic Skills</p> <p>For the majority of units, the default statement is that ‘Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.’</p> <p>Are there particular core skills that pose a challenge to learners in YOUR industry?</p> <p>Would it be useful for prospective learners in YOUR industry to have the required skills more clearly articulated in the course documentation?</p>
<p>International Comparability</p> <p>In YOUR specific industry, to what degree are qualifications benchmarked or compared against international examples?</p> <p>How does this inform the design process?</p>	<p>Alignment of assessments and outcomes</p> <p>A more recent change to the Australian templates has seen the Assessment Requirements separated into a new document. Has this had any impact on training development or delivery?</p> <p>Would it simplify or provide more value to have the assessments aligned directly to the elements and performance criteria?</p>
<p>Review Timelines and Approaches</p> <p>Certain industries in Australia (such as Policing) do have mandatory review timelines for their training products. Are there any guidelines in YOUR industry for when a review takes place?</p> <p>Would it be beneficial to implement mandatory timelines to ensure all TPs are reviewed appropriately?</p>	<p>Graded competency</p> <p>Would it be useful or relevant to YOUR industry to grade the competencies of a learner, beyond a competent/not yet competent binary?</p> <p>Would it add value to, as in New Zealand, have the option of including a grade for certain qualifications?</p>

Qualification template themes

Unit of competency template themes

General

Does anybody here have experience with other international VET systems?

If any, what changes would you make to the qualification/Unit of competency templates?

What other areas of focus within the VET system could add value to the Public Safety and Government industry?

Appendix C

C.1 Finland qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with Finland's qualification template (Table C1). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in Finland's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C1 Australia-Finland qualification template comparison

Australia ⁷⁷	Finland ⁷⁸	Outcome	Description ⁷⁹
Overview			
Name of Qualification (Title)	Name of Qualification (Title)	Aln	
Qualification Code	Diary Number of Regulation	Aln	
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Aln	
Qualification Level	Degrees and Other Competencies Frame of Reference	Aln	
	Date of the Regulation	Int	
	Valid From (date)	Int	
	Regulation on Deviating from the Regulation Requirements (if relevant)	Int	Description of how the qualification deviates from VET requirements outlined in Finnish legislation.
	Underlying VET Values	Int	Description of how each qualification develops individuals, working life, and society.
	Relevant Legislation	Int	Description of how the qualification aligns to relevant government policy.
	Reasons for Placement on NQF Level	Int*	This justifies why each unit (and qualification) has been placed at the certain NQF level

⁷⁷ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

⁷⁸ A translated example was used for the Finland Qualification template; ePerusteet, [Vocational Qualification in Forestry OPH-2882-2023: Information](#), ePerusteet website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁷⁹ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	Competences Acquired After Completion	Aln*	This field functions similarly to a graduate profile.
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	Aln	
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Aln	
	Work Tasks that can be Executed	Int*	This field also functions as a graduate profile. Outline specific occupations and their relevant job tasks that a successful learner will be capable of completing.
	Deviation from Professional Skills Requirements or Competence Goals	Int	Explains any deviation from any of the skills or knowledge requirements outlined in the qualification.
Course Description		Aus	
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs		Aus	
Review for Renewal of Accreditation		Aus	
Course Guidelines, Requirements, and Articulation			
Course Structure	Composition of Qualification	Aln	
Entry Requirements	Entry Requirements	Aln*	Entry requirements are not explicit to the qualification but are individualised upon application to the course. National policy mandates how learners are required to engage with the education system. For example, a year 12 completer is not eligible to undertake a preparatory VET course. Responsibility of the VET provider to match the learner with an appropriate qualification based on their needs. Each learner will submit an application to the provider who will direct the student to the appropriate course.
Pathways and Articulation	Eligibility for Post-graduate Studies	Aln	
Foundation Skills		Aus	Appears at the unit level for Finnish qualifications.
Assessment			
Assessment Strategy	Competence Assessment	Aln*	National policy states that each learner must collaborate with the provider to develop a Personal Competence Development Plan (PCDP). Each PCDP will assess prior learning, define appropriate assessment strategies (including assessment methods and delivery modes), and will detail the guidance and support measures required for that learner.

Assessor Competencies	Assessor Competencies	Aln	National legislation outlines requirements for assessors. This is not defined at a qualification or unit level.
Delivery Modes	Delivery Modes	Aln*	Included in the PCDP
	Recognition of Prior Learning	Int*	Included in the PCDP
	Rating Scale	Int*	Explanation of how the degree result is rated overall – Learner score, e.g., 1 through to 5.
	Average Weighting by Skill Points	Int	Explanation of how units are weighted to the overall score.
	Adjustments to Competence Assessments	Int	Individual consideration or additional support required for each learner.
Resources		Aus	
Supplementary Information			
	Notes	Int	
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation		Aus	Finland has no mandatory review at the qualification level
Total number of Aln fields		13	
Total number of Int fields		13	
Total number of Aus fields		6	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		+7	

C.2 Finland unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's unit of competency template with Finland's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C2). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in Finland's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C2 Australia-Finland unit of competency template comparison

Australia ⁸⁰		Finland ⁸¹	Outcome	Description ⁸²
Overview				
Unit Code		Unit Code	Aln	
Unit Title		Unit Title	Aln	
		Scope of Competency	Int	Aligned to credits/competence points, or time equivalent.
		Organiser(s)	Int	The organiser of the training
		Estimated Number of Learners Completing	Int	
		Links	Int	Possible links to resources and learning materials
Outcomes and Explanations				
Elements	Performance Criteria	Set of Competencies	Aln	This field is equivalent to elements. Not named as set of competencies in the qualification register however.
Range of Conditions		Methods of Demonstrating Competence	Aln	Explains the environment in which the competencies can be demonstrated.
		Regulatory Basis	Int	Does the unit align to a particular industry standard/licence regulation.
		Quality Assurance System	Int	Describes how the unit is reviewed and monitored for quality.
		Tasks for which the Set of Skills Prepares	Int*	The list of work tasks that a successful learner can complete

⁸⁰ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

⁸¹ ePerusteet, [Undergraduate degree in forestry OPH-2882-2023: Sustainable forest management and utilisation](#), ePerusteet website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁸² A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

Application		Aus	Not presented at the unit level.
Competency Field		Aus	Not presented at the unit level.
Unit Sector		Aus	Not presented at the unit level.
Skills and Knowledge			
Foundation Skills	Foundation Skills	Aln*	Foundation skills are built into common units, which form the basis of all qualifications in the Finnish VET system. These skills are not assessed discretely, they are integrated into the assessment of qualification-specific competencies.
Unit Mapping Information		Aus	
Prerequisite Unit		Aus	
Assessment			
Performance Evidence	Competence Requirements	Aln*	Performance evidence and knowledge evidence are integrated into what Finland terms.
Knowledge Evidence	Competence Requirements	Aln*	
Assessment Conditions	Methods of Demonstrating Competence	Aln*	Environment/conditions that learners would be required to demonstrate each competency.
	Assessment Matrix	Int*	Assessments are graded on a scale, generally between 1 and 5 (satisfactory to excellent).
Total number of Aln fields		8	
Total number of Int fields		8	
Total number of Aus fields		5	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		+3	

C.3 India qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with India's qualification template (Table C3). The comparison table details field that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in India's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C3 Australia-India qualification template comparison

Australia ⁸³	India ⁸⁴	Outcome	Description ⁸⁵
Overview Fields			
Name of Qualification (Title)	Name of Qualification (Title)	Aln	
Qualification Code	Qualification Code	Aln	
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Volume of Training	Aln	
Qualification Level	Qualification Level	Aln	
	NCO Code and Occupation	Int	Occupation code on the Indian National Classification of Occupations (similar to ANZSCO)
	Nature and Purpose of the Qualification	Int	'Nature' refers to short- or long-term qualifications.
	Awarding Body	Int	Institutions that can award the qualification.

⁸³ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

⁸⁴ National Institute of Electronics and Information technology (NIELIT), [NSQF Qualification File](#), NIELIT website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁸⁵ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	Accrediting Body	Int	Organisation that accredits providers (or awarding bodies) to deliver the course.
	Aligned Occupations	Int	Range of occupation to which the qualification gives access.
	Job Description of the Occupation	Int*	Outlines the key tasks related to the aligned occupation(s)
	Evidence of Level	Int	The NSQF domains are aligned to each unit/outcome, and it is described how each outcome relates to the level.
Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature and Purpose Components 	Aln	
Course Description	Course Description	Aln	Course description content is covered in the 'Nature and purpose' and 'Components' fields.
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Evidence of Need	Aln	
Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Date of Planned Review of the Qualification	Aln	
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing requirements Statutory and Regulatory Requirements of the Relevant Sector 	Aln	
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)		Aus	
Course Guidelines, Requirements, and Articulation			
Course Structure	Formal structure of the Qualification	Aln	Potential options for this field include 'mandatory' or 'optional'. The learning hours and level of each unit must also be defined in his field.
Entry Requirements	Entry Requirements	Aln	

Pathways and Articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression from the Qualification Evidence of Progression 	Aln*	Must show career map here to reflect the clear occupational progression.
	Arrangements for the Recognition of Prior Learning	Int	Describes the processes in place that providers follow to recognise prior learning or training.
Foundation Skills		Aus	
Assessment			
Assessment Strategy	Assessment Strategy	Aln	
Resources	Indicative List of Training Tools	Aln	
	Body/Bodies that will Carry out the Assessment	Int	The institution/organisation that will deliver the assessments.
	How will RPL Assessment be Managed and who will Carry it Out	Int	The specific body and methods used to manage the recognition of prior learning or training.
Assessor Competencies		Aus	
Delivery Modes		Aus	
Supplementary Information			
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation	Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation	Aln	
	International Comparability	Int	Outlines similar qualifications provided around the world.
	Government Endorsement/Approval	Int	Government body that has approved the qualification.

	Evidence of Non-duplication of Qualifications	Int	Explanation on how existing qualifications do not meet the needs addressed by the new qualification.
Total number of In fields		15	
Total number of Int fields		13	
Total number of Aus fields		4	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		<i>+9</i>	

C.4 India unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's unit of competency template with India's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C4). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), are exclusively included in Australia's unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in India's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C4 Australia-India unit of competency template comparison

Australia ⁸⁶		India ⁸⁷		Outcome	Description ⁸⁸
Overview Fields					
Unit Code		Unit Code		Aln	
Unit Title		Unit Title		Aln	
Outcomes and Explanations					
Application		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description Scope 		Aln	
Elements	Performance Criteria	Elements	Performance Criteria	Aln*	Each element is aligned to performance criteria and knowledge and understanding criteria. Each criterion is broken further into organisational context and technical knowledge.
Range of Conditions		Range of Conditions		Aln	
Competency Field				Aus	

⁸⁶ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

⁸⁷ National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), [Manual for the development of National Occupational Standards and Qualifications Packs Draft 8](#), NSDC website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁸⁸ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

Unit Sector		Aus	
Skills and Knowledge			
Foundation Skills	Core/Generic Skills and Professional Skills	Aln	
Unit Mapping Information		Aus	
Prerequisite Unit		Aus	
Assessment			
Performance Evidence	Assessable Outcomes	Aln*	Assessable outcomes are aligned directly to the relevant performance criteria
Knowledge Evidence	Assessable Outcomes	Aln*	Assessable outcomes are aligned directly to the relevant knowledge criteria.
Assessment Conditions	Assessment Conditions	Aln	Related to the allocation of knowledge or practical assessment
Total number of Aln fields		9	
Total number of Int fields		0	
Total number of Aus fields		4	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		-4	

C.5 Ireland qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with Ireland's qualification template (Table C5). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in Ireland's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C5 Australia-Ireland qualification template comparison

Australia ⁸⁹	Ireland ⁹⁰	Outcome	Description ⁹¹
Overview Fields			
Name of Qualification (title)	Name of Programme / Programme Title	Aln	
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Nominal Duration Of Course (hours)	Aln	
Qualification Level	NFQ Level	Aln	
	Provider Details	Int	
	Award Title	Int	Name of a specific award embedded within a larger programme.
	Award Code (and Award Class)	Int	Award code is the unique identifier of the qualification. Award class is the type of qualification (e.g., major, special purpose, supplemental, and minor).
	ISCED Code	Int	Four-digit <i>International Standard Classification of Education</i>

⁸⁹ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

⁹⁰ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), *Programme Validation Descriptor: For programme(s) leading to FET CAS Major, Special Purpose and Supplemental Award(s) of more than 30 credits*, QQI, 2024.

⁹¹ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	FET Credits	Int	Further education and training credits. Can be assigned as total for the qualification or maximum per year.
	Versions	Int	Full-time or part-time.
	Target Learner Group	Int	Description for who the qualification is aimed at.
Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	Program Objectives	Aln	
Course Description	Brief Synopsis	Aln	
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Education and Training Needs Met by the Programme	Aln	
Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Aln	Mandatory 5 years – Policy driven.
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	External Professional Licencing and/or Registration of the Programme	Aln	Additional section including process for approval.
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	External Licencing/Registration Body Approval	Aln	
	Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs)	Int	This field performs the same function as a graduate profile.
	Stakeholder Involvement in Programme Development	Int*	Describes the processes and outcomes of stakeholder engagement in the design of the programme.
	Comparison with Similar Programmes	Int*	Outlines how the programme compares with other provider's programmes leading to the same or similar award.
	Evidence of Demand for the Programme	Int*	Sets out evidence of the demand for the learner program. This may include research undertaken among current and prospective learners as well as relevant national skills reports and data.

Skills and Knowledge			
Foundation Skills	Entry Requirements	Aln	
Course Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded Programs • Modules • Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs) 	Aln	All three fields listed here contain information that, taken together, form a course structure.
Entry Requirements	Entry Criteria and Procedures for the Programme	Aln	Very detailed, includes minimum requirements for: general learning, discipline-specific learning, experiential learning, language, mathematics, criteria for passing interview, enrolment in online programme.
Pathways and Articulation	Transfer and Progression	Aln	
	Recognition of Prior Learning	Int	The programme-specific entry requirements and procedures.
	Proposed Learner Numbers	Int	Estimated or projected numbers alongside evidence of market research.
	Special Requirements	Int	This refers to particular resources, physical, technological or otherwise, which are required for this programme over and above what would normally be required (classrooms and virtual learning environment).
	Support for International Learners (where applicable)	Int	Outline the supports in place to ensure the effective participation of international learners in the programme.
	Alignment of the Programme with the Professional / Occupational Profile	Int*	Explains how the qualification translates to a specific occupation. Detail any alignment of the programme to a professional or occupational profile.
Assessment			

Assessment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Techniques Programme Summative Assessment Strategy 	Aln*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment techniques include: Continuous Assessment, Exams, Project, Practical Skills Demonstration, and Work-based. Explanation of the assessment strategy for the programme as a whole and demonstration that it is constructively aligned with the MIPLOs.
Delivery Modes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Delivery Modes Teaching and Learning Modalities 	Aln	<p>Programme delivery modes – includes face-to-face, blended, online or apprenticeships.</p> <p>Teaching and learning modalities – The manner in which the qualification content is delivered (e.g., face-to-face, hybrid, online).</p>
Resources	Physical and or Digital Resources	Aln	Description of physical and digital resource requirements, along with physical premises and other premise arrangements.
Assessor Competencies	Programme Staff	Aln	Must outline a summary of required qualifications and experience for all teaching staff.
Supplementary Information			
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation	Quality Assurance of Professional Standards	Aln	Describes the programme-specific arrangements for monitoring progress and guiding, informing, and caring for learners.
Total number of Aln fields		18	
Total number of Int fields		16	
Total number of Aus fields		0	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		<i>+16</i>	

C.6 Ireland unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's unit of competency template with Ireland's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C6). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in Ireland's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C6 Australia-Ireland unit of competency template comparison

Australia ⁹²	Ireland ⁹³	Outcome	Description ⁹⁴
Overview Fields			
Unit Code	Unit Code	Aln	
Unit Title	Unit Title	Aln	
	Award Type	Int	
	Award Level	Int	
	Credit Value	Int	
Outcomes and Explanations			
Application	Purpose	Aln	Brief statement of the intentions of the unit.

⁹² Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

⁹³ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Programme Validation Descriptor: For programme(s) of less than 60 credits leading to FET CAS Minor Award(s), QQI, 2024.

⁹⁴ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory

Elements	Performance Criteria	Learning Outcomes	Aln*	This field is highly detailed and contextualised. Covers off on Range of Conditions.
Range of Conditions		Learning Outcomes	Aln	
		Supporting Documentation	Int	A list of relevant legislation, internal policy, and health and safety documents.
		Recognition of Prior Learning	Int	Guidance for the assessment of recognising prior learning.
Competency Field			Aus	
Unit Sector			Aus	
Skills and Knowledge				
Prerequisite Unit		Access	Aln	Defines any prerequisite knowledge, skills, and other abilities required to begin the unit. This includes foundation skills.
		Transfer	Int	Similar to describing the process of articulation.
Foundation Skills			Aus	
Unit Mapping Information			Aus	
Assessment				
Assessment Conditions		Specific Validation Requirements	Aln	Defines the conditions that a provider must meet in order to successfully assess the learning materials.
		Assessment General Information	Int	A broad overview of how further education and training assessment are conducted.

	Assessment Techniques	Int	The specific breakdown of how assessments will be undertaken. For example, 70% skills demonstration, 30% written examination.
	Assessment Description and Weighting	Int*	Prescription of the assessment methods and the weighting of each competency to the overall grade. Assessment type is linked to learning outcome. Assessed in accordance with the MIMLOs.
	Grading	Int*	Overall unit grade documented as either Pass, merit, distinction.
Performance Evidence		Aus	
Knowledge Evidence		Aus	
Total number of In fields		7	
Total number of Int fields		10	
Total number of Aus fields		6	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		<i>+4</i>	

C.7 New Zealand qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with New Zealand's qualification template (Table C7). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), are exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in New Zealand's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C7 Australia-New Zealand qualification template comparison

Australia ⁹⁵	New Zealand ⁹⁶	Outcome	Description ⁹⁷
Overview Fields			
Name of Qualification (Title)	Name of Qualification (Title)	Aln	Unique qualification title as per naming guidelines.
Qualification Type	Qualification Type	Aln	The type of qualification e.g National Certificate, Diploma.
Qualification Level	Qualification Level	Aln	The National Qualification Framework level assigned to the qualification.
	Qualification Number	Int	
	Version Number	Int	
	Credits	Int	
	NZSCED	Int	New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (<i>ASCED appears on TGA in Australia</i>)
	Qualification Developer	Int	
	Review Date	Int	
	Qualification Specifications	Int	

⁹⁵ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

⁹⁶ New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA), [Qualification Template](#), NZQA website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

⁹⁷ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

Nominal Duration of Course (hours)		Aus	
Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	Outcome(s) of the Course	Aln*	The knowledge, skills and attitudes a learner should possess upon attainment of the qualification.
Course Description	Course Description	Aln	An overview of the purpose of the course
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Aln	The rationale for the creation of the course, i.e 'Why does the course need to be made?'
Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Aln	The process in place for reviewing and amending the qualification if necessary.
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Aln	Whether or not the qualification has any licensing or regulatory requirements to undertake the qualification, and/or whether the qualification itself is a regulatory or licensing requirement for an industry.
	Qualification Specifications	Int	General conditions for the program - Programmes must align to best practice documentation for the industry and use relevant technology, legislation and current policies and procedures.
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)		Aus	The acceptance of the qualification by industry, professional bodies, or associations.
Course Guidelines, Requirements, and Articulation			
Course Structure	Course Structure	Aln	A breakdown of the qualification into its units, and the packaging requirements for core/elective units and specialisations.
Entry Requirements	Entry Requirements	Aln	The minimum requirements to enrol in the qualification.
Pathways And Articulation	Pathways and Articulation	Aln	Options for articulation into further qualifications at either a higher NQF level (vertical) or at the same NQF level (horizontal).
Foundation Skills		Aus	Basic and general skills required to attain the qualification.
Assessment			
	Qualification Specifications	Int*	- Evidence requirements

			- Minimum standard of achievement and standards for grade endorsements
Assessment Strategy		Aus	
Assessor Competencies		Aus	The criteria an assessor must meet to deliver the qualification
Delivery Modes		Aus	The methods used to deliver the course. E.g., Classroom-based learning, on-the-job training.
Resources		Aus	Specialised facilities or materials required to deliver the qualification.
Supplementary Information			
	Replacement Information	Int	Identifies the qualification that has been superseded
	Additional Transition Information	Int	Describes the version history of the qualification.
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation		Aus	The process by which the qualification will be evaluated and updated based on industry needs or developments in current practice.
	Total number of In fields	11	
	Total number of Int fields	9	
	Total number of Aus fields	8	
	<i>Cumulative Score</i>	<i>+1</i>	

C.8 New Zealand unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's unit of competency template with New Zealand's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C8). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in New Zealand's unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C8 Australia-New Zealand unit of competency template comparison

Australia ⁹⁸	New Zealand ⁹⁹	Outcome	Description ¹⁰⁰
Overview Fields			
Unit Code	Unit Code	Aln	Unique code for each individual unit
Unit Title	Unit Title	Aln	Unique title for the unit
	Unit Level	Int	
	Credit	Int	
	Purpose	Int	
	Replacement Information	Int	
	Planned Review Date	Int	
	Status Information and Last Date for Assessment for Superseded Versions	Int	

⁹⁸ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

⁹⁹ New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA), [Guidelines for approval and listing of skill standards Interim draft – May 2023](#), NZQA website, 2023, accessed 19 June 2024.

¹⁰⁰ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	Consent and Moderation Requirements Reference	Int	The specific industry requirements for assessment, resources, equipment and environment, in order to adequately assess learners.
	Comments on this Unit Standard	Int	Same as notes
	Indicative Content (optional)	Int*	An example of how the course will be delivered (a good example of what level of detail might be useful in the Aus companion volume)
	Resources (optional)	Int	May include references to resources including relevant legislation, Rules, Codes of Practice, textbooks, definitions, links to online material, and other useful guidance to tutors, assessors and learners.
	Directory of Assessment and Skills Standards (DASS)	Int	Rules for how the unit will be listed on the register
Outcomes and Explanations			
Application	Application	Aln	
Elements and Performance Criteria	Elements and Performance Criteria	Aln	
Range of Conditions	Range of Conditions	Aln	Compliance with OHS procedures.
	Guidance information	Int	
Competency Field		Aus	
Unit Sector		Aus	
Skills and Knowledge			
Prerequisite Unit	Pre-requisites	Aln	
Foundation Skills		Aus	
Unit Mapping Information		Aus	
Assessment			

Assessment Conditions	Assessment Conditions	Aln	
	Assessment rating system	Aln	
Performance Evidence		Aus	
Knowledge Evidence		Aus	
Total number of Aln fields		7	
Total number of Int fields		13	
Total number of Aus fields		6	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		+7	

C.9 Scotland qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with Scotland's qualification template (Table C9) The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in Scotland's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C9 Australia-Scotland qualification template comparison

Australia ¹⁰¹	Scotland ¹⁰²	Outcome	Description ¹⁰³
Overview Fields			
Name of Qualification (Title)	Name of Qualification (Title)	Aln	
Qualification Code	Qualification Code	Aln	
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Aln	
Qualification Level	Qualification Level	Aln	
	Awarding Body	Int	Similar to ASQA
	Accreditation Period	Int	Start and end date of when it was first accredited and will subsequently require review.
Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	Outcome(s) of the Course	Aln	
Course Description	Course Description	Aln	

¹⁰¹ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

¹⁰² Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), [Developing Qualification Products for SQA Accreditation Approval: A guide for submitting organisations](#), SQA, 2021.

¹⁰³ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Review for Renewal of Accreditation	Aln	
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs		Aus	
Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)		Aus	
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)		Aus	
Course Guidelines, Requirements, and Articulation			
Course Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview Mandatory Units and Optional Units 	Aln	Both fields listed here contain information that, taken together, form a course structure.
Entry Requirements	Who Does This Qualification Suit? → Access	Aln	
Foundation Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace Core Skills Core Skills Signposting 	Aln	Together, these fields describe whether there are opportunities within units to develop core skills to a specified SCQF level.
	Reregistration History	Int	Date that the qualification was first registered and subsequently reregistered.
Pathways and Articulation		Aus	
Assessment			
Assessment Strategy	Assessment Strategy	Aln	Assessment strategy does not appear in the qualification document. Instead, guidance around the development of assessments is done at a sector level (e.g. Justice and Community Safety).
Assessor Competencies	Assessor Competencies	Aln	This is covered in the assessment strategy guidance at the package level (similar to the companion volume)
Resources		Aus	
Delivery Modes		Aus	
Supplementary Information			

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation		Aus	The Scotland system employs a specified accreditation 'end date' and is not explicitly defined in the template.
Total number of In fields		12	
Total number of Int fields		3	
Total number of Aus fields		7	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		-4	

C.10 Scotland unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by side comparison of Australia’s unit of competency template with Scotland’s unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C10). The comparison table details field that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia’s unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in Scotland’s unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C10 Australia-Scotland unit of competency template comparison

Australia ¹⁰⁴	Scotland ¹⁰⁵	Outcome	Description ¹⁰⁶
Overview Fields			
Unit Code	Unit Code	Aln	
Unit Title	Unit Title	Aln	
	Overview	Int	
	Additional Information – Scope / Range	Int	Provides details on the range of requirements aligned to the intended occupation.
	Developed by	Int	
	Version Number	Int	
	Date Approved	Int	
	Indicative Review Date	Int	
	Validity	Int	Potential outcomes for this field are either ‘current’ or ‘superseded’

¹⁰⁴ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

¹⁰⁵ Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), [National certificate module: unit specification](#), SQA website, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

¹⁰⁶ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	Status	Int	
	Originating Organisation	Int	
	Original URN (unit reference number)	Int	
	Relevant Occupations	Int *	
	Keywords	Int *	
Outcomes and Explanations			
Unit sector	Suite	Aln	
Elements and Performance Criteria	Performance Criteria	Aln	Structure is the same. High-level statement, then broken down into separate performance criteria. Performance criteria are the same as elements in this case, which are broken down further into subordinate components.
Range of Conditions	Scope/Range	Aln	Describes the context and knowledge a learner would need to possess to successfully complete the unit (e.g Organisational policy, OH&S guidelines)
	Knowledge and Understanding	Int	Similar to Performance Criteria. Knowledge is the field, which is further broken into 'knowledge components' etc.
Application		Aus	
Competency Field		Aus	
Skills and Knowledge			
Foundation Skills	Core Skills	Aln	Core skills are integrated into Performance Criteria and Knowledge and Understanding.
Prerequisite Unit		Aus	
Unit Mapping Information		Aus	
Assessment			

Performance Evidence		Aus	Note – the ‘Assessment Strategy’ is defined at the training package level. This could be considered similar to the <i>Companion Volume</i> of the Australian system.
Knowledge Evidence		Aus	
Assessment Conditions		Aus	
Total number of Aln fields		6	
Total number of Int fields		13	
Total number of Aus fields		7	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		<i>+6</i>	

C.11 South Africa qualification template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia's qualification template with South Africa's qualification template (Table C11). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia's qualification template (Aus), and exclusively included in South Africa's qualification template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C11 Australia-South Africa qualification template comparison

Australia ¹⁰⁷	South Africa ¹⁰⁸	Outcome	Description ¹⁰⁹
Overview Fields			
Name of Qualification (Title)	Name of Qualification (Title)	Aln	Unique qualification title as per naming guidelines.
Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Nominal Duration of Course (hours)	Aln	The nominal total hours required to complete the course, stated either in hours, or in credits representing total hours.
Qualification Type	Qualification Type	Aln	The type of qualification e.g National Certificate, Diploma.
Field	Field	Aln	The broad industry or industries the qualification relates to.
Qualification Level	Qualification Level	Aln	The National Qualification Framework level assigned to the qualification.
	Originator	Int	The developer of the qualification
	Originating Provider	Int	The training provider that has developed the qualification (if applicable).
	NQF Sub-Framework	Int	References which of the three Sub-Frameworks (Higher Ed, Occupational, or General and Further Education and Training) the qualification is aligned to.

¹⁰⁷ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), [Standards for VET Accredited Courses 2021](#), Federal Register of Legislation Website, Australian Government, 2021, accessed 19 June 2024.

¹⁰⁸ South Africa Qualification Authority (SAQA), [Template for the Registration of Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework \(NQF\)](#), SAQA, n.d., accessed 20 June 2024.

¹⁰⁹ A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	Subfield	Int	The specific industry-sector the qualification relates to.
	ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) Band	Int	Applies to courses that sit on the ABET band level (equivalent to between Years 9-12).
	Minimum Credits	Int*	The lowest number of credits required to attain the qualification.
	Pre-2009 NQF Level	Int	Applicable to South African qualifications registered prior to 2009 on a previous 8-level NQF.
	Qualification Class	Int	The class of qualification based on course structure, e.g., Exit-Level Outcomes and Assessment or Unit Standards based.
	Registration Status	Int	Whether the qualification is current and/or registered.
	SAQA Decision Number	Int	Decision number from SAQA Board
	Registration Start Date	Int	The date the qualification is registered or re-registered.
	Registration End Date	Int	The last date of registration. The time depends on the type and level of qualification, and is either 3 or 5 years in South Africa.
	Last Date for Enrolment	Int	The final day a learner can enrol in the qualification.
	Last Date for Achievement	Int	The final day a learner can achieve the qualification.
Outcomes and Explanations			
Outcome(s) of the Course	Outcome(s) of the Course	Aln*	The knowledge, skills and attitudes a learner should possess upon attainment of the qualification.
Course Description	Course Description	Aln	An overview of the purpose of the course
Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Industry, Education, Legislative, Enterprise or Community Needs	Aln	The rationale for the creation of the course, i.e 'Why does the course need to be made?'
Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	Recognition Given to the Course (if applicable)	Aln	The acceptance of the qualification by industry, professional bodies, or associations.

Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Licensing or Regulatory Requirements (if applicable)	Aln	Whether or not the qualification has any licensing or regulatory requirements to undertake the qualification, and/or whether the qualification itself is a regulatory or licensing requirement for an industry.
Review for Renewal of Accreditation		Aus	The process in place for reviewing and amending the qualification if necessary.
Course Guidelines, Requirements, and Articulation			
Foundation Skills	Foundation Skills	Aln	Basic and general skills required to attain the qualification.
Course Structure	Course Structure	Aln	A breakdown of the qualification into its units, and the packaging requirements for core/elective units and specialisations.
Entry Requirements	Entry Requirements	Aln	The minimum requirements to enrol in the qualification.
Pathways and Articulation	Pathways and Articulation	Aln	Options for articulation into further qualifications at either a higher NQF level (vertical) or at the same NQF level (horizontal).
Reregistration History	Reregistration History	Aln	The history of when the qualification was reregistered, if applicable.
	Learning Assumed to be in Place	Int	The scope of skills and knowledge, including general and foundational skills and knowledge, qualifications, or individual units that a learner is assumed to possess upon enrolment in the qualifications.
	Recognition of Prior Learning	Int	The principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.
	Moderation Options	Int	The regulatory standards for the assessment and moderation of the qualification
	International Comparability	Int*	A benchmarking exercise comparing the qualification to similar qualifications in at least two other countries.
Assessment			
Assessment Strategy	Assessment Strategy	Aln*	
Assessor Competencies	Assessor Competencies	Aln	The criteria an assessor must meet to deliver the qualification

Delivery Modes		Aus	The methods used to deliver the course. E.g., Classroom-based learning, on-the-job training.
Resources		Aus	Specialised facilities or materials required to deliver the qualification.
Supplementary Information			
	Notes	Int	Additional information.
	Parent Qualification (where applicable)	Int	The larger qualification that a part-qualification sits within.
	Related Part-Qualifications (where applicable)	Int	Other part-qualifications within the same or similar parent qualifications.
	Learning Programmes Recorded Against this Qualification	Int	If the qualification forms part of a wider Learning Programme.
Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation		Aus*	The process by which the qualification will be evaluated and updated based on industry needs or developments in current practice.
Total number of Aln fields		17	
Total number of Int fields		22	
Total number of Aus fields		4	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>		<i>+18</i>	

C.12 South unit of competency template comparison

Below is a side-by-side comparison of Australia’s unit of competency template with South Africa’s unit of competency (equivalent) template (Table C12). The comparison table details fields that are aligned (Aln), exclusively included in Australia’s unit of competency template (Aus), and exclusively included in South Africa’s unit of competency (equivalent) template (Int), with considerable differences marked with asterisk (*). The findings of the side-by-side comparison are presented together based on similarity of fields.

Table C12 Australia-South Africa unit of competency template comparison

Australia ¹¹⁰	South Africa ¹¹¹	Outcome	Description ¹¹²
Overview Fields			
Unit Code	Unit Code	Aln	Unique code for each individual unit
Unit Title	Unit Title	Aln	Unique title for the unit
	Originator	Int	Creator of the unit
	ABET Band	Int	Applies to courses that sit on the ABET band level (equivalent to between Years 9-12).
	SAQA US ID	Int	Unique number allocated once the Unit Standard is registered
	Unit Standard Type	Int	
	NQF Level	Int	
	Credits	Int	
	Registration Status	Int	Whether the unit is current and/or registered

¹¹⁰ Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), [Standard 10.2 and 10.3 – Enterprise units of competency](#), ASQA website, n.d., accessed 19 June 2024.

¹¹¹ South Africa Qualification Authority (SAQA), [South African Qualifications Authority Unit Standard: 1 Strategic Planning of Built Environment Projects](#), SAQA, accessed 20 June 2024.

¹¹² A description has been provided for fields that are unique and require greater explanation. Fields that have been left without a description are considered self-explanatory.

	SAQA Decision Number	Int	Decision number from SAQA Board
	Registration Start Date	Int	The date the unit is registered or re-registered.
	Registration End Date	Int	The last date of registration.
	Last Date for Enrolment	Int	The final day a learner can enrol in the unit
	Last Date for Achievement	Int	The final day a learner can achieve the unit
	Reregistration History	Int	
	Unit Standard Notes	Int	Additional information
Outcomes and Explanations			
Application	Application	Aln	
Competency Field	Competency Field	Aln	
Unit Sector	Unit Sector	Aln	
Range of Conditions	Range of Conditions	Aln	
Elements	Performance Criteria	Aus	
Skills and Knowledge			
Prerequisite Unit	Prerequisite Unit	Aln	
Foundation Skills	Foundation Skills	Aln	
	Essential Embedded Knowledge	Int	Technical and organisational-specific knowledge a learner must demonstrate that is assessed in its own right.
	Critical Cross Field Outcomes (CCFOs)	Int	CCFOs are generic competencies that are considered essential for lifelong learning and success across different fields or disciplines.
	Recognition of Prior Learning	Int	

Unit Mapping Information		Aus		
Assessment				
	Specific Outcome	Assessment Criterion	Int	Specific outcomes that are broken down into individual criteria. These criteria form the basis of assessment.
	Specific Outcome Range		Int	The operational context for the specific outcome. I.e – when and where is this outcome demonstrated?
	Assessment Criterion Range		Int	The broad scope of tools/activities with which or environments in which the learner will be assessed.
	Unit Standard Accreditation and Moderation Options		Int	The accreditation requirements providers must meet to award the unit.
Performance Evidence			Aus	
Knowledge Evidence			Aus	
Assessment Conditions			Aus	
Total number of In fields			8	
Total number of Int fields			21	
Total number of Aus fields			5	
<i>Cumulative Score</i>			<i>+16</i>	