Qualifications Frameworks: national and regional

Andrea Bateman

APEC Integrated Referencing Framework meeting, Manila 2015
Outline

• Qualifications systems
• National qualifications frameworks
• Regional qualifications frameworks
  • AQRF
Qualifications landscape

International Classification of Education (ISCED)

Regional Frameworks (e.g. European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, Bologna Framework for higher education)

National Qualifications Frameworks (e.g. The Hong Kong Qualifications Framework)

Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks (e.g. Indian National Skills Qualification Framework, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (UK))

Qualifications (e.g. school leaving certificates, bachelor’s degrees, craft diplomas, awards by professional bodies, course completion certificates, licences to practice, language proficiency certificates)

Standards (e.g. occupational standards, institutional teaching standards, curriculum/training standards, job profiles, professional standards, qualifications criteria, assessment criteria)

Learning Outcomes (e.g. knowledge, skills and competence)

Source: Coles & Bateman 2013
Qualifications system

- All aspects of a country’s activity that result in the recognition of learning:
  - national or sectoral policy on qualifications
  - institutional arrangements
  - quality assurance processes
  - assessment and awarding processes
  - skills recognition and other mechanisms that link education and training to the labour market and civil society.

- Qualifications systems may be more or less integrated and coherent.

- Qualifications framework may be explicit within the system.

Source: Qualifications systems: Bridges to lifelong learning, OECD 2006
Qualifications frameworks; What are they?

An instrument for the development and classification of qualifications (e.g. at national or sectoral level) according to a set of criteria (e.g. using descriptors) applicable to specified levels of learning outcomes.

Source CEDEFOP 2011
Types of qualification frameworks

- National
- Regional
- Comprehensive
- Sectoral
- Transforming
- Communicative

Development and design of NQFs are influenced by each country’s structural and governance arrangements for education and training and the broader political and administrative systems, cultures and labour markets contexts.
General variations across NQFs

- Coverage – sectors and qualification types
- Purpose and vision of NQFs (e.g. reflective of status quo, reforming, transparency, mobility, regional solidarity, national identity, coherence of education and training etc)
- Levels of learning complexity
- Domains (for level descriptors)
- Qualification types and qualifications type descriptors
- Volume measures
- Links to quality assurance
- Arrangements for recognising informal learning and for credit
- Governance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Levels</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Singapore (TVET only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domains

- Focus generally on:
  - Knowledge and skills, and application
  - Degree of independence, autonomy, responsibility, leadership

- Others include:
  - Numeracy, IT, communications

- And others include:
  - Social skills
  - Problem solving
  - Ethics and morals
  - Lifelong learning skills
Volume

- Generally utilised within a credit based qualifications system – but this is not always the case
- Aims is to enable credit transfer and credit accumulation processes.
- ‘...the amount of time that would need to be devoted to the learning for the award’ Ref: Bateman, Dunn & Vickers 2010
- Often described in terms of credit points
- AQF - volume statement for the whole qualification is described as a duration measure.
## Status of QFs – ASEAN group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Level of establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td>Inaugurated 2013, initial stages of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Inaugurated 2012, initial stages of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Inaugurated 2007, fully implemented and at review stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Inaugurated 2012, initial stages of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Sector QF – Workforce Skills Qualifications system, Inaugurated 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Inaugurated 2014, initial stages of implementation, 3 established sub frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam*</td>
<td>Planned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: APEC mapping 2009, Bateman & Liang draft 2015, Bateman & Coles 2015, UNESCO Global Inventory 2015, personal communications (Mexico, Columbia)
# Status of QFs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Established 1995, large scale review 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Enacted 2007, implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea*</td>
<td>Has TVET framework, NQF documented since 2003, plan to revise and establish a linking NQF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico*</td>
<td>Developed 2011, revision planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Introduced as the NZ NQF in 1991, NZQF established 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>Introduced 2008 (linkage framework), approved in 2012 (2 sector frameworks)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: APEC mapping 2009, Bateman & Liang draft March 2015, Bateman & Coles 2015, UNESCO Global Inventory 2015, personal communications (Mexico, Colombia)
## Status of QFs

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<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada*</td>
<td>Proposed, Ontario has a partial framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile*</td>
<td>In development (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China*</td>
<td>Not planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia*</td>
<td>Planned (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Not current APEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Taipei*</td>
<td>None (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru*</td>
<td>None (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia*</td>
<td>None (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America*</td>
<td>None (status report from country?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: APEC mapping 2009, Bateman & Liang draft 2015, Bateman & Coles 2015, UNESCO Global Inventory 2015, personal communication (Mexico, Columbia)
Regional Qualifications Frameworks
Regional Qualifications Frameworks

- are not an NQF
- common reference framework or ‘meta’ frameworks
- ‘a means of enabling one framework of qualifications to relate to others and subsequently for one qualification to relate to others that are normally located in another framework’  Ref: Commission of European Communities 2005
- have very different functions to that of NQFs and aim to add value to the NQFs
- vary in purpose, design and functionality (and level of implementation)
Regional frameworks

Regional common reference frameworks can:

- deepen integration and harmonisation
- create a common identity
- facilitate:
  - transparency of multiple complex systems
  - mobility of workers and students
  - recognition and credit transfer
- support economic imperatives such as removal of barriers to trade
- RQFs vary in purpose, design and functionality (and level of implementation):
Components of Regional Frameworks

- Voluntary code of practice
- Agreed levels and descriptors
- Agreed range of functions
- Quality assurance arrangements
- Referencing process
- Collaborative management
- Monitoring arrangements
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQF</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Qualifications Framework (EQF)</td>
<td>Common reference framework which links different country qualification systems and frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean Community (CARICOM)</td>
<td>Focussed upon the development of standards &amp; qualifications, including a CBT model &amp; the sharing of materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF)</td>
<td>Common reference framework that links to a regional register for national qualifications underpinned by QA arrangements, agency and provider standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN QRF</td>
<td>Common reference framework; translation device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth</td>
<td>Transnational QF - reference system to link national qualifications systems and frameworks in different small states together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Referencing process

- Is voluntary; results in the establishment of a relationship between the levels of the RQF and that of an NQF
- Referencing criteria, which all countries must use, promotes a common process.
- Only national qualifications levels are formally linked to the regional framework levels.
- Notion of best fit - there can be no perfect reference point for all qualifications levels and some compromise positions are inevitable
- Includes national consultation, reporting national referencing outcomes, a RQF governing committee, engaging in peer review with the committee and finally reporting a single official report of an NQF linkage with the RQF.
Referencing
This website provides an easy comparison with EU countries that have completed the referencing process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>EQF Level 5</th>
<th>SCQF Level 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td><strong>certifications de niveau 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>SCQF Level 8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodation Manager (brevet de technicien</td>
<td>Higher National Diplomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>supérieur)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TP : Titre professionnel Bilingual English-French import-export assistant, trilingual English-German-French option. Nouvel intitulé : Assistant(e) import-export</td>
<td>Diploma of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel personal assistant (école professionnelle de tourisme et d’hôtellerie)</td>
<td>Professional Development Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scotland</strong></td>
<td><strong>SCQF Level 7</strong></td>
<td>SVQ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher National Certificates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate of Higher Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task Force on AQRF

- Initial phase late 2010 – 2011 – initial concept design
- Task Force - established in May 2012 by AANZFTA Joint Committee. First met November 2012 Bangkok, final 7th Meeting Bangkok Oct 2015
- Membership includes:
  - ASEAN officials from Ministries of Trade/Commerce, Education, Labour/Manpower Development, Accreditation and Qualification Agencies
  - Non-voting members Australia & New Zealand
- Endorsed by all relevant ASEAN Ministers by mid 2015
AQRF - overview

- regional common reference framework.
- is a device to enable comparisons of qualifications across ASEAN Member States (AMS)
- translation device that can broaden the understanding of national qualifications systems of AMS
- addresses all education and training sectors and the wider objective of promoting lifelong learning.
AQRF Principles

- Based on agreed understanding among AMS of a regional framework that affirms the value of referencing national qualifications frameworks and that will govern the process
- Invites voluntary engagement
- Does not require AMS to make changes to their national qualification system
- Respects AMS specific structures and processes
Components

- 8 levels
  - hierarchy of levels of complexity of learning which use learning outcomes as the metric for the hierarchy
  - two domains:
    - Knowledge and skills
    - Application and Responsibility.
Quality assurance

- AQRF requires AMS to reference to a Quality Assurance Framework including (but not limited to):
  - East Asia Summit Vocational Education and Training Quality Assurance Framework
Referencing to the AQRF

- Endorsement document includes:
  - 11 criteria
  - Advice on structure of report
- Draft Guidelines have been developed
AQRF Governance

- The proposed governance arrangements are still under deliberation among the AMS, but may include:
  - Regional advisory group
  - National focal point

- To be progressed – need for other associated support such as monitoring arrangements and website for:
  - AQRF endorsed document
  - Concept notes
  - Guidelines
  - Referencing reports